

SOCIAL STATUS AND CONVERSION

The Structure of the Early Christian Communities

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TO MY PARENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with social aspects of early Christianity. It considers the social origins and careers of the early Christians, as far as they can be traced in the scanty and fragmented evidence. The spread of Christianity is examined in relation to the prevailing social and economic conditions of the Roman world in the first centuries AD. The Christian attitudes to slavery and the penetration of Christianity into the countryside are discussed at some length.

The evidence considered does not justify the traditional views which regard early Christianity as a religion of the underprivileged and the oppressed. Except for the imperial slaves and a small number of favourites of Christian masters, slaves, as far as it can be established, were not eager to embrace the new religion, while in the countryside, Christianity seems to have found its first adherents among the landowning and Hellenized peasants. In the cities, besides bankers, artisans and prosperous freedmen, Christianity attracted, as it is illustrated, many people of leisure, education and wealth.

Overall, it is maintained, that although in principle Christianity drew its members from all social classes and groups, professing egalitarian doctrines, it was in effect more successful with the middle classes of the cities, which it organized under the leadership of wealthy and highly educated church officials. Millennial and prophetic tendencies, with strong social implications, such as were manifest among the first generation of Christians, survived or were revived only as marginal phenomena, especially in the countryside. Mainstream Christianity advocated and encouraged strict observance of the existing social order.

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On one such occasion I was travelling to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests; and as I was on my way ... in the middle of the day I saw a light from the sky, more brilliant than the sun, shining all around me and my travelling-companions. We all fell to the ground, and then I heard a voice saying to me in the Jewish language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you, this kicking against the goad.' I said, 'Tell me Lord, who you are'; and the Lord replied, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But now, rise to your feet and stand upright. I have appeared to you for a purpose: to appoint you my servant and witness, to testify both to what you have seen and to what you shall yet see of me. I will rescue you from this people and from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you. I send you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, from the dominion of Satan to God, so that, by trust in me, they may obtain forgiveness of sins, and a place with those whom God has made his own.'

Acts 26: 12-18.

Accordingly (Constantine) besought his father's god in prayer, beseeching and imploring him to tell him who he was and to stretch out his right hand to help him in his present difficulties. And while he was thus praying with fervent entreaty, a most incredible sign appeared to him from heaven... He said that about noon, when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and an inscription CONQUER BY THIS attached to it. At this sight he himself was struck with amazement, and his whole army also, which followed him on an expedition, and witnessed the miracle.

He said, moreover, that he doubted within himself what the import of this portent could be. And while he continued to ponder and reason on its meaning, night overtook him; then in his sleep the Christ of God appeared to him with the sign which he had seen in the heavens, and commanded him to make a likeness of that sign which he had seen in the heavens, and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies.

Eusebius, Vita Constantini 1. 28. 1.

INTRODUCTION

A. From 'Syndoulos' to 'Brothers and Sisters'

Equality and Hierarchy.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians (1:7), referred to one of his colleagues as being a σύνδουλος (fellow slave). The conception of men as slaves of a master/god, almost unanimously accepted by the New Testament authors had been an essential feature of Jewish theological tradition. The same conception was prevalent at least in some social circles of the Roman world (1).

With the spread of Christianity, the master/slave metaphor was diffused into Hellenistic and Roman culture. It became all the more dominant, as the slave system entered its long and fatal crisis (2). The Pauline, and subsequently common Christian metaphor, however, had little in common with 'the pedantically slavish spirit' of the Jewish people. To the 'mechanical slavery' (3) of a blind observance to the Law, Christians counterpoised an internalized humility, which had more to do with the development of a novel religious psychology, than with the repetitive ritual actions of traditional Judaism.

The Christian idea of σύνδουλος had a second point of emphasis. Paul's colleague was not a mere slave of God; he was, at the same time, Paul's fellow-slave. The Jewish community, with its national religion, had a strong sense of national and religious identity; circumcision and other ceremonial practices clearly separated it from the 'outside-world'. Christians inherited from Judaism the idea of an elect nation, but in spite of the efforts of their most powerful moralists, could not bar themselves, as successfully as the Jews, from the heathen world. Universal closed marriages (i.e. marriages between Christians as opposed to mixed marriages) always remained an unaccomplished aim.

However, the constant polemic with the non-Christian world led to the

development of a vocabulary, which in its turn, strengthened the feelings of a closed group. Σύνδουλος was a term belonging to this vocabulary. The idea of σύνδουλος as developed by the early Christian theologians, included all adherents of the new religion as members of a common familia, i.e. the familia of a single master (4). A second New Testament passage in which the term σύνδουλος appears, expressed in a most powerful way the idea of a closed group in a life and death conflict with its enemies. "Ἔως πότε, ὁ δεσπότης, ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός, οὐ κρίνεις καὶ ἐκδικεῖς τὸ αἷμα ἡμῶν ἐκ τῶν κατοικούντων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ask the slain martyrs in the Apocalypse of John during a period of persecution. Rest yet for a little longer, they were told, until your σύνδουλοι and brothers are also killed as you have been (6:11). Σύνδουλος, it thus seems, had good reasons to become a dominant technical term of the developing Christian vocabulary.

New religions, in forming their theological and moral discourses, either select terms from the existing stock of older religions and philosophies, or, if necessary, invent new terms to meet with their novel needs. 'New concepts demand new terms' wrote Cicero in his On the Nature of the Gods (5). Forced by other social factors, new theologies sometimes abandon terms originally employed, occasionally developing new terms at a latter stage. Some words acquire gradually a new sense, while at times, new ideas remain implicit, awaiting a retarded term to give them full meaning. Thus the history of the early Christian vocabulary reveals much of the first stages of the development of Christianity, and historians often have to rely on linguistic grounds to trace an influence or a peculiarity.

The Pauline and Johannean σύνδουλος had the merit of combining at the same time the idea of humility with the idea of fellowship. This

second idea was frequently emphasized by the New Testament authors with the use of the prefix συν (with). Συναγωνίσασθαί μοι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς (Rom.15:30); διὰ θελήματος Θεοῦ συναναπαύσομαι ὑμῶν (ibid. 15:32); τοῦ εὐαγγελίου συγκοινωνοῦ μου (Phil. 1:7); Τῷ συστρατιώτῃ ἡμῶν (Philem. 3); συναιχμάλωτος, συνεργοῦ (ibid); συνεκλεκτοῦ (Pet A: 5:13) and so on. All these terms had a special value in early Christian thought. Particularly popular was the use of the military metaphor (6). Christians often conceived their mission as a military enterprise. Soldiers were as a rule in groups under the command of a leader. A soldier in isolation, with no colleagues and no officer in command, was hardly a typical picture. But in spite of the strong sense of obedience, which the military metaphor inspired, soldiers lacked the humility, which a common slave was expected to express.

Christian minds, however, although affected by the metaphors of συστρατιώτης and σύνδουλος - the term σύνδουλος appears in Ignatius, John Chrysostom and Eustathios - hardly allowed themselves to be dominated by either. Of all metaphors ever used, one gradually overpowered all others: the metaphor of the family. Christians were brothers and sisters, and all of them children of God and of his earthly representatives, the priests and bishops (7). This choice of language was determined by important developments, which were taking place in the Christian churches, their social composition and organisation. A third New Testament passage in which the term σύνδουλος appears, may serve as an illustration of this.

The Christian churches were organized on the basis of two principles: equality of all their members and a strict hierarchy. At a very early stage - if we are to believe the Acts and a small number of other sources (see pp. 55 ff. below) - the Christian churches seem to have leant towards equality (8). Later on, however, much of this 'equality'

and 'freedom' was sacrificed to an ever increasing hierarchical order, at the top of which in each church stood bishops (9). These bishops gradually achieved almost absolute power over the distribution of church wealth and the spiritual direction of the community. At all stages however, the two principles, hierarchy and equality, coexisted in a constant, implicit or explicit conflict. Of this conflict, the outcome of which had important consequences in the social structure of the Christian churches, little has come down to us in the form of narrative history. On the other hand interesting aspects of the conflict can be detected in the early Christian 'myths'.

The earliest Christian 'myths' are to be found in the New Testament documents. In this genre, in a wide sense, we may include the Gospel parables and stories, which are the product of the primitive Christian community. The Gospel parables - in all likelihood subsequent to the Pauline and Johanne passages examined above - often make use of the master and slave metaphor to illustrate church doctrines and ideals. In one Matthean parable, the term σύνδουλος occurs once more, but this time with a much more complicated meaning. Close attention reveals the transitional character of the period in matters of discipline and organization.

The Kingdom of Heaven, so the parable goes, can be compared to a human king who decided to settle accounts with his slaves (10).

At the outset there appeared before him (i.e. the king) a man whose debt was 10,000 talents. Since he had no means of paying, his master ordered him to be sold to meet the debt, with his wife, his children, and everything he had. The slave fell prostrate at his master's feet. 'Be patient with me', he said, 'and I shall pay in full'; and the master was so moved with

pity that he let the slave go and remitted the debt. But no sooner had the slave gone out than he met a fellow-slave (ἕνα τῶν συνδούλων) who owed him 100 denarii; and catching hold of him he gripped him by the throat and said, 'Pay me what you owe'. The fellow-slave fell at his feet and begged him 'Be patient with me, and I shall pay you'; but he refused, and had him jailed until he should pay the debt. His fellow-slaves were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to the master and told him the whole story. He accordingly sent for the slave. 'You scoundrel!' he said to him; 'I remitted the whole of your debt when you appealed to me; were you not bound to show your fellow-slave the same pity as I showed you?'

The parable insists several times that all men mentioned, but the king, were slaves. The word need not be taken in its strict legal sense, but its significance ought to be carefully considered. Our parable refers also four times to the slaves as being fellow-slaves (σύνδουλοι). This choice of language, and indeed the choice of a term never again used in the Gospels, stresses two points. On the one hand it emphasizes the low status which all men mentioned shared in front of their king/master. On the other hand, it is maintained that all stood far apart from their master, and that in view of this distance, a slave owing 10,000 talents could be considered as equal to a slave who could not collect 100 denarii (they were all fellow-slaves). To grasp the importance of these small details, we have first to remember what thorough investigations have suggested about the nature of the Christian parables.

'The similitudes (parables) are governed by the wise economy of popular story telling.' This is the verdict of one of the most sound New

Testament scholars, R. Bultmann (11). This view is supported by Bultmann with the following arguments. The narrative of the parables is characterized by an impressive conciseness. 'Only the necessary persons appear.' As a rule there are never more than two or three chief characters. When groups appear, they are treated as single persons; we then have two or three groups or parties. Even so, according to the 'law of stage duality' only two persons or groups are acting at a time; the third person - if there is one - and the subordinate characters remain in the background. Parables are always told from the point of view of one character - 'law of the single perspective'; when two points of view are presented, 'scenes are so arranged that they never overlap'. No explicit attributes are given to the characters, except when occasionally one character pronounces judgement upon the other; from the parable teller's point of view, no characterization is made. Feelings and motives are mentioned very rarely; for the most part the hearer is left to form his own idea about them. In correspondence also to the popular story-telling economy, 'whatever is reported is described in very concrete terms' e.g. the amounts of the debts. Finally, we may mention the 'law of repetition', which is so common in popular narratives. One major and relevant conclusion to our present discussion is drawn without difficulty from the above arguments. Only the strictly necessary information is given; anything unnecessary is omitted, even when this is the obvious objective conclusion of the parable.

If such is the case with the parable economy, we may reasonably expect that even the choice of terms employed (especially when they are terms not in common use) has its detectable significance. Compared to what we know about the primitive communities - i.e. those to which the Pauline and Johanne passages were addressed - our first impression about the meaning of the word σύνδουλος is sound. The ideals of equality (expressed by the prefix συν) and of freedom (each slave was free to

do what he thought best until the master decided to settle accounts with him) are present in our parable. However, the difference in financial terms between the two slaves was so great that from this point of view the two slaves can hardly be considered as equals in real terms. The first slave could have easily been an overseer in charge of other slaves, while the second slave could have been a common slave working under the direction of the first. So far apart stood the two slaves in financial prospects from each other, that we may claim that the parable introduces simultaneously two opposite pictures: The two slaves were equal (in front of the master, hence the prefix $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$) and not equal (in real i.e. financial terms, hence the implicit hierarchy among them). The idea of a vigorous hierarchy is also introduced by the very structure of the narrative.

The structure of the parable (following the so-called law of repetition) doubles the master and slave relation, reproducing it in the event between the two slaves. The first slave, we are told, treated the second with authority, as he had been treated himself by his master. The first slave did not merely have the power to control the second, but also the power to imprison him. This repetition of the hierarchical power in almost the same wording stands as an unequivocal statement of the existence of a hierarchical order among the 'fellow-slaves'. As a matter of principle, the existence of a conflicting message within the same 'myth' is no surprise. What attracts the attention, however, of the careful reader is the inadequacy of the term *syndoulos* to account for the developed situation in which freedom and equality were becoming more or less a dead letter. We may therefore suspect, with good reasons, that the gradual displacement of the term 'syndoulos' by the metaphor of brothers and sisters was the product of this new situation. Brothers and sisters may be humble in front of their father, but the family structure allows for great variations in authority sha-

red by its members (12).

B. The Social Structure of the Early Christian Communities. Scope and Limits of the Study.

The moral commandment, so clearly illustrated in the parable examined, was repeated several times explicitly in the Gospels: ἀφεσὶ ἡμῶν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν. In the case of the parable, the debts (ὀφειλήματα) mentioned were financial debts and this probably reflects the original intention of the commandment. If all Christians released their debtors from their debts, then a real equality might have been approached; hence the term syndoulos, i.e. all men equal between themselves and humble servants of the greatness of God. But this was not achieved; it is even questionable whether it was ever actually attempted. The financial debts of Christians to Christians remained and new converts entering the church retained, as a rule, their previous social positions. Though equal in front of God, the early converts were very unequal in social terms. To this stratification, the developing hierarchy gave a new and strong potency; hence the dropping of the term syndoulos. In the eve of its success, Christianity reproduced within its ranks the complexity of the outside social order. Members of each class, within the Christian churches, held fast to their social aspirations and struggled to enforce them as general rules upon all Christians. Moral commandments and theological doctrines were sometimes disguised social positions. (See below pp. 131 ff.)

Led by such signs - and above all, by their personal ideological preconceptions - many scholars have advanced for many years the theory that the intervention of slaves and the popular masses was a decisive factor in the outcome. But although the precise balance of social forces must have weighed as an important factor in the struggle for re-

cognition and triumph, the reduction of the Christian movement to a class movement, explains little and has a weak and dubious foundation. The present thesis, by investigating, as much as possible, the social composition of the early Christian communities, brings forward strong reasons for rejecting the theory that early Christianity was dominated by a slave element or a revolutionary mentality.

The Christian churches had of course their members, the social origins and positions of whom we shall attempt to trace in the present study. But churches are also unions with a definite structure, a structure which is closely related to their social function. At the time when we have a clear picture of the Christian movement, it already had an identifiable church - structure, i.e. it was a union of people with a detectable, if not yet fully developed organisation, and with a number of more or less clarified, though not uniformly established and accepted dogmas.

Organisation and dogma found their symbolic - and real - representation in the figure of the bishop (ἐπίσκοπος). The bishop stood at the top of a pyramid of officials and executives giving the final word in matters of dispute. At the time when our sources give us enough information (in the late second and early third century), bishops were already the key figures in the movement. The Christian churches were "electing" bishops, not because a bishop's work had to be done, but because churches had bishops. Of course, a bishop's work had to be done and this work probably led, from a historical point of view, to the installation of bishops; but by the third century a bishop's post had become an institution.

In the story of the Acts and the New Testament epistles, we get an idea of what the predecessors of the bishops looked like, in their double function as inspired leaders who developed the Christian dogmas, and as

executives who controlled the funds of the community. The exchange and control of ideas and wealth was the motivating factor, which led to the development of the church as an institution.

The present study does not deal in a systematic way with the Christian dogmas and the organisation of the Christian church. The types of organisation involved in building up the church hierarchy, were closely related, as has already been indicated, to the social stratification of Christian communities. Here and there this relationship is illustrated in the present discussion. On the whole, however, organisation, discipline and hierarchy form a special topic, which lies outside the scope of this thesis.

The case of doctrinal matters is somewhat different. In his study on totemism C. Lévi - Strauss wrote that primitive people chose natural species as 'totems' not because they are 'good to eat' but because they are 'good to think' (13). What he meant was that the relationship between species was analogous to the relationship between clans (14). This, it seems to me, holds true, to some extent, for Christian dogmas. Judged at face value, many doctrinal propositions of the church fathers appear absurd. One extreme case is Gnostic beliefs. Much has been written and said about them; few views are convincing. Why did it really matter, for example, whether God was the seventh or eighth force? These numbers were taken out of astrological contemplations, but astrology alone will not help us understand the significance of discussions, which often led to violent conflicts. On the other hand, if the relationship between stars and if the order of the stars is seen as an analogy or a symbol of the earthly human and social order, some sense starts to emerge. E.H. Pagels in several recent articles has shown in a small number of cases that the 'absurd' discussions of the Gnostics had some real meaning, which was anything but trivial. Pagels has opened a traceable path, but what is needed is a wide road which would allow an evaluation

of the immense but still dark material. To include, therefore, in the present study, considerations on the social stratification of the Christian communities, based upon interpretations of doctrinal conflicts, would make the tentative conclusions of an already fragile material, less rather than more convincing. Hence, a systematic treatment of the early Christian dogmas, from the point of view of the social composition of the Christian churches, has been omitted; only occasionally, when the meaning of a theological position seemed quite clear, have I mentioned such matters.

Our sources and the material considered, like all historical investigations, pose problems of interpretation, which call for some preliminary clarification. But before doing so, let me briefly look at the progress being made in the study of the history of the early Christian church.

C. Ecclesiastical History - Progress and Drawbacks.

The study of Roman history has made great progress since the time of E. Gibbon. Historians now know much more about the Roman world. They also know how to evaluate information, which was accessible, but seemed worthless. On the other hand, 'historians now put different questions to the past, and therefore come out with a different picture' (15). It is not exactly so with ecclesiastical history. True, ever since F.C. Baur and the neo-Hegelians, Christian sources have been more carefully examined, while numerous archaeological and papyrological discoveries have added important new dimensions to early Christian history. As E.G. Turner has argued, the accumulation of even the smallest and most insignificant Christian fragments, which are being constantly discovered in Egypt, can add, when carefully considered, useful information to our knowledge of the earliest Christian history. Even pagan texts of the sa-

me period can give information about the new meanings certain well-known words had obtained; these new meanings, unknown otherwise, may spread light over misinterpreted Christian formulations (16). However, since the early twentieth century, apart from the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Library, few discoveries of great significance have been made. The Dead Sea Scrolls gave extremely useful information about the Jewish background of the earliest church, but added little to Christian history proper. The Nag Hammadi Library, on the other hand, poses difficulties of the nature mentioned above and has not yet been profitably investigated (17). It therefore looks as if 'What facts we can know, we have already known for a long time', i.e. ever since the publication of A. Harnack's The Mission and Expansion of Christianity at the beginning of this century (18).

Harnack ended his monumental and unsurpassed work with the following declaration, which deserves some close examination:

The question may be asked, however, how did (Christianity) actually influence the course of things on earth? What share is to be assigned to it in the protracted changes which revolutionized the ranks and classes of society, labour and workmen, organizations and the various social groups? It is impossible to answer this query for the pre-Constantine age (19).

Philosophers and sociologists had been asking such questions at least since the middle of the nineteenth century and Harnack's contemporary, M. Weber, had dealt with them in his The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, which was published in the same year in which Harnack wrote the above lines. Harnack was one of the very first church historians to express genuine interest in sociological matters. However, his point of view suffered from a certain empiricist tendency, which historians today are increasingly rejecting. Today it would be possible, per-

haps, to answer some of the questions Harnack left in suspense, if only church history caught up with progress in related disciplines.

Comparative and historical studies have discovered precedents in doctrines and rituals which once were thought of as novelties; beliefs and practices which once were thought to differ radically from each other, are now being seen as similar and mutually dependent in important respects. Contemporary parallel religious movements, such as Mithraism, have been much better investigated, while late antique paganism is now being placed in its evolved dimensions, which have more to do with monotheistic Christianity than with the Homeric Olympians. Scholars, and especially theologians, had for centuries been misled on such issues by the early Christians themselves. To give one example, the Alexandrian church father Clement in one of his works fiercely attacked what scholars have usually understood as the popular morality and religion of late antiquity. Close attention, however, makes it clear that Clement was merely citing from Homer, the tragic poets, Plato, Aristotle and other writers of classical Greece. Thus, Clement's 'knowledge' of popular morality proves to be rather of an antiquarian type. In the late second century AD, many things had changed in the pagan world, which Clement ignored, perhaps in order to make his own religion appear much more novel than it really was. Another common mistake has been to compare Christian precept with the actual conduct of pagans. What has been ignored is that 'the gap between Christian precept and the actual conduct of Christian society is very great indeed' (20).

Our present day knowledge has become prolific with difficulties and drawbacks; some of them have left behind deeply rooted convictions. When the first serious attempts to examine early Christianity were made in the nineteenth century, many scholars were amazed to realize how dif-

ferent matters really were. In their attempts to reconsider the facts, they met with 'perverted and ill-natured judgments', products of a time which could not 'see beyond its own limited party interests' (21). Some pulled the rope too hard at the other end. They tended to reduce Christian innovations to a minimum. The 'discovery' of the Alexander philosopher Philo, led some to believe (B.Bauer, et al.) that Paul had been merely a plagiarist of the Jewish sage. Whenever a pagan symbol was found next to a Christian in archaeological excavations, many too hastily detected syncretism. Early Christian doctrines were often treated as a jumble of ideas. Once more scholars were being misled by the early Christians. What some modern scholars detected in early Christianity, early Christians themselves had suggested about their rival Gnostics and other heretics. Gnosticism is by the way still being considered as Syncretism par excellence. But the combination of the traditional with the new is not necessarily syncretism, and the similarities between Paul and Philo do not suggest that Paul had even read Philo (22).

The clarifications being made on issues such as continuity and change or syncretism and purity, are undeniable signs of theoretical progress, but there is still much ground to be covered (23). There are two types of difficulties in theorizing religious conversions. The first is subjective and the second objective.

The subjective obstacles which delay or distort the formation of a theory of conversion arise out of ideological bias. What people read in history is based partly upon what they really observe, and partly upon what they would like to observe. One example of contradictory interpretations of the same evidence is the case of Eusebius compared to the early protestant scholars. Eusebius, the first systematic church historian, collected all the evidence available to him in his attempt to demonstrate that Christianity by the late second century had made notable

progress among the educated, and the wealthy classes of Roman society; his object probably was to make Christianity more respectable. Protestant historians, engaged as they were in a struggle with oppressive ecclesiastical authorities, went through the same material to argue that early Christianity had been primarily a religion of the underprivileged and the oppressed. Perhaps the time has now come to look at the problem with a more objective eye. But who can claim to be completely free from ideological constraints?

The objective obstacles arise from the dual character of conversion, viz. the individual and the social. It is possible to isolate personalities such as Paul or for that matter Augustine, to analyse them with the conceptual tools of modern psychology, diagnose their 'neurosis' and classify it in the archives of modern erudition. F. Cumont has argued that 'a great religious conquest can be explained only on moral grounds' and that 'Whatever part must be ascribed to the instinct of imitation and the contagion of example, in the last analysis we are always face to face with a series of individual conversions' (24). It is much more difficult, though it has also been attempted, to put Paul back in his social context and relate his 'neurosis' to the 'neurasthenia' of his contemporaries.

Mass conversions, on the scale witnessed in late antiquity, call for complex and sophisticated explanations. First, the place of religion in antiquity must be reevaluated. Doctrinal disputes which appear trivial to the modern scholar, but which led in their time to bitter conflicts, will become more comprehensible if comparisons to modern equivalents are used with caution. Next, what is common to all religions, relevant to the 'essence' of man, must be distinguished from what is peculiar to each one of them. The scrutiny must go deep enough to unveil differences, which are hidden beneath common labels. It will thus become clea-

rer, not only whether paganism had always remained the same, but whether all Christianities are one and the same religion. Finally, and here is where the real problems begin, changes in religion must be related to other social developments. I shall discuss these problems in brief with reference to two important studies on early Christianity. Other works could have been chosen instead, but in English bibliography, these two studies have the advantage of bringing to light two opposite aspects of our subject.

D. The Point of View of the Interpreter - 'An Age of Transition'.

General ideas about the age, the intellectual climate and the social character of the Christian movement are unavoidably formed in the mind of the interpreter, even in the earliest stages of his research. Though these ideas to some extent predetermine the outcome of the investigation, this method of approaching the subject is not necessarily bad. It would certainly be of great assistance to our understanding of religious developments, if we could apply general notions to whole historical phases, even if these notions need reappraisal in the course of the research. The light which such general notions shed on the quest for the social origins of the early Christian converts can be illustrated, for example, by E.R.Dodds' Age of Anxiety. Dodds applied his notion of an Age of Anxiety to the period from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine (25). The idea of an Age of Anxiety was meant primarily to designate religious experience, but it also referred both to a material and a moral insecurity. Viewed under this rubric our period does show signs of tension. The massive conversion of people to a new religion was accompanied by an intense countervailing desire to persecute the converts by those who had remained faithful to their old cults. This conflict contained an element of that unconscious and irrational threat

which generates anxiety. The "contempt for the human condition" and the 'hatred of the body', so manifestly observed in the case of Christian ascetics, are in their turn linked to the 'material distresses of the third century' and are, therefore, seen as a disease 'endemic in the entire culture of the period'. Indeed, close attention shows that the symptoms of the disease appear also in a milder form in pagans of purely Hellenic education' (26). Dodds' great contribution was precisely the demonstration of what was common to pagans and Christians being at the same time peculiar to the age. In such a picture of the late Roman world, what comes to mind is the mass of the underprivileged classes, i.e. the supporters of an imperial government which gave them little in return. These people, it is often argued, turned to religion for relief, and Christianity served their cause best. The next thing to look for would be slaves, peasants and oppressed workers in the cities. But were things exactly as this chain of ideas implies?

Unfortunately, the very notion of an Age of Anxiety depends too heavily upon the Rostovtzeffian 'crisis of the third century'. Our present day knowledge of Roman history has challenged the idea of a general decay and impoverishment, which supported the anxiety theory. The well known complaints about unbearable burdens, unduly generalized by many historians, prove to be complaints by particular sections of the urban upper classes. Members of these sections were replaced by new men, i.e. the prophets and bishops of the Christian communities, who were rising financially, bringing with them a more vigorous morality. Around them a great number of people started gathering. These people may have been superstitious, but distress was not their basic common characteristic; it was faith in the days to come. The bishops and their faithful optimistic flocks, the organized churches with their growing wealth, had been there all the time, but the Age of Anxiety veiled them. Dodds focused upon Antony and the ascetics, who bore clear signs

of anxiety neurosis, but he had little to say about the fully developed and well organized monastic movement of Pachomius. The couplet crisis - anxiety becomes, to say the least, inadequate. Since this is the case, the researcher should look at the middle-classes and the prosperous pagans as potentially new converts, as well.

Alternatively, P. Brown argued that what appears as novel in the first Christian centuries, must be seen as 'a redistribution and a reorchestration of components which had already existed for centuries' (27). Alterations, he argued, were provoked by 'the changing quality of life and of social relations' (28). More than most other scholars investigating religious developments in late antiquity, Brown has made use of the present day knowledge of what was really happening in the Roman world. Rather provocatively, he named the same period Age of Ambition and set out to link the changes in lifestyle to what he called a new ceremonial of power (29). Against the hierarchy of Roman society, which was experiencing numerous difficulties, the Age of Ambition saw the rise of a spiritual hierarchy of 'friends of God', whose power was to reform social order in the coming years, along new lines. Instead of a general crisis and decline, Brown suggested that there was a fragmentation of the upper classes and a sharpening of the division between the classes.

The idea of an Age of Ambition frees historic considerations from unnecessary constraints and opens new directions for the understanding of religion in late antiquity. Not unexpectedly, Brown focused on the Christianization of the upper classes, writing little about slaves and working men. In effect, however, the merit of the new ~~dt~~ look on the late Roman world, has served at the same time as its constraint. Actually, some people were ambitious and many were led by them. Many, if not most of these new leaders came out of the traditional upper classes. Below, however, at the level of day-workers, peasants and slaves, lit-

tle was going on that could properly be called ambition. If the notion of an Age of Anxiety masked the new developments among the upper classes, the notion of an Age of Ambition masked the living conditions, the distress and the aspirations of the multitude.

It seems to me that we still know too little about the first Christian centuries to characterize them uniformly under one label. Almost certainly our period was an age of transition and this is perhaps the best, though extremely general and vague, notion we can apply. In a world of changing social relations and culture, at the top of the social ladder, the members of the richest and most powerful section of Roman aristocracy, managed to service and secure their position even if very slowly and peacefully they had to abandon their traditional cults. At the bottom of the ladder, the poorest and weakest members of Roman Society did not achieve visible improvements and their swing to Christianity seems to have also been a delayed, though not so peaceful process. In between, though little can be said with precision, the whole world seems to have been in flux, with obvious signs of tension, ambition and unrest. People belonging to this wide 'in between' section of classes and social groups, did not react to the changing world, uniformly. Others clung to their traditional beliefs, seeing the root of the tumult in what was new. Others shifted quickly to the new church viewing the attachment to paganism as the major cause of distress. Among people of such a wide social range we should look for the early Christian converts; and if we allow all this spectrum to emerge, we shall notice that the early Christian communities were socially very complex indeed. This complexity, in its turn, is, I think, the most profitable and welcome sign in the study of early Christianity, for it speaks as a strong advocate of what should be called the relative autonomy of the religious sphere.

E. The Sources Available and their Limits

In setting out to investigate the social composition of the early Christian churches, it should be stated according to what criteria and what definition of class, the early Christians are to be classified. The best solution would perhaps be to follow one of the modern theories of class. But (leaving aside the problem of how well modern theories can interpret the ancient world) given the nature of our evidence this is almost completely impossible. What I have done is more or less to rely upon what can be called 'the spontaneous sociology of our informers' for it is through their views that the evidence is handed down to us. It cannot be expected that this spontaneous sociology, which will guide us, is in any way systematic or uniformly accepted by the ancient authors. However, a number of basic concepts—sometimes defined in legal terms, but mostly developed by common sense — seem to have been, if not generally accepted, at least generally understood. Let us briefly look at Artemidorus' Interpretation of Dreams. This work may serve as a guide because it is concerned in a rather systematic manner with occupations and social stratification. Its interest in such issues derives from a fundamental theoretical option, which runs through the work. Artemidorus, in one of those insights, which make a future science proud of its past, wrote that it was necessary for a dream interpreter to 'know the dreamer's identity, occupation, birth, financial status, state of health, and age' (30). For a poor man, Artemidorus wrote, a dream indicates one thing, but for a rich man, another. To a slave who enjoys the confidence of his master it signifies this, but to other slaves something else. In a ship we find the following order: Sailor, boatswain, officer in command, steersman, shipmaster. Bankers, usurers, men who have to collect subscriptions, merchants, all fall in the same group. Orators and philosophers go together. Anyone in the court of the King,

belongs to a single category, etc. Such contemplations will serve as a reference point. Whenever possible I shall escape from this type of classification, but it must not be forgotten that the views of the ancients about their society have their own significance.

To conclude these introductory remarks, let me say a few things about the nature of the sources available, and draw attention to their limits.

1. Sociological studies of the early Christian communities are primarily based upon direct statements of ancient authors. Such statements are unfortunately, not frequent. Furthermore, even when they do exist, they are liable to two types of distortion: a) the author's lack of statistical data, and his lack of an accurate method of evaluating the data which he possessed (ancient authors usually worked with approximations); and b) the author's personal interests and bias.
2. Prosopographic investigations are a second source of sociological studies and sometimes seem to be more reliable than direct statements about the social origins of the early Christians. But early Christian histories, and especially legendary and mythological accounts concentrate, as a rule on the behaviour of 'important' personalities rather than on the behaviour of common people. Common people and everyday affairs, only rarely attract the attention of commentators.
3. A third source for sociological inquiries derives from archaeological data. For early Christianity, sepulchral and other inscriptions would seem the obvious place to look at. But wealthy people and people of rank were much more likely to commemorate important events of their lives (and their deaths), than poor and humble people. The same should be expected to happen with personal letters, such as those found among the Egyptian papyri; they are more likely to belong to educated and

wealthy people than to uneducated and poor people (though the opposite view has been also advanced) (31).

4. Church rules and other related material can be used as a further source. With an appropriate analysis of such material we could get a picture of the social structure of the Christian communities to which it applied. It can be objected that church rules did not necessarily reflect the true composition of a community. Rules often have a preventive character and they do not assure us that a particular crime mentioned has ever been committed. Fortunately, this is not the case with early Christian rules. As a rule, they were either repetitions of Judaic legislation (which can be easily detected) or verdicts about crimes already committed.

5. Linguistic considerations can be also usefully employed by sociologists. The provincial countryside in several areas had been incompletely Hellenized or Romanized. The usage of vernaculars by early Christians is a sign of Christian penetration into the native and primarily agricultural population. Late antiquity, however, witnessed a revival of traditional vernaculars, which embraced wealthy and educated people as well.

The social origin of early Christians can be also traced by the idiom of Greek or Latin used. Once more this is not a very reliable source because even uneducated people tended to write in the respectable idiom of the learned, rather than in their own spoken language.

6. Finally, sociological investigations in a period which has left so little reliable evidence, must make use of the close relations between wealth, education and social status. These three features were by no means identical and unreserved conclusions can be often misleading. However, it is reasonable to expect that a community comprising many wealthy and educated people, would also include people of high social

status.

Researches relying upon evidence so scanty as that of early Christianity and limited by the restrictions just mentioned, cannot claim to arrive at definitive conclusions. I only hope to use the available sources as profitably as possible, confirming or rejecting many of the well established assumptions in the light of current considerations on Roman History.

PART I

ELEMENTS OF SLAVERY AND FREEDOM

Slavery, Early Christianity and Modern Ideology.

Shortly before his death, F. Engels wrote an article on the history of early Christianity (1). In his long and productive career Engels had left few subjects out of his consideration. But to write one of his last articles on a purely historical subject, going back more than eighteen hundred years and to leave it to his followers as a sort of political testament (a testament which his immediate successor K. Kautsky eagerly embraced) is almost a curiosity (2). The sense of curiosity, however, is dispelled as soon as we read in the opening sentence of the article that the origin of Christianity had 'notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement.' In what Christianity had achieved in less than three hundred years, i.e. official recognition, socialism could see its own future in an even shorter period. Comparing early Christianity with the working-class movement, Engels wrote:

Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people: it first appeared as the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves, of poor people deprived of all rights, of peoples subjected or dispersed by Rome (3).

As we shall see later on, the view expressed above predominated in one form or another in subsequent Marxist historical writings and, leaving aside the comparison to the working-class movement, in subsequent non-Marxist histories also (4). But Engels was not the inventor of this view nor was he building upon an intellectual vacuum. German scholarship - theological and sociological - which had given birth to biblical criticism in the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century was the product of Hegel's philosophical revolution. Hegel (whose Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion started being published a year after his death in 1832) had argued that religion was an integral part of universal history and universal spirit. The Enlightenment had seen in religion little more than a fraud. Old-Lutheran orthodoxy examined the Scripture in relation to the dogmas it

contained treating them as universal truths. New Testament theology of the Enlightenment (like old-Lutheran orthodoxy) had attempted to show that Christianity was the rational religion. Everything which contradicted the principles of reason had to be peeled off as local and temporal. But the theology of the Enlightenment (in contrast to old-Lutheran orthodoxy) did not follow the authority of the Scripture in establishing the 'right doctrine'; it worked it out by rational reasoning and then rediscovered it in the Scripture. Thus, in peeling off the local and the temporal, theology was led to examine precisely the historical aspects of the formation of the Scripture if only to refute them (5).

The contradiction between the temporal and the eternal was resolved by Hegel. Truth and history should not be understood as being opposed to each other. Rather the totality of history contained the Truth as such. The Hegelian system had in one movement placed the Dogma of religion (i.e. Truth) within the course of historical development and subordinated it to a higher and more philosophical reasoning - which was also the product of history (6). Referring to Christianity, Hegel argued that its community

found itself sustaining a double relation - first, a relation to the Roman World, and secondly, to the truth whose development was its aim (7).

Hegel also gave the direction for subsequent evaluations of the social character of Christianity. Were Jesus' precept directly complied with, Hegel wrote,

a social revolution must take place; the poor would become the rich (8).

Hegel's close contemporary and follower F.C. Baur (1792-1860) and his colleagues of the Tübingen school subjected the Bible to scientific criticism disregarding miracles and contradictions and questioning the rest from a historical point of view - as far as it could be questioned within the boundaries of theology. What they rejected can be considered as totally fictitious. The value of the

contribution of Baur lies in the fact that he was the first 'who attempted to give a uniform general idea of the history of dogma' (9). Working in terms of Hegelian dialectics, Baur had shown that Catholicism was the product of the struggle of Jewish Christianity with the Gospel of Paul. With such views (now generally accepted) Baur influenced biblical studies enormously; we need only think of A. Harnack (1851-1930) who in spite of central points of disagreement can be considered as his follower. In Troeltsch's words, Baur and Harnack had descended 'from the great idealistic-historical method of German philosophy and historiography', and their method 'is characterized by a constructive synthesis which sees thousands of details as constituting one great course of development' (10). Indicative of the ideological climate of the age in which Baur was writing is the following passage from the preface to his work The Church History of the First Three Centuries, written in 1853.

... but I am not conscious of having followed any other aim (than the historical), and this consciousness sufficiently protects me against all insinuations, against those perverted and ill-natured judgments which are unfortunately the fashion of a time which cannot see beyond its own limited party interests (11).

The Young Hegelians (the left-wing followers of the Hegelian school), D.F. Strauss (1808-74), B. Bauer (1809-82) and M. Stirner (1806-56) joined in the battle and abandoning the theological restraints developed the most radical theories of the origin of Christianity and Christian literature. Of them Bauer, a prominent radical politician, rejected so much of the historical accounts given in the biblical texts that he was led to place the birth of Christianity not in Palestine but in Alexandria and Rome half a century later than the traditional date. In the same vein Bauer reduced Christian theology to Hellenistic philosophy intermingled with Judaism (cf. Philo) (12).

In the philosophical terrain, the conception of religion was revolutionized once again with the publication of Feuerbach's Essence of Christianity in 1841. According to Feuerbach (1804-72) the

essence of religion was man himself. 'The divine being is nothing else than the human being, or, rather, the human nature purified' (13). This holds true for everything that exists in the sphere of the religious. Everything is a fantastic reflection of the human essence. 'One must himself have experienced the liberating effect of this book', Engels wrote forty-five years later, 'to get an idea of it. Enthusiasm was general; we all became at once Feuerbachians' (14). But Feuerbach, although constantly referring to man and nature, conceived both as abstract realities and was thus unable to see man as a participant in history. The revolution of 1848 that followed was something he never understood. Feuerbach was led to 'retirement into solitude' and so did his theoretical scheme. It is only recently that existentialist theologians have turned back to Feuerbach for assistance, but this is another problem (15).

In the meantime German biblical criticism was making good progress abroad. The Tübingen school and Strauss had influenced scholars in Holland, Switzerland and England. In France, the most prominent follower of German scholarship was E. Renan (1823-92) who starting in the sixties, produced accounts of the history of early Christianity acceptable to the majority of theologians. It has been claimed that even the modern and highly critical French scholar M. Goguel had merely been 'one of the greatest exponents' of a tradition which had Renan as its 'fountainhead' (16). Engels, a great admirer of German biblical scholarship, found Renan 'a poor plagiarist of the German critics. Of all his works nothing belongs to him but the aesthetic sentimentalism of the pervading thought, and the milk-and-water language, which wraps it up' (17). Nevertheless, Engels was ready to grant Renan the correctness of the following statement:

If I wanted to give you an idea of the early Christian communities I would tell you to look at a local section of the International Working Men's Association (18).

References to early Christianity were already, however, commonplace

among French revolutionaries - so even in this respect Renan lacked originality. But the important fact is that the historical examination of Christianity had led to what we may call the oppressed-class theory (19).

The thirties and forties of the nineteenth century saw the rise of another line of research closely linked to the above. Within the framework of an increasing interest in the decline of ancient slavery, the Christian attitude to slavery was brought into focus. It is not difficult to discover what was lying behind this interest. At that time 'abolitionism was a live issue in Europe' (20). In this field of research views of scholars radically diverged. On the one hand there is H. Wallon whose Histoire de l'esclavage dans l'antiquité was published in 1847. This work, which has not yet lost its significance, contains an elaborate attempt to show that Christianity had been opposed to slavery. Another Frenchman, P. Allard, elaborated further this view which was to become dominant with the publication of his Les esclaves chrétiens in 1876 (21). The problem was causing great confusion. The prominent and extremely non-conventional historian F.C. Baur, though aware of the failure of early Christianity to attract large numbers of slaves, and of its unwillingness to advocate the abolition of slavery, argued that,

And yet we cannot but judge that the abolition of slavery is a requirement of the moral consciousness which agrees with the spirit of Christianity (22).

On the other hand, the German theologians H. Wiskemann (1866) and chiefly F. Overbeck (1875) argued for the contrary view. The belief that Christianity had done nothing to abolish slavery was placed on firm ground as the marxist E. Ciccotti (following Engels in this respect, who had briefly stated this view in 1884) entered the debate in 1899 attributing the decline of slavery to economic factors (23).

To sum up we can say that by the end of the nineteenth century the theory that early Christianity - at least in its original form - had

been the religion of the oppressed, was becoming dominant. This theory, supported by marxists and non-marxists alike, maintained that Christianity had been recruiting its members from the humble classes and basically among slaves. On the other hand, scholars were divided on whether or not the decline of slavery should be attributed in any sense to Christianity. At this point marxists uniformly asserted that Christianity had done nothing - and what is more important, could not have done anything - to abolish slavery.

Recently, the alleged contribution of Christianity to the decline of slavery has lost much of its credibility, but the belief that in the early Christian communities slaves were numerous is still predominantly maintained. This can be seen clearly in works that refer to early Christianity in passing. In such works, where many details are not needed, the view of old Engels and the early protestant scholars has crept in.

Engels' view about early Christianity was mistaken, basically because it was based on an oversimplified and in several respects erroneous idea of Rome society. Engels, along with many of his contemporaries, overestimated both the proportion of slaves in classical antiquity and their significance in production.

The population became more and more sharply divided into three classes, thrown together out of the most varying elements and nationalities; rich people, including not a few emancipated slaves (cf. Petronius), big landowners or usurers or both at once, like Seneca, the uncle of Christianity, propertyless free people, who in Rome were fed and amused by the state ... and finally the great mass, the slaves (24).

Furthermore, Engels underestimated the numbers of the free working population - urban and rural - and reduced them all financially to a level of subsistence.

The propertyless free citizens were state pensioners in Rome, but in the provinces their condition was an unhappy one. They had to work and to compete with slave-labour into the bargain (25).

Competition between the free population and slaves is highly questionable while complaints are never mentioned in the sources. Because of these views about Roman society, Engels, who believed that Christianity appealed primarily to the oppressed, was led to focus on slaves. He knew that Christianity had no abolitionist programme for he wrote that Christianity 'had partaken of the fruits of slavery' and that it was 'perfectly innocent' of the 'gradual dying out of ancient slavery.' Nevertheless, he did not think of this as a serious obstacle. After all he could have called in his favour the undeniable existence of many women in the Christian communities; everybody knows that early Christianity had a very low opinion of them (26).

Engels, however, was not led to such views about early Christianity merely on the basis of an erroneous historical conception. His motives were political rather than historical. Writing in the way he did, he 'wanted to point out the irresistible and elemental nature of the progress' of the socialist movement. What Kautsky found interesting in all this was nothing more than the 'expression of the healthy optimism which Engels retained up to his death' (27). Kautsky was undoubtedly right. The discussion was about socialism not Christianity (as Engels' contemporaries understood only too well). As for A. Harnack, he has shown himself in what way his idea about early Christianity corresponded to his political views (28).

But what about modern scholars who have a much better knowledge of Roman society and have calculated with far greater precision the numbers of slaves and the conditions of living of the free population? The political motives of Engels are no longer opportune. Yet it is still common among researchers to cling to the traditional views about Christianity. The supposed notorious success of Christianity with slaves is based upon a few names of Christian slaves. And the fact that Christianity did nothing to abolish slavery is seen as a compromise not affecting its essential incompatibility with the institution (29).

At this point some notable exceptions come to mind and it is worth mentioning some of them. M. Weber for example, who paradoxically started by comparing slaves to the modern proletariat, as Engels had done, concluded that the lowest stratum of slaves provided no scope for congregational religion and that the few slaves to be found in the early Christian communities were members of the urban 'petty bourgeoisie' (30). K. Kautsky, who followed Engels in the main lines, considered Christianity as a religion of the 'free proletariat' not of slaves (31). W.M. Ramsay had been highly original in maintaining that the first converts were among the educated classes (32). We could finally add that E.A. Judge, H. Kreissig and R.M. Grant have also questioned the oppressed-class theory, while G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, on the basis of the early texts has settled, as we shall see below, the problem of the Christian attitudes to slavery (33).

But the existence of a few exceptions does not solve the problem. We need to go back to the sources once more (if not constantly) if a better understanding of the phenomenon is to be expected. Historians and sociologists can never be freed from ideological constraints. Their task is to use them as profitably as possible in their struggle to reconstruct and explain the past.

CHAPTER I

Christianity, Slavery and Slaves

1. The Slave System.

The study of ancient slavery - inaugurated in a systematic way in the eighteenth century - has met with problems which have not yet found satisfactory solutions. Not only are scholars in dispute as to numbers, prices, types of employment, relative profitability (and productivity), reproduction and living conditions of slaves in classical antiquity; but also, the location of slavery in society and history is equivocal and controversial. True, the first set of questions ultimately aims at breaking the ground for the second set. It would be a serious mistake, however, to believe that slavery as a historical phenomenon could be understood, if we merely knew more about the numbers of slaves and the rest.

To locate slavery in society is to establish its relation to other types of human subjection and to determine its contribution to economic production. The mere existence of slaves in a given society should not be taken to imply that in that particular society there exists a mode of production based on slave labour (1). Unfortunately, the distinction between slavery in general and a slave mode of production is absent in Aristotle's moralizing justification of the institution. Aristotle's definition according to which 'any human being who by nature belongs not to himself but to another is by nature a slave', is not only a truism but also a dead end for philosophical investigations. The problem whether slavery is natural - as Aristotle believed - or contrary to nature - as some of his contemporaries claimed - is based upon the ambiguity of the concept nature (and natural) and the even greater ambiguity of the concept soul (which Aristotle conjures out of the magician's hat to argue his point) and can therefore find no

satisfactory solution (2).

Slavery was first examined in its historical context by Hegel. In his celebrated passage on masters and slaves in his Phenomenology of Mind Hegel went deeper into the matter by employing his dialectical method to demonstrate the potential transformation of this type of subjection into its opposite.

But just as lordship showed its essential nature to be the reverse of what it wants to be, so too, bondage will, when completed, pass into the opposite of what it immediately is; being a consciousness repressed within itself, it will enter into itself, and change round into real and true independence (3).

Hegel's philosophical intervention has influenced the social sciences in two directions. One trend of interpretation developed by J. Hyppolite has seen in the Hegelian scheme 'a condition of human experience' as opposed to a 'datable moment in human history' (4). At this level of reasoning the argument, with several modifications, has been further developed by the French psychoanalyst J. Lacan (5). Another trend, however, more clearly identifiable in Hegel's later work (viz. Philosophy of Mind) sees slavery as a necessary stage in the history of nations (6). The theory of stages, systematized by Marx and the marxists, points to what I called above the location of slavery in history. Slavery becomes the basis for a new system of periodization.

There is no need to discuss here the notion of a slave mode of production - let alone the problem of whether or not this mode was dominant in classical antiquity (7). The importance of the employment of slaves in production is adequately demonstrated by Aristotle who asserted that the masters who could afford it did not only exploit the labour of slaves but also used an overseer (slaves?) to direct them. Thus these masters could devote themselves to statecraft or philosophy (8). Slavery is demonstrated to be not an incidental feature of classical antiquity but closely linked to the status of free citizens. In Athens, which some scholars readily identify with classical antiquity, freedom and slavery advanced hand in hand (9).

As a stage of human history, slavery has a definite historic origin. The relation between slavery and war is well known and commonly accepted. Historians have proposed the following causal sequence of the process that led to the establishment of the slave-system (in the sense of a mode of production): Through wars and conquest the aristocracy acquired vast fortunes which it invested in land compelling small landowners (i.e. free peasants) to sell their property. As the estates grew larger and larger the aristocracy found it cheaper to employ war captives as agricultural slaves instead of using free workers. The need for slaves led consequently to further wars (slave hunts) and so on (10).

Alternatively, this causal sequence has been inverted. The demand for slaves, Finley has argued, preceded the supply.

The Romans captured many tens of thousands of men, women and children during the Italian and Punic wars because the demand for slaves already existed, not the other way round (11).

Of the conditions required for the transformation of captives into slaves, Finley picks out private ownership of land; a sufficient development of commodity production; and unavailability of an internal labour supply.

It is very difficult to find decisive arguments in support of either theory. Finley's view has in its favour that not all wars in the Ancient world led to slavery; the transformation of captives into slaves is no simple matter. The relations, however, between war and slavery are so complex that it is perhaps best to think of a closed circuit in which the supply of slaves created new demands and the demand for slaves led to new wars. The search for a single original cause of complex social phenomena does not do justice to actual events.

As we pass from the problem of origin to the results of the intrusion of slaves, the situation becomes a little clearer though still highly complex. To speak only of the Roman empire we observe that gradually its whole social and economic structure changed. The growth of markets was accompanied by an increase in monetisation; the influx of booty, by investment in land and the formation of large estates. The impoverishment of the peasants - accelerated overtime by lengthy military service - encouraged emigration to the towns and the provinces. The population of Rome, by the end of the last century BC, was perhaps about one million people, followed by Alexandria, Antioch and Carthage. Eventually, under the early emperors, the Roman political and legal systems were modified to an extent that they (especially the political system) only remotely resembled those of the Republic (12).

Classical legislation depicts all men and women as being either free or slaves. Once more reality proves to be far more complex. In the second century AD the expression 'between slavery and freedom' was applied by a rhetorician to helots, penestai and other dependent labourers, all of which, had probably disappeared by then. But the same expression can be used to indicate a form of dependent labour, which never disappeared and which was in practice considered as slavery, viz. debt-bondage (13). The view expressed by a lawyer that slavery was contra naturam illustrates the complexity which the institution caused to the human mind. Scholars have often discussed the legal aspects of the conception of a slave as both a person and property. But it is in popular texts such as Juvenal's Satires that we find confirmation of the ambiguity. 'Crucify that slave!', a woman demands in a satire and gets the following reply:

But what is the slave's offence to merit such punishment? Who has brought charges against him? Where are the witnesses? You must hear his defence: no delay can be too long when a man's life is at stake.

The woman then exclaims,

So a slave's a man now, is he, you crackpot? All right, perhaps he didn't do anything. This is still my wish, my command: Warrant enough that I will it (14).

A further disadvantage in applying the legal category 'slave' in sociological analysis is that it conceals some of the differences which exist between various types of slaves. A slave's financial and living standards depended not only on his occupation but on the status of his master as well. Even within the same household, a slave could be a wretched agricultural worker or an overseer with a family and some property, let alone a banker or a skilled craftsman. Law also had its share in the differentiation of slaves. To single out the most important legal effect on the status of slaves we should mention the acquisition of citizenship on their part when manumitted by Roman citizens (15).

For all these and other reasons (which need not be discussed here), scholars have been in dispute on whether or not slaves should be considered a class (16). The problem is further complicated because no single definition of class has been accepted. It is not agreed, for example, whether position in production alone or a common ideology as well is needed to determine a class. Whatever the answer to this may be, it is rather commonly agreed that slaves, apart from brief historic periods, were not characterized by ideological homogeneity.

At this point, some remarks on the religious ideologies of slaves are in order. According to M. Weber, slaves 'have hitherto never been bearers of a distinctive type of religion' (17). This view seems to be confirmed by one of the few pieces of information on the subject given by an ancient writer. Tacitus reports that a senator once exclaimed:

... nowadays our huge households are international.
They include every alien religion - or none at all (18).

It could be that some slaves had no interest in religion whatsoever; but the statement could also reflect the well known attitude of Roman

aristocrats who, as a rule, would even call Christians atheists.

It is much safer to take Weber literally: Slaves did not have a distinctive type of religion. F. Bömer has shown that slaves participated in the religious rites of the free population and that in religion even they, became persons (19). From ancient works on agriculture we know that the rural slaves observed the religious festivities led by their masters. When their masters turned to Christianity, slaves (at least sometimes) remained pagan and protected their idol-religions by force if necessary (20). Inscriptional material from Minturnae and evidence from the rites performed for the lares, demonstrate that slaves served as ministri assisting freedmen (usually serving as magistri) in the local cults (21).

We know little about the details of religious rites, but from what we know we may assume that slaves were initiated into new cults along with their masters (this does not apply, as a rule, in the case of Christianity as we shall see later). A well documented case is that of the Bacchic cult. Livy, who gives an account of the banning of the cult in 186 BC, almost asserts that slaves were seduced into observance of these rites (22). Finally, ever since F. Cumont, we know that Mithraism and several Syrian cults spread to the West as oriental slaves were imported into Italy (23). Overall, we may assume that slaves either retained their traditional religions (especially those they had before their captivity) or were converted to new religions along with their masters.

2. Christian Attitudes to Slavery.

Poverty and slavery may have many points of resemblance, but they are clearly distinguished by the legal procedures which in the case of slavery almost totally subordinate a person to another person's commands (1). In the Roman world, there existed some slaves who were anything but poor and who had better prospects for social advance than many of their free contemporaries. It is never misleading to emphasize the importance of legal restraints in this context. For although the saying attributed to Jesus, that he did not come to abolish the law but to complete it (2), apparently refers to the Mosaic law, in a more fundamental way it is applicable to the social laws of the Roman world. In this sense it must not seem surprising that Christianity, even in its earliest form, although expressing concern for the poor never questioned the institution of slavery as such. As a matter of fact, the opposite is the case. Christianity, chiefly in its Pauline version, elaborated further the already established ideological justification of slavery. The 'essential incompatibility' between slavery and Christianity is a construction of the modern mind having nothing to do with the most essential type of Christianity: that of Jesus (3).

Christianity, it has been correctly claimed, helped strengthen the ideological justification of slavery. This problem can be better understood if we first look back at the prevailing theories of slavery in the Graeco-Roman world. The first systematic formulation of such theories are found in Aristotle, but Aristotle could hardly have been their inventor. The idea of 'natural slavery', i.e. that some people are born to be free while others are born to be slaves, was probably much older although far from universally accepted (cf. Aeschylus, Orestes trilogy, where fortune alone is held responsible for slavery). Ideological justifications are needed in all cases of oppression.

De Ste. Croix is certainly right when he writes that a ruling class seldom tries to rule by force alone, although I feel that Aristotle's philosophical arguments were meant to appease the conscience of the slave-owning classes rather than persuade slaves that their condition was just (4). To my mind, what kept many slaves in submission - besides fear which always remained a principal factor - was a peculiar psychology which led them to identify their personal interests with those of their masters. The words of the tragic poets attributed to slaves, τὰ δεσποτῶν γὰρ εἶ πάντᾳ θήσομαι (5) or χρηστοῖσι δούλοις ξυμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν κακῶς πίπτοντα, (6), are more than a slave-owners' invention.

After Aristotle, as far as I know, the theory of 'natural slavery' was never again advocated. The standard view, from the Hellenistic period onwards, was that Fortune rather than Nature was responsible for slavery. This view was systematically formulated by the Stoics. To begin with, Stoicism, like all other ancient philosophies, accepted slavery as normal. It never questioned it as an institution. On the other hand, through the voices of men such as Seneca, Stoicism professed that all men were equal, especially in view of their common fate of death. 'We're born unequal, we die equal', Seneca wrote (7). Seneca protested against the inhuman behaviour of some slave owners; to convince them he reminded them of the power fortune had over all men. Enslavement was a matter of fortune. Consequently, beneath the appearances of slavery and freedom, all men were equal.

Strictly speaking they're our fellow-slaves, if you once reflect that fortune has as much power over us as over them...

How about reflecting that the person you call your slave traces his origin back to the same stock as yourself, has the same good sky above him, breathes as you do, lives as you do, dies as you do? It is as easy for you to see in him a free-born man as for him to see a slave in you (8).

Seneca was obviously addressing himself to slave-owners. When

he wrote: 'Make (slaves) respect you rather than fear you', he was hoping that humane behaviour on the master's part would lead slaves into voluntary submission. But he never addressed himself to slaves directly. In this sense Seneca, like Aristotle, was formulating the ideology of the masters rather than the ideology of the slaves. At this point Christianity and Stoicism present an important difference (9).

Paul came very close to Seneca when he said that a slave is God's freedman and that a freeman is God's slave; but Paul's formulation is more absolute and static; fortune is not the decisive factor any more; man's position is determined by his relation to God. The most important innovation in Paul's attitude - an innovation adopted by orthodox Christianity - was the fact that he addressed himself not only to masters but to slaves as well. The classical formulas of the well known Pauline passages, which became a sort of cliché in subsequent writings, start with an expression such as: οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου... , and go on in a manner such as: καὶ οἱ κύριοι, τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖτε...(10). This idea is reproduced in the post-apostolic text 1 Clement: 'The strong are not to ignore the weak, and the weak are to respect the strong' (11); or in The Didache where masters are told they should 'Never speak sharply when giving orders to...slaves', and slaves are told that they should obey their masters 'with respectfulness and fear, as the representatives of God' (12). This attitude is confirmed by many other texts. It is sufficient to mention the Apostolic Constitutions, which is a late compilation of early documents that were widely accepted (13).

The intention of all these documents is obvious. Christianity was formulating an ideological justification of slavery, close to that of Seneca, but apparently more effective. It was addressing itself not exclusively to masters any longer but to slaves as well; furthermore it was appealing to God with this end. Tertullian wrote somewhere in the Apology, that 'The slave is faithful now; but the

master, once so gentle, has banished him from his sight' (14). The passage is highly rhetorical, but it reflects the early Christian mentality. On the whole, however, it should be stressed that there was nothing really original in the Christian formulations, and that Christian efforts were not crowned with the expected success. The constant and almost obsessive repetition of the same rules throughout the first three centuries bears witness to the meagre results of the endeavour.

There is, however, a further point on which Christianity came close to Stoicism. This point appears in the works of more sophisticated writers such as Clement of Alexandria. A man, it was claimed, is not a slave if he does not deserve to be; he becomes a slave because of his bad character (according to Stoicism) or because of his sins, (according to Clement). Otherwise, he is not 'really' a slave. In his Stromata, Clement wrote:

As slaves the Scripture views those 'under sin' and 'sold to sin', the lovers of pleasure and of the body; and the beasts rather than men... (15).

It should be noted that in a section of another work, The Paedagogus, Clement, although familiar with the Aristotelian views on slaves, did not accept the theory of 'natural slavery'. He considered it preferable from the Christian point of view to adopt a language which reminds us of Seneca:

Slaves, too are to be treated like ourselves for they are human beings, as we are. For God is the same to free and bound, if you consider.
Such of our brethren as transgress, we must not punish but rebuke (16).

Like Seneca, nowhere in his massive work did Clement address himself to slaves directly, unless he was quoting from Paul.

In the same vein as Clement, Origen wrote that slaves should be taught how to 'obtain a free mind and receive noble birth from the Logos'. In fourth century authors such as John Chrysostom, we find Clement's view prevailing (17).

The ideological justification of slavery is also reflected in the early Christian legislative documents. The first work of a systematic regulative character with detailed references to slaves is the Apostolic Tradition, attributed to Hippolytus of Rome. The date of this document is fixed between AD 215 and 217. The first point to be noticed in the Apostolic Tradition, and all subsequent Christian legislative texts, is that slavery was accepted as a matter of course. In its relevant section referring to new converts, it ordained that detailed inquiries should be made about the lives of the persons considered. It was of special importance to check whether the candidate was a slave or a free person. If he was the slave of a believer, the master's permission was required. Slaves whose masters did not 'bear witness' to them were rejected. But if the slave's master was a heathen then the slave was taught 'to please his master, that there be no scandal (βλασφημία).' (It is probably the heathen master who would blaspheme). This rather obscure expression must have meant in effect that such slaves were not accepted. Slaves could not move around freely to join the Christian meetings and congregations. If their master was a heathen or even a Christian with 'no understanding', slaves might think themselves entitled to run away or to have their freedom bought for them. In the first case, the result would have been a true 'scandal'. Christianity would have been accused of advising slaves to run away; this was bad publicity and detrimental to the interest of Christian slave-owners (18). There still remained the possibility of emancipating slaves at the Christian community's expense (slaves with enough money of their own would have bought their liberty anyway). I shall deal with this problem in some detail in the next chapter. For the time being, suffice it to say that early Christian communities, as a rule, were neither willing nor concerned with the problem of slave emancipation (except for buying back Christians who had been kidnapped).

In accordance with this general rule, the Apostolic Tradition dealt with a number of special cases. Thus a man's concubine, if she were a slave, was allowed to 'hear' (the Christian preaching) on the condition that she had reared his children and that she consorted with no other man. A believer who had a concubine should either marry her, if she were free, or leave her and marry another, if she were a slave (unless they already had children together). Finally, a Christian woman who consorted with a slave was rejected from the church if she did not desist (19). This last regulation was prompted by Christianity's observance of the Roman law. It was subsequently revoked under Callistus, bishop of Rome from AD 217 to 221, who thought the clause to be contrary to the interests of the Christian community, and so recognized such unions as legal marriages in spite of the Roman law (20).
But more of this in a later chapter.

The next legislative document which I would like to consider is the Apostolic Constitutions. This work unlike the Apostolic Traditions, which originated in the west, drew upon various texts most of which were of eastern origin. Its date cannot be fixed; several sections belong to the second and third centuries, others to the third and fourth. The Apostolic Constitutions, besides the instructions mentioned earlier in this section, reproduce all the material on slaves which was found in the Apostolic Tradition. In addition to that, the Apostolic Constitution established several days during which slaves should be allowed to rest. Leisure days were all Saturdays and Sundays, the Greek Week and that which follows it, the days of ascension, the Pentecost, Christmas day, the day of Epiphany, the days of the apostles and of the first martyr Stephen (21). From the fact that slaves should be instructed 'who it is that suffered and rose again', we may infer

that at least many of them were still pagans. In a section referring to ecclesiastical canons, the Apostolic Constitutions did not permit slaves to be ordained into the clergy without their master's consent. Two reasons are given: first, because ordination without the master's consent 'would grieve those that owned them'; and secondly, because such a practice 'would occasion the subversion of families'. This is one more case in which we observe Christianity to be explicitly on the slave-owners' side. The Apostolic Constitutions considered the emancipation of a slave to be a necessary precondition for his ordination, but left the matter to his master's discretion (22).

It is also worth referring to the Canons of the Council of Elvira (Southern Spain) c. AD 305 or 309, which, in a manner recalling the Judaic legislation, fixed a penalty of seven and five years excommunication respectively to any woman who 'intentionally' or 'accidentally' killed her maidservant. The same Canons confirm that Christians were sometimes owners of large numbers of slaves. The Canons were not concerned with the paganism of slaves, which is almost taken for granted, but with their masters' resistance to idolatry. If a master could not keep idols away from his house because he 'feared' his slaves 'on account of their number', he should at least keep himself 'at a distance from them' (23).

At this point, I should like to draw attention to a problem which would have been passed in silence, if de Ste. Croix had not called for its examination. Apart from the text mentioned above (which refers to the danger of idolatry), nowhere does the Christian literature consider the effects of slavery upon the master. Slaves in classical antiquity were frequently subjected to corporal punishment and torture; they were also often the victims of sexual abuse. It is at least strange that no Christian legislative or moral document ever referred to slavery as the institution which led masters 'into the gravest temptation, to commit acts of cruelty and lust' (24):

From the earliest days onwards, the idea of slavery was often used by Christians metaphorically to designate the relation of a believer to God or Jesus. We read in several documents, especially those written by church leaders, that Christians referred to themselves as slaves of Christ (25). It is sometimes thought that this attitude reflects a general tendency to treat slaves as equals. J. Vogt writes that 'slaves had been ennobled merely by becoming the symbols of man's place in the kingdom of God' (26). Closer attention leaves no doubt that the attitude mentioned expresses the opposite idea. Christians thought of themselves as humble in front of God, as slaves should feel in front of their masters. 'If in no other way', Chrysostom wrote, 'let us render (God) service at least as our servants render it to us' (27). In so saying, Chrysostom had no intention of eliminating differences between slaves and masters; and nor did Antony (or rather Athanasius who wrote his biography). Antony, in his perverse way of thinking, exhorted Christians to behave like slaves in front of God, but did not expect slaves to feel more relaxed.

With these thoughts let a person convince himself not to grow careless, especially if he considers himself to be the Lord's slave, obliged to do his master's will. Just as a slave would not dare to say, 'Since I worked yesterday, I am not working today' ... so also let us persist daily in the ascetic life (28).

Furthermore, the idea of slavery was also used by Christians to describe the worst moral degeneration in the same way that the rabbinical writings referred to slaves as idle, thieving and vicious.

Traces of this attitude appear together with ample evidence suggesting the existence of numerous Christian slave-owners. Later on I shall deal with a small number of cases where Christian slaves are reported to have died in persecutions along with their masters. In the meantime, I should like to mention a more common event: slaves were often used as witnesses for the prosecution of their Christian masters. Of such events we read in Justin's 2nd Apology and other documents (29). Eusebius preserved a vivid account of the slaves of the martyrs in

Lyons and Vienne (AD 177). He reported that

There were also arrested certain heathen slaves of our members ... and these ..., fearing the tortures which they saw the saints suffering, when the soldiers urged them, falsely accused us of Thyestean feasts and Oedipodean intercourse ... (30).

Irenaeus in a preserved fragment gives the same information adding the following explanation:

... these slaves, having nothing to say which would meet the wishes of their tormentors, except that they had heard from their masters that the divine communion was the body and blood of Christ, and imagining that it was actually flesh and blood gave their inquisitors answers to that effect (31).

Tertullian in his Apology (AD 197) wrote of slaves as the enemies of Christians by their very nature. A little further on, becoming more violent, he wrote that heathens hate the Christians 'like rascal slaves' their masters and that they break out against Christians

like rebels breaking out of slave-pens, jails or mines, or that sort of penal servitude (32).

The situation remained unchanged until Constantine's time. The Canons of the Council of Ancyra (c. AD 314 -9) mentioned Christians who were 'betrayed by their slaves', confirming that the 'very nature' of slaves was still the same (33). Under these circumstances we can understand how people like Origen developed such a low opinion of slaves, as to write that the Christian teacher does not discourse on the Divine wisdom to the most uneducated and to slaves and to the most unlearned (34).

The often quoted passage of the Acts in which Christians are reported to have sold their possessions and distributed their wealth is sometimes understood as a form of primitive communism. In a communist community, abolition of slavery would have obviously been a matter of course and this is how John Chrysostom - to speak only of him - understood it (35). The account of the Acts is, therefore, used as evidence of an early abolitionist tendency. This tendency, if true, deserves close attention because it would contradict all other evidence.

To begin with, although fairly rare in our documents, this early

Christian habit of sharing their property must have been a historical fact. The writer of the Acts would have no reason to invent a behaviour unknown to his age, if he had not found it in his sources, unless he was falsely attributing to the early Christians what he had heard about the Essenes. But even Renan felt that the 'communism' of the early church could not have been as rigorous as the Acts imply (36). The problem, however, is not whether this communism was absolute or relative; the problem is what sort of communism it was.

I think that it is not an exaggeration to assert that the first chapters of the Acts (in which the relevant passage occurs) are dominated by the anguish felt by the brotherhood. The apostles, expressing the agony of the early Christians asked the Lord whether the time when the 'sovereignty of Israel' will be established once again, was about to come. Getting no definite reply they were left in a state of lasting fear of which we are constantly reminded in the Acts (37). This is not the realistic fear to be found elsewhere (e.g. 'for fear of the Jews' - John 7: 13), but what we should rather call φόβος ψυχικός. At any rate the story in the Acts goes as follows:

'Εγένετο δέ πάση ψυχῇ φόβος' πολλά τε τέρατα καί σημεῖα διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγένετο, πάντες δέ οἱ πιστεύοντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τό αὐτό, καί εἶχαν ἅπαντα κοινά' καί τὰ κτήματα καί τὰς ὑπάρξεις ἐπίπρασκον, καί διεμέριζον αὐτά πᾶσι, καθότι ἂν τις χεῖραν εἶχε (38).

The historicity of the account is supported by a pagan writer a century later. In his work The Death of Peregrinus the satirist Lucian gave a vivid description of a Christian community in the middle of the second century. Among other information Lucian wrote that

...ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ πρῶτος ἔπεισεν αὐτούς ὡς ἀδελφοί πάντες εἶεν ἀλλήλων, ἐπειδὴν ἅπαξ παραβάντες θεοῦς μὲν τοὺς Ἑλληνικοὺς ἀπαρνήσονται, τὸν δέ ἀνασκολοπισμένον ἐκεῖνον σοφιστήν αὐτόν προσκυνῶσιν καί κατὰ τοὺς ἐκεῖνου νόμους βιώσιν. καταφρονοῦσιν οὖν ἀπάντων ἐξ ἴσῃν καί κοινά ἡγοῦνται, ἄνευ τινός ἀκριβοῦς πίστεως τὰ τοιαῦτα παραδεξάμενοι (39).

But by confirming the historicity of the community of goods mentioned in the Acts, Lucian creates problems that most historians prefer to ignore. For if the story in the Acts refers to an early phase which gradually came to pass, how are we to explain its reappearance a century later (not to speak of the Carpocratian or the Monastic 'communism')?

In the nineteenth century the question of common ownership of goods among the first Christians had already attracted much attention. 'This maxim', Hegel thought, 'was well enough suited to the man who had no possessions; but it must have been a serious problem for anyone who had property ... consequently, it was abandoned' (40). Kautsky thought of a more sophisticated explanation:

Its necessary presupposition was that at least one-half of society should remain unbelievers, otherwise there would have been no one to buy the possessions of the believers (41).

Both of them, however, (and many others with them) were convinced that they were dealing with a unique stage in the development of Christianity. Hegel ignored the story of Lucian; Renan believed that it was a mere impression given to heathens; Kautsky suggested that it 'may not be taken literally'; and many other modern writers have not come up with other alternatives (42).

Troeltsch, and others after him, went deeper into the matter by pointing out that

It was a communism composed solely of consumers, a communism based upon the assumption that its members will continue to earn their living by private enterprise... (43).

By pointing out this feature Troeltsch was in a way challenging the applicability of the very notion of communism, but I personally believe that we must go further than that. To put it bluntly I would say after Harnack that as far as communism is concerned 'nothing of the kind ever existed' (44). The phenomenon described in the Acts and later in Lucian's Feregrinus did not constitute a unique historical phase. It

was a reaction of people trembling before the realization of the eschatological expectation. These people had no concern for social reforms and never dreamt of questioning the institution of slavery.

My assertion that the notion of communism is inapplicable to the early Christian community is based upon the voluntary character of the contributions, already pointed out by Harnack. These voluntary donations fit well with the psychology of people expecting the end of the world. Similar behaviour has also been observed among other people living with comparable expectations. Thus, we find a close parallel in the behaviour of a Christian group in the East in the late second century, when all scholars would agree that the early 'communism' had disappeared for ever.

According to Hippolytus, a Christian leader in Pontus once convinced his flock that the 'judgment' would come within a year. Those who heard him prophesying that ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου started praying day and night in great fear.

καί εἰς τοσοῦτον ἤγαγε φόβον καί δειλίαν τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς, ὥστε ἔασαι αὐτῶν τὰς χώρας καί τοὺς ἀγροὺς ἐρήμους τὰ τε κτήματα αὐτῶν οἱ πλείους κατεπόλεσαν (45).

As it is clear from the description, the behaviour of the brotherhood was spontaneous, unorganized and inconsiderate. They spent their money for as long as it lasted; they lived for a while on anything they found; and when the year had passed and their eschatological expectations were not fulfilled 'the virgins got married and the men returned to their work.' But those of them who had sold their land εὐρέθησαν ὕστερον ἐπαιτοῦντες (46). This is the end of the story told by Hippolytus; the similar story related in the Acts (and possibly that told by Lucian also) must have had no better ending, and this can explain why it has been omitted. It is, therefore, very unlikely that the alleged communism of the early Christians was an institutionalized practice, as it had been with the Essenes. After all

even the Essenes did not live in an egalitarian society; the members of the Qumran sect belonged to 'ranks', which were carefully observed (47).

To conclude my remarks on the Christian attitudes to slavery I would like to deal in brief with a problem which remains open since de Rossi's publication of the Christian sepulchral inscriptions. In these inscriptions de Rossi noticed that the title 'slave' never occurred (today we know that it did occur but only rarely)(48). Several scholars, taking for granted that slaves had been numerous in the early Christian communities, attempted to explain this contradiction by the desire of the early Christians to do away with social distinctions. Thus J. Bass Mullinger and others after him interpreted the absence of the title 'slave' as a 'silent but significant evidence ... of the uniform disregard in the church itself of any distinction between the slave and the free man' (49). A. Harnack, on the other hand, who also believed that during the first centuries in the Christian communities 'the lower classes, slaves, freedmen, and labourers, very largely predominated', admitted that de Rossi's evidence does not allow for any firm decision on whether it is accidental or intentional (50). I. Kajanto, in a recent study, although still trapped in the belief that 'Christianity largely began as a religion of the poor and the humble' and that it therefore embraced a 'considerable percentage of slaves and freedmen', rejected the proposed interpretation that Christians desired to do away with social distinctions on the following grounds:

Tradesmen, doctors and the like did not allow their titles to pass unnoticed, and the different grades of clerical hierarchy were conscientiously recorded. The infrequency of freedmen's and slaves' designations cannot, then, be attributed to a tendency to disregard social differences...

Even so, Kajanto arrived at the paradoxical and unexpected conclusion

that,

It is possible that the rejection of the idea of slavery influenced the etiquette of cemeteries so that it was considered un-Christian to reveal that the deceased was, or had been a slave (51).

My personal opinion is that the 'mysterious' absence of the title 'slave' from the sepulchral inscriptions of a religion thought to be notoriously spread by slaves can find its solution only by questioning its very premise, i.e. the spread of Christianity among slaves. I will therefore proceed by examining the evidence of Christianization of slaves.

3. Christianity and the Slaves.

The message of Christianity, as it appeared in some of the earliest documents (e.g. μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί, in Luke 6: 20), gives the impression of oppressed-class ideology. Early Christianity - many modern Christians believe - must by necessity have been a religion of the underprivileged. With a number of notable exceptions this a priori assumption has joined together both Marxist and non-Marxist scholars (1). It is true that the scholars who have considered Christian success among slaves as significant have not themselves presented their view as an a priori assumption, but have attempted to base it on historical evidence. But this testimony, scanty as it is, serves as an illustration rather than a demonstration of their argument. In the present section, I should like to go through this testimony questioning its validity and reconsidering its consequences.

For methodological reasons, I have grouped slaves in four categories: rural slaves, urban slaves, slave-miners and the slaves of the emperor. The last group, which is clearly identifiable, I shall examine in a separate chapter because of its unique significance. Slave-miners are also rather clearly identifiable in our documents and present no major difficulty. On the other hand, the distinction between rural and urban slaves (based on the distinction between familia rustica and the familia urbana well known to Roman writers) is more or less valid in the case of large and rich households. In the majority of cases, it is almost impossible to determine whether a slave was employed in domestic and artisanal occupations, or in agricultural and pastoral labour. A good example of the lack of any clear-cut distinction between rural and urban slaves is found in a parable of Jesus reported in Luke:

Τίς δέ ἐξ ὑμῶν δοῦλον ἔχων ἀροτριῶντα ἢ ποιμαίνοντα, ὅς εἰσελθόντι ἐκ τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἐρεῖ αὐτῷ, εὐθέως παρελθὼν ἀνάπεσε, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἐρεῖ αὐτῷ Ἐτοίμασον τί δειπνήσω, καὶ περιζωσάμενος διακόνει μοι, ἕως φάγω καὶ πίω, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα φάγεσαι καὶ πίεσαι σὺ (2);

Nevertheless, in spite of this ambiguity, the methodological grouping is useful and suggestive, as it will become evident shortly. Furthermore, the ambiguity can be overcome, up to a point, by excluding from the rural slaves all those who served as domestics irrespective of their eventual agricultural or pastoral employment. This leaves to the rural group those agricultural or pastoral slaves who had little or no personal contact with their master i.e. the familia rustica of the large and rich households often residing in barracks.

Rural Slaves.

To put it plainly, nowhere, as far as I know, are rural slaves (in the sense given above) reported to have been converted to Christianity throughout our period. The only Christians known to have worked as rural slaves are those who were condemned to so doing during the persecutions. We are told that those members of the imperial household who were found to be Christians during the persecutions of Valerian (AD 258) should be 'sent in chains as conscripts to Caesar's estates' (some might have already been slaves but the rescript probably refers to freedmen or freeborn persons since it declares that their property should be confiscated) (3). On the other hand, it is reported that Christian landowners often had pagan slaves (and sometimes Jews) working on their estates.

The fact that rural slaves are not mentioned in the documents as having been converted to Christianity does not necessarily imply that this never happened. Early Christians, as a rule, had no interest in reporting such conversions. It is rather the living conditions of agricultural slaves (which Christians never questioned) which warrant our belief in the improbability of slaves expressing a collective interest. M. Weber who first made this observation wrote that,

In the barracks of earlier times Christianity would have made little headway, but in the age of St. Augustine the free peasants of Africa were actually fervent supporters of a local heresy (4).

In the Italian vineyards in the second century BC, when slaves were often chained, Cato noticed that only the overseer should be allowed to live in a family; the rest of the slaves should live and work under military discipline (5). From the tombstone of a slave trader we gather that in the first century AD, it had been a common practice to lead slaves chained together by the neck; chained slaves are also depicted in paintings and sculptures (6). About the same period, Pliny the Younger informed a friend of his that at a certain place a 'good type of slaves' should be used, because chained slaves could not be employed there. The use of unchained slaves was obviously recommended as an exception (7). The rescript of Valerian mentioned above confirms that agricultural slaves in the middle of the third century were still sometimes in chains.

We need not insist any further on the disadvantages of the rural slaves' living conditions. What has already been said should make it clear enough that no congregational religion stood a great chance of success with this type of slaves.

Urban Slaves.

Let us now turn to the urban slaves who include apart from domestics, artisans and unskilled labourers. Some of them, I have assumed, would have been working in agricultural or pastoral employments as well, but their conditions of life and their close relations to their masters opened to them prospects of religious participation in the family cult of their owners.

A general impression of Christianity's failure among urban slaves can be inferred from a passage in the Slavonic Version of Josephus!

Jewish War. This passage along with several others, is omitted from the Greek text. It is generally considered as a Christian interpolation. Whether authentic or not it reflects the conditions of early Christian life. The passage goes as follows:

Many of the common people listened to their preaching and accepted their call - not because they were men of mark, for they were working men, some only shoemakers, others cobblers, others labourers (8).

The description - clearly concerned with the urban population - makes no mention of slaves, although the context seems to be appropriate to speak of slaves if a significant number of them had been converted. Two more similar passages (neither of which refers to slaves) occur in Athenagoras' Legatio and Tatian's Oratio (9). Minucius Felix in his apologetic work Octavius, written in the late second or early third century, confirms the same impression. Octavius reported a debate between a Christian and a pagan. At some point the pagan accused Christians as being

Fellows who gather together illiterates from the dregs of the populace and credulous women with the instability natural to their sex, and so organize a rabble of profane conspirators... (10).

To this accusation the Christian answered:

That most of us are reputed poor is no disgrace, but a credit, for the mind is relaxed by luxury, and braced by frugality (11).

The 'reputed poor' are evidently members of the free population. Once more there is no reference to slaves.

In Tertullian's Apology there is a passage sometimes understood as referring to slaves. According to Tertullian, one of the reasons for which Christians collected money was for iamque domesticis senibus, which could be translated 'for slaves grown old' but which could also mean 'old people confined to the house.' At any rate Tertullian did not even say that these people were Christians, but merely that they were taken care of by Christians. In his On Idolatry, Tertullian alluded to the existence of Christian slaves belonging to pagan masters,

but the expression is highly rhetorical and has perhaps no historical value (12).

One of the few ancient authors who has given information about the existence of slaves in the early Christian communities is Celsus. In his Alēthēs Logos, written about AD 180, Celsus gave the following picture of some early Christians:

By the fact that they themselves admit that these people are worthy of their God, they show that they want and are able to convince only the foolish, dishonourable and stupid, and only slaves, women and little children.

Origen, however, replied that the views mentioned by Celsus belonged to people 'who are supposed to be Christians' but who were 'entirely contrary to Jesus' teachings'. Furthermore Celsus himself made it clear that he was only giving his personal impression; he was commenting upon the following expression, which he attributed to Christians:

But as for anyone ignorant, anyone stupid, anyone uneducated, anyone who is a child, let him come boldly (13).

As it can be observed no slaves are mentioned. It therefore looks as if Celsus' deduction was merely based on his desire to discredit Christians

Though in practice slaves did have families (the so-called contubernium) these families were not recognised under Roman law and thus they could be dissolved at any time at the master's decision (14). Cato had established in his familia urbana a system of prostitution to cater to the sexual needs of his slaves. A century later, Varro advocated family life for slaves as more effective and so did Columella. Varro and Columella were referring to the familia rustica, but there is no reason to believe that matters would have been any different in the cities. Columella advocated exemption from work of slave mothers with three children or more (15). Still, even in the later empire the strong family bonds, which seem to have been so essential to all congregational religions, such as Christianity, were

lacking among slaves (16).

On the other hand, there is reliable evidence that at least a small number of slaves did exist in the early Christian communities. In a well known letter to Trajan, Pliny referred to two women who were in all likelihood slaves, though we cannot say whether they belonged to an urban or a rural Christian group. In a letter to Polycarp, which will be considered in some detail in the next chapter, Ignatius wrote that some Christian slaves were asking for the church's support in buying their freedom. Finally, in the Acts of the Christian martyrs a few slaves are reported to have fallen victims of the persecutions. Eusebius wrote that among the martyrs of Palestine there were even some slaves, but gave the name of only one such slave (17).

Unfortunately, the nature of the evidence is so fragmentary that no firm conclusions can be drawn. All that seems certain is that slaves did not constitute a significant minority in the early Christian communities and that, in any case, they did not make their presence strongly felt.

Scholars have repeatedly 'confirmed' their view of significant Christian success among slaves by referring to a small number of Christian slaves, about whom some biographical details are known. No one, however, as far as I know has noticed that in almost all these cases the slaves examined had Christian masters. Such was Onesimus, the runaway slave mentioned by Paul in his epistle to Philemon. Such was Blandina, the slave martyr of Lyons, who suffered along with her mistress. Such was Felicitas, catechumen and martyr along with her fellow-slave Revocatus and her mistress. Such was Porphyry, the slave and fellow-martyr of the presbyter Pamphilus. Finally, the same can be said about Callistus, a slave who after gaining his freedom became bishop, although the case of Callistus should be best considered together with the other Christian members of the Familia Caesaris (see ch.3). Only one slave known by name, Sabina, had a pagan mistress and

was obliged to run away from her (18).

Obviously we cannot claim on the basis of this evidence that as a rule Christian slaves were being converted along with their masters. The number of known cases is unfortunately extremely small. But the fact that they were almost exclusively slaves of Christian masters is not enough to corroborate the theory that Christianity had an independent appeal to slaves. A fugitive slave who found his way back to his Christian master through Christianity; several slaves who followed their masters and mistresses into captivity and execution; and a slave who became a banker through the support of his Christian master: all these instances suggest that Christianity strengthened, if anything, master and slave relations.

Slave Miners and Convicts to Penal Servitude.

Working conditions had always been very hard for miners. In the Roman world mines were predominantly worked by slaves and people convicted of grave crimes - though this may not have been the case in small gold and silver mines. Slave breeding and reproduction were almost out of the question for slave miners. Slaves had to be constantly brought to work from outside for rather short periods 'until through ill-treatment they died in the midst of their tortures'. Diodorus Siculus, from whom I borrow the expression, went on to give the following account of the conditions of miners in Egypt:

Consequently the poor unfortunates believe, because their punishment is so excessively severe, that the future will always be more terrible than the present and therefore look forward to death as more to be desired than life (19).

We never hear of a single conversion to Christianity among slave miners, but then our evidence is sparse. Yet, when we take into account that during the persecutions, Christians were often condemned to the mines, it is interesting that, as we know, they never succeeded

in converting the slave mining population.

Tradition has it that apostle John was condemned to the mines for several years (20). The same fate also awaited Paul according to the apocryphal Acts that bear his name. These Acts, though unreliable as history of the primitive age of Christianity, reflect the conditions of life characteristic of the middle of the second century. Except for an obscure sentence that while in the mines Paul 'worked fasting, in great cheerfulness, for two days with the prisoners', the Acts say nothing about actual conversions (21). In the second half of the second century, the Roman bishop Sotēr was known to have sent supplies to Christians condemned to the mines (22). Late in the same century, a number of Christians was condemned to the mines of Sardinia. Among them we also find Callistus, the slave who later became bishop. Through the good will of a concubine of Commodus, all the martyrs, except Callistus were released. Callistus, we are told, begged that he likewise might be released and was finally emancipated. No one begged, however for the other convicts (23). During the persecutions of the early fourth century some Christians were condemned to the mines of Egypt, Thebais and Palestine. Similar convictions of Manicheans in Palestine are also known. The churches expressed concern for the victims and organized aid as far as possible without, however, making it their policy to attract other miners to the faith (24). There is extant a letter of Cyprian to Christian martyrs condemned to the mines. Cyprian encouraged the martyrs but said nothing about the heathen miners. Further confirmation about Christians condemned to the mines is found in Eusebius' Martyrs of Palestine (c. AD 306 - 310) and in the Apostolic Constitutions, with no other information. At some point Eusebius gave a detailed description of the purple-marble mines in Thebais called Porphyry mines - but wrote nothing about the miners (25). The above is not a complete list, but it is sufficient, I hope, to demonstrate the argument.

The fact that slaves were still condemned to work in the mines in the age of the Christian emperor Constantine, is the natural outcome of a long developed policy, which had never aimed at abolishing slavery; not even in its worst forms (26).

4. Slaves and their Christian Masters.

In the previous sections of this chapter, I dealt with Christian attitudes to slavery and with the extent to which domestic slaves were Christianized. The basic arguments advanced were that Christianity did not question the existence of the slave system and that Christians exhibited no particular eagerness in converting slaves. Only a small number of slaves embraced the new religion. It also looks as if the converted slaves were favourites of their Christian masters. I should now like to leave aside this small number of Christian slaves and turn to the bulk of slaves. How did these people react to the spread of the Christian movement and how did they feel about their Christian masters - when they happened to have such masters?

Pagan sources give no information about master and slave relations in the Christian communities. The Christian documents have very little to say on the subject and what they do say is exclusively from the Christian point of view. In effect, as we have seen, the Christian point of view was the point of view of Christian slave owners. Not that all or most Christians owned slaves - we know little about numbers; but because the legislative and the other extant documents reflected, as a rule, the interests of the slave owners, whatever their numbers. Our discussion of the topic cannot, therefore, rely upon any clear evidence, but must be based upon inferences and calculations.

Almost all researches in the religious feelings of the oppressed sections of ancient societies meet with a common difficulty. Even when some information is given about the beliefs of the oppressed people (which is unusual anyhow), it is presented from the point of view of the upper classes. This need not cause any surprise. Laws were meant to preserve domination over the oppressed classes, while the literary texts were written by people who had a) the appropriate education and b) the time available for such activities. Both preconditions were the

privilege of the dominant classes. True a small number of ex-slaves managed to acquire a high degree of education; but it was in their new status (i.e. the status of an emancipated slave) that they wrote. What is more, even these people wrote for readers of the upper classes. So even in such cases we do not have, strictly speaking, a slave view (cf. Epictetus). The 'little education' which some slaves had, according to Varro, amounted to no more than knowledge of reading and writing notes and bills.

Inferences about the religious sentiments and more generally the feelings of the oppressed classes must be based upon a reinterpretation of the behaviour of these classes through a critical examination of the ancient authors' views. Such inferences, however, plausible though they may be, can never be more than speculations. The psychological categories, which are by necessity applied in such investigations, derive from the behaviour of modern man and there is no guarantee that ancient people felt or reacted in similar ways. Bearing this in mind we can proceed to speculate about some aspects of the religious sentiments of slaves as derived from the slaves' position in society.

Reading the ancient sources we might get the impression that besides being false and bent on escaping, slaves in classical antiquity often accepted their position in a more or less passive way. It is true that miners did not really have much of an alternative. Their conditions of living were wretched and their supervision extremely close. Diodorus wrote that they 'look forward to death as more to be desired than life', and he may have been not far from the truth. Those of the agricultural slaves who laboured in gangs were sometimes in chains, under equally intensive supervision - though it is hard to believe that cultivation with chained slaves could have been very profitable. Other slaves are also known to have perished under similar or worse conditions. The 'passivity' of such slaves is not difficult to comprehend. But do we get from classical tragedy, the New Comedy

and Roman Comedy an accurate picture of the behaviour of domestic slaves when we read so much about the servus fidelis? I shall argue that the idea of the submissive and faithful slave is to a large extent a distortion of the true picture due to the slave owners' desires. But since to some degree at least, slaves had been faithful, a few explanations are required.

The prospect of eventual emancipation, often singled out by scholars, must be considered as a significant, though not exclusive factor, accounting for the submissiveness of slaves. Very little is known about the numbers of manumitted slaves at any given time. But even if we did know more about numbers and percentages, it would still be very difficult to determine the effects the prospect of emancipation had on the slave's behaviour in general. However, we can imagine with fair certainty that thousands of slaves lived their lives through in slavery, with no prospect of and no hope for emancipation. Why did so many of them remain passive, and even faithful, giving no clear signs of rebellion? In answering this question we can be helped by turning to cases of similar behaviour examined by modern psychologists.

It has been observed that subjects living in conditions of almost total dependence upon other people - such as children, or in our case slaves - when faced with excessive external threat caused by their father or master, tend to identify themselves with their aggressor. A common outcome of such identification is an almost total submission to the will of the aggressor. Under such conditions, one theory of modern psychology claims, obedience is not as unpleasant as it would otherwise have been. The dependent subject who has identified himself with his aggressor, in a way, only obeys himself, when he bows to his lord's desires (1). Hegel had already opened the path to such considerations when he wrote that the consciousness of the slave cancels itself as self-existent, and ipso facto, itself does what the consciousness of the master demands. Under these conditions 'what is

done by the slave is properly', according to Hegel, 'an action on the part of the master' (2). But 'this willing obedience obviously only goes to a certain limit, varying with the individual' (3). If this limit is overstepped the introjected aggression of the master or father (otherwise resulting in domestic quarrels), turns against the masters and fathers. Having felt this aggression of slaves, Varro advised masters to treat slaves more generously so that 'their loyalty and kindly feeling to the master may be restored' (4)

Literary sources such as Juvenal's Satires, which are quite revealing about everyday behaviour, suggest that the cruelty of the masters was frequently excessive. Fathers, we are told, teach their sons to treat slaves with extreme harshness. Nothing pleases some masters, more 'than a good old noisy flogging, no siren song to compare with the crack of the lash' (5). What we read in the Satires is confirmed by other literary documents and the extant Roman legislation as well.

It is almost impossible to penetrate into the psychology of slaves. We cannot say to what extent slave submission was due to unconscious identification or to conscious fear of punishment. What we do know is that the limits of 'willing obedience' were often exceeded and that master and slave relations were not as peaceful as we might tend to believe at first sight.

To corroborate this statement we need not refer to the slave revolts, the most important of which occurred during brief periods in the late second and early first centuries B.C. It is arguable that the large Roman slave rebellions developed under exceptional circumstances when great numbers of new slaves from the same regions were concentrated in Sicily and southern Italy (6). On the other hand, open violent conflict between slaves and their masters did occur in individual households, as the reported murders of masters by their slaves remind us. We also know of several cases in which slaves

attempted to murder their masters and we can infer that many other such incidents occurred of which no evidence has survived

Historical and legislative documents make it clear that the flight of slaves was a common feature of everyday life, greatly increasing in scale during wars and social unrest. Owners used slave collars and turned to astrological aid to recapture their fugitive slaves. Slaves are also known to have conspired, cheated or stolen from their masters and their masters' friends. Finally, slaves also reacted with other more passive forms of resistance such as idleness, laxness, intentional clumsiness, lack of discipline and the not so passive answering back to masters. 'The tongue is a slave's worse part', some masters thought (7).

A rather exceptional piece of information as to the feelings of slaves is given by Phaedrus, a freedman of Augustus and famous fable-writer. In his introduction to the fourth book of fables, Phaedrus wrote:

Now I shall explain briefly why the type of thing called fable was invented. The slave, being liable to punishment for any offence, since he dared not say outright what he wished to say, projected his personal sentiments into fables and eluded censure under the guise of jesting with made-up stories. Where Aesop made a footpath, I have built a highway, and have thought up more subjects than he left behind; although some of the subjects I chose led to disaster for me (8).

In several cases, slaves are reported to have participated in the dominant or established religious rituals such as the Lares (Compitalia and Augusti), the cults of Ceres, Venus, Spes and Mercury Felix, the Bacchanalia, Saturnalia, Mithraism, other Syrian religions, et al. (9). Slaves also took part in the religious ceremonies of the families they served, whether they lived in cities or in the country-side. To understand the idea of participation in family-cults we must recall the religious character of the ancient family. When the head of a household was converted to a new cult or adopted a new god, the other

members of that household were often also initiated. As far as Christianity is concerned, from the days of Paul until the age of Commodus and later, ample evidence (including the significant testimony of Hermas) makes it clear that the conversion of the head of a household to Christianity was often followed by the conversion of all the dependent members of that household - though it is far from clear to what extent slaves were also converted. In a later chapter I shall discuss this problem in some detail and comment on the contrary evidence.

It should be stressed, nevertheless, that although slaves did participate in several religious cults, they were never themselves the bearers of a distinctive type of religion. This is an important feature of the slave-psychology which must be considered together with the problem of the lack of a distinctive slave consciousness. Slaves are not even known to have adapted any of the religions they embraced to their own class interest. The liberties allowed to them during the Saturnalia, must be seen as a concession of the slave-owners. The Saturnalia were in no way a slave religion (10).

Very little is known of the slaves' reaction to the spread of the Christian movement, although throughout the period during which the Apostolic Constitutions were in use, slaves were normally expected to be pagan. The few Christian slaves, considered earlier on, did not see in Christianity a force that would free them from slavery. The importance they attached to it lay in its afterworld promises. The most that Christian slaves might have asked for, was to be financially aided by their Christian community to pay for their manumission. As we shall see in the next chapter, even this aid was, as a rule, denied to them by the church leaders.

A striking feature is that slaves sometimes turned against their Christian masters, in a more violent way than would normally be expected. Canon 41 of the Synod of Elvira supposed that some Christians owned large numbers of heathen slaves. Christian masters

should not, according to the canon, tolerate idols in their houses. But if this was unavoidable because these masters feared their slaves 'on account of their number', slaves could be left to worship their idols but Christian masters should keep at a distance from their slaves and watch out against idolatry (11). It is not difficult to understand that behind this enactment lay the strong resistance of at least some pagan slaves to their masters' attempts to convert them to Christianity.

Further evidence suggests an even more hostile attitude of slaves towards their Christian masters. Pagan slaves - it is attested in several documents - had been used as witnesses for the prosecution of their converted masters. Christian authors, who give us the information, obviously felt uneasy about it and attempted to present the slaves' behaviour as resulting from torture or fear of torture. We cannot reject this explanation, although there are some cases in which slaves accused their masters definitely on their own account. Furthermore, slaves knew perfectly well that by denouncing their masters they often resisted further torture and even the death penalty (12).

Let us go back to our original problem: are there any grounds for postulating that Christianity had a special and distinctive appeal to slaves? Judging from the evidence given above, scanty and fragmentary as it may be, it seems not. The new religion did not actually impart to the slaves a sense, a vision or an expectation of liberation. Similarly, there are no grounds for assuming that when a master was Christian he succeeded in developing a 'special relationship' between himself and his slaves: as far as we know, very seldom did a slave consent to viewing submission to his master's will as a discharge of his moral obligation of obedience and humility. Such instances as there were of a very close affectionate bond between master and slave, resulting in the voluntary martyrdom of the slave along with the master, as well as opposite phenomena of hateful and vindictive denunciation of a master by one of his slaves, should not, I think,

be attributed to particular moral or social features of Christianity. Rather, they were manifestations of the typical ambivalence of feelings of slaves towards their masters, as registered above in the case of pagan masters.

CHAPTER 2

Christianity, Manumission and Freedmen

1. Manumission.

Tacitus, in a famous passage, asserted that freedmen and their descendants 'are everywhere'.

They provide the majority of the voters, public servants, attendants of officials and priests, watchmen, firemen. Most knights, and many senators, are descended from former slaves. Segregate the freed - and you will only show how few free-born there are (1).

Scholars are divided on how seriously this statement should be taken. It is generally agreed, nevertheless, that especially from the Principate onwards, the number of freedmen - and their descendants - increased considerably and that some at least, managed to acquire great fortunes and enter even the highest ranks in the Roman hierarchy. Narcissus, Pallas, Nymphidius, the father of Claudius Etruscus are just the best known cases; but the list could go on to include senators, such as Larcius Macedo, or (possibly) the emperor Pertinax who were sons of ex-slaves (2). To understand freedmen's position in Roman society, we must first turn briefly to the history and the legal forms of manumission and then discuss some psychological aspects peculiar to freedmen.

On the History and the Motives of Manumission.

We will be able to understand Roman manumission better if we take a brief look at the history of manumission. The practice of liberating slaves was almost as old as the institution of slavery. Throughout the course of ancient history, manumission and slavery, developed and changed both in form and in social function. In Greece manumission had formally been established by the fifth century B.C. and

from that point on we can trace its history alongside the history of slavery (3).

Manumitted slaves in Athens did not normally become full citizens but metics, unless they were granted this privilege as a reward for special services. Originally metics were foreigners who had settled in Athens on payment of a tax, without enjoying civic rights. There is no way of distinguishing immigrant metics from ex-slave metics or their descendants and although it has been suggested that the number of freedmen among metics was far from negligible the plain truth is that we have no idea (4).

Sparta's case was different and serves as a warning not to treat all forms of dependent labour as being one and the same thing. In Sparta forced labour had been imposed upon the older inhabitants, the helots. Helots and similar social groups elsewhere were distinguished from chattel slaves in three ways. Firstly, they were all of the same nationality and had fixed social relations; secondly, their property was much more substantial and different in law than that of slaves; and thirdly, they overwhelmingly outnumbered the free population. Their social position differed accordingly; the major peculiarity was their frequent revolts (5). Helots, in contrast to slaves, were not subject to manumission, except by the State in rare occasions when they were needed in the hoplite ranks, and were called neodamodeis.

In the east (basically in Egypt but possibly in Asia Minor and Syria as well) conditions were still different. There, production was normally not based on slaves. Chattel slavery was almost unknown until the Hellenistic period. During the Hellenistic and Roman period, slavery developed to some extent, basically for domestic purposes and mining, though many domestics were probably employed in agricultural work as well. References to slavery in the cities of the Hellenistic East are rare and doubtful, but suggest that slavery did exist (6). It is assumed that although less common than in the later Roman period,

manumission was frequently practiced in the Hellenistic world following patterns similar to those of Greece. In the Roman period, slavery and manumission were extended to the East. Even in Egypt, pace Westermann and others, it is increasingly believed that slavery was not that uncommon. Alexandria, during the imperial ages, gives the impression of a centre of a slave market, which spread all over Egypt (7). One of the major difficulties, however, in discussing slavery in Egypt is the ambiguity of the non-technical terms for slave used in Egyptian papyri; but even in this field progress is being made (8). Inscriptions belonging to the Roman and Jewish minorities in the North Euxine shore, suggest that slavery was known in that area also. The ritual of manumission followed Greek practice with influences from the Jewish legal traditions. Paramonē and other types of conditional manumission are also attested (9).

Slavery in Rome took a form similar to that in Athens, although during the period of imperial expansion it grew to an unprecedented extent. As in Athens, two types of manumission existed in Rome. In the first type, the master granted his slave's freedom out of 'mere generosity'. In the second, the slave had to buy his freedom in a commercial transaction. The ability of a slave to buy his freedom presupposed the possession of a property known as peculium, although it is sometimes difficult to understand how slaves could amass such amounts as were often required (10). Perhaps, sometimes they paid part of the money required after their release. It seems that in Rome manumission gradually became predominantly a commercial transaction. The amount masters demanded from their slaves to manumit them varied on account of several factors but it is reasonable to assume that owners must have required at least the amount of money necessary to buy a new slave.

There is one point worth noting, which I believe has not always attracted much attention. The evidence on manumission coming from

Greece and Rome shows an extremely larger proportion of urban slaves being manumitted, in comparison to agricultural slaves, while miners were manumitted only in exceptional cases. Scholars have interpreted this fact, which is sustained by the most undeniable evidence (e.g. manumission lists of the years 340 - 320 B.C. from Attica, report only 12 out of 115 males as being agricultural slaves), as an indication that agricultural slaves were few in number and hence that agricultural production was not based on slave labour (11). I do not wish to deny that in Athens, agricultural slaves were fewer than domestics and miners or that they were outnumbered by free peasants (12). However, this does not adequately explain the extremely low proportion of manumitted agricultural slaves. What, then about slave miners? We know that their numbers were very large, yet we know of no manumissions except in special cases. The fact is that 'agricultural slaves naturally had very much less chance of obtaining their freedom than domestics or industrial slaves' (13). As Brunt has noted 'so far as the rural familia was concerned, even vilici and actores were seldom emancipated' (of nearly 80 actores and vilici recorded in the indexes of GIL V, IX and X, almost all are slaves). The farm-hands were according to the elder Pliny 'men without hope' (14). Agricultural slaves, miners and unskilled slaves in general were much more important for production than domestics, craftsmen and artisans. Thousands of unproductive or semi-productive domestics were 'retained by men of means because it was the thing to do' (15). Craftsmen and artisans could all have equally well been freeborn (as the greatest proportion of them probably was). But it was not the same with the agricultural slaves; the large estates of Italy, for example, depended heavily on their labour.

We can look at the same problem from a different angle. The philosophy of the Stoa (and Christianity later), has been often held responsible for the increasing numbers of manumissions during the Republic and the Principate (16). We are not told, however, why

Stoicism failed to bring about any amelioration of the admittedly horrible conditions of the miners. The answer must be that the Stoics, such as Seneca, were concerned with the conditions of some of their slave domestics with whom they were in personal contact. As far as miners were concerned they did not have much to say and it is very unlikely that they could bring about any change.

In the early empire, it seems that in Rome manumission was granted with unusual liberty. Augustus passed laws which were never actually enforced, restricting manumissions by testamentary grant (not more than one fifth of the total number of an owner's slaves and in no case more than 100 could be manumitted by testament). Manumission by testamentary grant must have been viewed by Augustus as a harmful and superstitious act, depriving the dead man's heirs of valuable property. Later he declared that no slaves under the age of thirty could be manumitted. According to Suetonius, Augustus was much concerned 'not to let the native Roman stock be tainted with foreign or servile blood'. It is rather obvious that what Augustus had in mind was the city of Rome and its urban slaves. No one seems to have been prone to liberating excessive numbers of miners or rural slaves. But even in the city of Rome, judging from the great numbers of freedmen and their descendants in the population, we must assume that the rules were often broken and that manumission was not seriously restricted by law. Furthermore, it has been observed that in other respects the early imperial legislation encouraged the advance of freedmen (17).

The motives for manumission are rather complex and to a certain degree unclarified. We do not know how slave owners felt, and we obviously have to rely on elaborated statements made by ancient historians and inferences drawn there from. Slaves, we are led to believe, were manumitted for several reasons: to attend their patrons as clients; for the purpose of marriage; to show off; out of gratitude; affection; superstition; expedience; to have them attend the funeral

of the manumittor etc. Several passages from Roman historians are sometimes thought to provide additional explanations for the manumissions observed in the cities of Italy, and especially Rome. Suetonius wrote that 'after announcing a distribution of largesse, Augustus found that the list of citizens had been swelled by a considerable number of recently freed slaves'. Dionysius of Halicarnassus related that slaves were freed to secure shares in the wheat bounties (18). To what extent mass manumissions can be explained by such arguments, we cannot say. I am inclined to believe that the motives behind manumissions were as complex as the attempted explanations; that is to say, we cannot give a single or a principal cause of the phenomenon.

Legal Forms and Consequences of Manumissions.

Manumissio and libertinus (libertina) are categories of Roman law, corresponding to ἀπελευθερία and ἀπελεύθερος (ἀπελεύθερη) in Greek law. These terms suggest, at least from the legal point of view, a clear cut distinction between a slave and a freedman. The legal status of freedmen differed. Some ex-slaves became citizens (this was normal when the manumittor was Roman citizen himself) others didn't (19). Besides unconditional manumission, according to which a slave was supposed to gain full independence (though still subject to some restrictions) (20), another common type of manumission was the conditional liberation - the so-called παραμονή (it is probable, however, that the practice of paramonē was different in Greece and Egypt). Paramonē was a form of a service contract distinguished from contracts of free labourers in that 'the type of work was not delimited and the man hired became a handy man, subject to any demand of work given within the scope of the

requirements customarily required of free workers' with not always definite limit in the length of service (21). Roman patrons sometimes arranged manumissions in a way that their freedmen would perform certain services after obtaining their freedom, such as working for some days a week in their patrons' houses or factories. This contract imposed a special oath on the slave and was called operae. On the other hand all freedmen were expected to retain some obligations to their patrons of a rather moral character, which went by the names obsequium et officium. The former had a negative connotation and would normally prohibit freedmen from bringing a civil lawsuit against their patron; the latter implied the expected respect, which freedmen should show to their patrons (22).

Roman custom knew many formal and informal modes of manumission, each with peculiar consequences. We can refer to manumissio iusta and minus iusta (23). Under the early empire informal manumission became legally recognized, so that the difference between these two types became primarily one of custom, though each retained some of its specific legal implications. (It should be noted that the five percent tax was levied in both forms of liberation from an early date onwards). Of the formal types of manumission, the single most important was that arranged by testament. It is possibly for this reason that legislators imposed restrictions on its practice.

The variety of the legal forms and social consequences of manumission created a whole range of intermediary positions, which scholars have called 'between slavery and freedom' (24). On the other hand, although even from a legal point of view distinction between slaves and freedmen was not as sharp as it is sometimes thought, several rights accompanied most types of manumission with important effects on the psychology and ideology of ex-slaves. I have brought out three major rights, applicable to most categories of freedmen (25).

i) The option of mobility. This privilege was not granted in the

cases of conditional manumission until the condition ceased to hold (26).

ii) The right to possess property. It is true that with the institution of peculium, slaves were sometimes allowed to manage a certain amount of money. But this privilege did not apply to all slaves and always remained within limits, subject to the master's good will (27).

iii) The right to have a family. Greek and Roman law did not recognise this right to slaves, though in practice many such slave-families did exist - the so-called contubernium. Nevertheless, even when these families existed de facto, they were always threatened by a master's or his heirs' capacity to decide to sell one or several of its members (28).

These three major rights were important to freedmen as individuals. We still have to give a brief account of the significance which the phenomenon of manumission had on the social system as a whole. Evidence from sepulchral inscriptions of the first two and a half centuries of imperial Rome has been interpreted as implying that nearly ninety percent of the population of the city of Rome was of foreign extraction; among them many are believed to have been of slave or ex-slave stock (29). Further calculations have suggested that well above the half of the population of the imperial city of Rome were freedmen (30), while about one fifth of the local aristocracy of Italy is thought to have descended from slaves (31). The two basic problems with these calculations are that 'the names in the epitaphs do not give us a cross section of the population' (L.R. Taylor, one of the scholars responsible for the above mentioned calculations believes that the names in the epitaphs 'belong primarily to one group in the city - to the freedmen') and that there are no definite criteria for classifying the bearers of these names as to legal status. But even if we reject these percentages as implausible we must still agree that the numbers of ex-

slaves in the city of Rome and the Italian cities were quite substantial. What was the significance of these large scale manumissions that had produced all these freedmen?

Large scale manumissions had a double function. Manumission as a social phenomenon affected both slaves and slaveowners. To slaves, the prospect of emancipation served as an incentive to work harder and to submit willingly (32). Not that all slaves had good chances of being emancipated. Urban slaves, and among them domestics and tutors had much better opportunities. But even among urban slaves, those who secured freedom were probably a minority. Still, in the cities of the Roman empire, so many ex-slaves were living and working as free citizens that they must have kept the hopes of freedom alive in others. To this end slaves may often have sacrificed all their savings, which sometimes amounted to considerable sums; and they may also often have sacrificed their rebellious nature. Slaves who in old age handed over to their masters all their savings with little or no prospect of earning them afresh, serve as an example of what freedom meant to them. Others, of course, by gaining their freedom found the way open to social advancement and enrichment.

Let us now turn to slaveowners. Here we are also faced with two extreme cases. Some masters emancipated many of their slaves by will; these slaveowners had obviously made no material gain by their action; it seems that they had purely moral motives. But many masters obtained large sums in order to liberate their slaves and sometimes they secured services from their freedmen as well; needless to say that the money obtained could be used for the purchase of new slaves. Overall, it should be said that manumission served to secure the slave system; in spite of the beneficent effects it had for individual slaves, it constituted nothing like abolition of slavery.

On the Psychology and the Religious Participation of Freedmen.

Freedmen did not constitute a distinctive social class. Looking at them in the long run we see them as occupying an intermediary position, rooted in slavery but moving towards complete freedom. Within three if not two generations, traces of servile descent totally disappeared. This is one sense in which freedmen had a status which lasted only one generation. Moreover freedmen were distributed among several social classes and numerous occupations. Therefore, we have to be cautious in discussing freedman psychology. Only a very small number of common psychological features can be observed.

The general impression one gets is that by and large ex-slaves retained their old occupations. Obviously we have no statistics, but let us consider each case separately. Manumission of slaves belonging to Familia Caesaris was linked to upward social mobility; it therefore is highly unlikely that imperial freedmen turned to completely different occupations. Roughly speaking, within the imperial household domestics seem to have remained domestics, while members of the administration remained in this section - if only in higher posts (33).

The cases of conditional manumissions need not be discussed in great detail. The very idea of this type of emancipation left small chances - if any - for occupational mobility. Even when full independence was achieved - despite the attempted restrictions of the Augustan legislation (34) - freedmen were usually expected to retain some social obligations to their former masters. There are several examples of freedmen who had been employed while slaves, in banking, commerce or in their masters' firms, and who then kept their former positions. Slave craftsmen and other skilled labourers had even less reasons to change professions (35). At this point, we can recall the case of a 'well-known' freedwoman harlot named Hispala Faecenia. Livy, who related her story wrote that this woman 'was worthy of a better

life than the business to which she had become accustomed while a mere slave', but then went on to report that 'even after her manumission she had supported herself by the same occupation' (36). The case of Hispala might not have been typical, but if a harlot found it acceptable to support herself in the same way, when emancipated, why should others change? Besides, why would anyone voluntarily quit an occupation presumably profitable enough to have provided him with the sum required for the purchase of his liberation?

It might have been different with some manumitted domestics and agricultural slaves. The only slaves, however, who had good reason to want to alter their way of life were the miners; but miners, as we have seen were only manumitted in exceptional cases. Overall, as far as occupational mobility is concerned, the effects of manumission must have been felt in the long run (37).

But if freedmen were expected, as a rule, to retain their former occupations, the same is not true for their religious feelings. Slaves had been excluded, as it were, from the world (economically, politically, socially); freedmen were in a sense readmitted. They found themselves in a new position. Many formed families; and some found themselves in substantially improved economic conditions. The world which they entered was already inhabited by people belonging to distinct orders. Not all doors were open, since freedmen were usually - especially among the upper classes - considered inferior even when they had made small fortunes. It was in religious participation that freedmen sought shelter; or, to put it in another way religious cults gave freedmen the sense of 'belonging' somewhere (38).

While a slave, Hispala had been initiated with her mistress in the Bacchic cult, but when she was manumitted she dropped her mistress' religion and wanted to know nothing about it. Although she remained a harlot, she found her former religion immoral. I suspect that she

was motivated by a desire to join a new cult as a freedwoman.

Freedmen served as magistri in several cults while a few inscriptions of the imperial age suggest that many of the religious officials in some religious rites in Italy were of ex-slave stock (39). It has been argued that this was so because the emperor, as Pontifex Maximus appointed as temple guards members of his own familia. The freedmen were also priests of foreign cults as that of Isis, and Tacitus wrote that four thousand adult freedmen 'tainted' with Egyptian and Jewish rites were transported to Sardinia (though Josephus reported that they were all Jews) (40).

There can be no simple explanation to account for this phenomenon, but it seems plausible that freedmen were attracted to these cults because they were organized in the form of small communities, which gave their members some prestige, and the sense of a new identity.

2. Christian Attitudes to Manumission.

Given that the early Christian attitudes to slaves had ranged from mere sympathy to contempt, it is not surprising that no systematic approach to emancipation was developed. Our examination of the Christian attitudes to manumission must, therefore, depend upon individual cases and inferences. The general impression is that early Christians and their churches, clung eagerly to the Pauline recommendation. Paul, as we have seen, did not encourage Christian slaveowners to emancipate their slaves and, what is more important, advised slaves to remain in their condition of slavery rather than seek their freedom. It is possible that in those earliest days the Pauline view was so strongly connected with the hopes of an imminent realization of the eschatological expectations that its social consequences were not readily grasped. Gradually, when it became clear that the Christian communities had a long mission to fulfil upon earth before the coming of the Kingdom of God, the social conservatism of the Pauline attitude became visible even to the most religious eye. The church became consciously conservative. However, despite our onesided information (i.e. that of the official church), some popular reactions to this conservatism can be detected. It is with these conflicting elements of the early Christian attitudes that the present section is concerned.

In the middle of the fourth century, not more than a few decades after the official recognition of the Christian religion, some definite reactions to slavery are echoed in the literature. A brief consideration of them seems to be the best introduction to the attitudes of the earlier period. Canon 3 of the Council at Gangca in Cappadocia, about AD 340 (although the date is much disputed) enacted that,

If anyone teaches a slave, under pretext of piety, to despise his master, to forsake his service, and not to serve him with goodwill and all respect, let him be anathema (1).

What this canon tells us, besides the official attitude which is well expected, is that some people had been instructing slaves to forsake their service, which probably meant that in effect, slaves were encouraged to flee. Furthermore, we are told that these instructions were given 'under pretext of piety' and this accounts for the interest expressed by the church in the matter. Who these people were we cannot say. The fact that this canon stands rather isolated in the preserved documents suggests that their numbers and their activities were not significant. However, such people did not only exist, but also intervened in the theological disputations of their time. These people were known to John Chrysostom (c. AD 350-407) for he referred to them in similar words:

He therefore is deserving of condemnation, who under pretense of continence separates wives from their husbands, and he who under any other pretext takes away slaves from their masters.

Chrysostom alluded to them in his discussion of the Pauline statement mentioned above. He felt it necessary to insist that the prevailing interpretation of the Pauline passage was the correct one, although he knew theologians who adopted the contrary interpretation (2).

By combining these two pieces of information we form the picture of a conflict (inside the Christian communities) which extended from everyday life agitation to attempts at theological reinterpretation of the Scripture. The reformist tendency gradually died away and was only revived in the sixteenth century in connection with the protestant movement of Luther, Erasmus, Calvin et al. But let us turn to the origins of the conflict which are our present concern.

The earliest direct information on the subject, dates from the second century. During this period it is known that many Christians owned slaves, sometimes in large numbers (3). It was only to be expected, therefore, that discussions about manumitting at least the Christian slaves of Christian masters could not be avoided. Indeed,

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, in one of his extant letters referred to the problem these discussions had created by explicitly stating his own position. It is worth quoting the relevant paragraph of this letter - addressed to another bishop, Polycarp of Smyrna - in full:

Take care that the widows are not neglected; next to the Lord, be yourself their guardian. See that nothing is ever done without consulting you, and do nothing yourself without consulting God - as I am sure you never do. Take a firm stand. Hold service more frequently, and hunt up everyone by name. You must not be overbearing in your manner to slaves, whether man or woman; but on the other hand, never let them get above themselves. It should be their aim to be better slaves for the glory of God; so that they may earn a richer freedom at His hands. And they are not to set their hearts on gaining their liberty at the church's expense, for then they only become slaves to their own longings(4).

Ignatius (died c. AD 115) was not a bishop in the strong sense that the word later acquired; nor was orthodoxy firmly established in his age. It is best to think of him as the leader 'of a group that is engaged in a life and death struggle against an almost overwhelming adversary' (5). In Smyrna things were not very different. A sort of an anti-bishop can be traced challenging Polycarp (6). Ignatius' advice to Polycarp that nothing should be ever done without his being consulted is better understood as part of the struggle towards the monarchical episcopate (7). It has been suggested, and it is probably correct, that the rival groups, which opposed Ignatius and Polycarp, were Gnostic.

Semi-Gnostic sects in Asia Minor and Syria are known to have existed during the same period. Among the documents used by the un-orthodox groups of Asia Minor we should include the Acts of Peter (c. AD 180-90) and among those used by similar groups of Syria, the Acts of Thomas (AD 200-50). Both documents exhibit an attitude to slavery not in total conformity with the orthodox view. I shall first cite the two relevant passages and then comment on the possible implications of the differences.

In the Acts of Peter, the apostle Peter was about to bring back to life the dead son of a despairing woman. At the funeral, the

woman, according to custom, had emancipated a number of slaves in honour of her son. Fearing that by bringing back to life the son, these men might lose their freedom again, Peter said:

Those young men whom you set free in honour of your son, are they to do service to their master as free men, when he is alive? For I know that some will feel injured on seeing your son restored to life, because these men will become his slaves once again. But let them all keep their freedom and draw their provisions as they drew them before, for your son shall be raised up, and they must be with him (8).

To this the woman replied that she not only agreed but would grant to the freedmen all that she meant to spend at her son's funeral.

Although Peter, in this passage was only securing a manumission, which had already taken place, his request is the strongest statement in favour of manumission we ever get in any Christian text. What is even more interesting to notice is that Peter was not motivated by the hard feelings of the slaves themselves but by the objections of some people which he unfortunately did not name. Peter said, however, that some of the bystanders would go so far as to feel injured with the restoration to life of a dead man if his slaves were to remain in slavery. This account can be contrasted to that given in a later text, the Acts of Philip (late 4th or 5th century). In a similar situation described in a passage of these Acts, the slaves 'made signs' to Philip to remember them and they were actually freed in the end. (These slaves were to be burned with their master's corpse according to custom) (9). Finally, let us note that what is proposed is a sort of conditional manumission, since freedmen would have to continue serving their master.

In the Acts of Thomas, the apostle Thomas reproached the wife of a nobleman who was carried by her slaves. Looking at the slaves, Thomas said:

You are they who bear burdens grievous to be born, you who (are driven forward) at her command. And though you are men they lay burdens on you, as on unreasoning beasts, while those who have authority over you think

that you are not men such as they are (and they know not that all men are alike before God), be they slaves or free (10).

In spite of some modern commentators, the passage quoted above does not condemn slavery as a matter of principle (11). What is interesting, however, is the strong reaffirmation of the humanitarian principles observed in several other texts of the period. Such is a passage from one of Cyprian's epistles, which sounds almost like an expanded version of the passage of the Acts of Thomas (12). Nevertheless, Tertullian and Cyprian himself made it quite clear that the church funds in Carthage were never used for the emancipation of slaves (13). The idea of heavy burdens imposed upon men appears in several texts of the New Testament but since it is not explicitly connected with slavery, it is unlikely that it had directly influenced second and third century authors (14). The common source of all these texts could have been the Stoic doctrine, which is known to us from the letters of Seneca. Seneca wrote of the 'harsh and inhuman behaviour' of many masters who abuse their slaves 'as if they were beasts of burden instead of human beings', and called on his friends to reflect 'that the person (they) call (their) slave traces his origin back to the same stock as (they themselves), has the same good sky above him, breathes as (they) do, lives as (they) do, dies as (they) do' (15). Seneca's humanism, as we have seen, did not go so far as to advocate emancipation.

But let us come back to Asia Minor. Ignatius and the Acts of Peter (and to a less extent the Acts of Thomas) represent two different tendencies within the Christian movement. Ignatius openly rejected the idea of slaves gaining their freedom at the church's expense, but said nothing about slaves who could pay themselves for their freedom. In this respect his attitude was somewhat milder than that of Paul. Behind Ignatius we can suspect the existence of other church leaders with a more reformist attitude. On the other hand, the Acts of Peter

are much more favourably inclined towards the advocates of manumission (the bystanders of our text), although they are far from spelling it out in so many words. From the rest of the story it is known that Ignatius' group prevailed, routing its rivals and establishing along with the Roman church the so-called orthodoxy. No wonder, therefore, that the official attitude to manumission was that propounded by Ignatius.

Our next piece of information comes from the Martyrdom of Pionius which took place in Smyrna, where Polycarp had been bishop. Eusebius dated the martyrdom at the late second century, but the Acts themselves put it in the mid-third century (16). According to the document a Christian slave called Sabina was receiving sustenance from a Christian circle which was at the same time making efforts to free her from her bonds and from her mistress. Before any result had been achieved Sabina was arrested along with her protector, the presbyter Pionius, and was imprisoned in Smyrna. This story has been taken to imply that some Christians were helping or encouraging slaves to run away and that they might have even intended to contribute financially to their emancipation. Closer attention shows that this is not exactly so.

To begin with, Sabina was not really a run-away slave, as Grant believes (17). She was 'bound and cast out on the mountains' by her own mistress where she was found and 'received sustenance secretly from the brethren' (18). The Christians did not 'manage' to free her but were merely trying to do so when the persecutions broke out. While being interrogated, Sabina was advised by Pionius to give a false name so that she would not 'fall into the hands' of her mistress. Once again it is not because her mistress was tyrannical, as Cadoux understands (19), that the Christians were trying to hide her, but because her mistress was attempting 'to change the girl's faith'. Politta, the mistress was not being referred to as tyrannical but as 'immoral' (20). From the Apostolic Constitutions we know that slaves were expected to serve 'with fear of God', even their impious masters,

unless the masters interfered with their slaves' worship (21).

Finally, it must be noted that Pionius was leading Sabina to martyrdom, not to a free life.

True, the text under consideration is in many respects obscure and little can be deduced with certainty. The religious motives and the pathological eagerness for martyrdom mystify the statement that σπουδή ἐγένετο ὥστε αὐτήν ἐλευθερωθῆναι καί Πολίτις καί δεσμῶν (efforts were made to free her from her bonds and from Politta). Even so, we must not exclude the possibility that the brethren were thinking of an actual emancipation of Sabina. The date of the martyrdom and its setting in Smyrna place the incident at the centre of the disputes discussed earlier. Furthermore, although Pionius himself was explicitly referred to as belonging to the catholic church, the boundaries separating orthodoxy from heresy were not so clear. Pionius was put to prison together with a Montanist and was executed along with a Marcionite presbyter (22). The pagan magistrates were quite well informed about Christianity and as Frensdorf has noted 'They also knew that the church was riddled with sects' (23). It seems plausible, though we cannot prove it in any way, that the Christian groups mentioned in the Martyrdom were also puzzled with the problem of emancipation of slaves and that not all of them were exclusively concerned with the religious future of Sabina, as the orthodox Pionius.

In the middle of the third century the Christian groups in Syria and Asia Minor were using the Apostolic Constitutions, which, as we have seen have the character of church-rules. This document betrays an ascetic and monastic tendency, peculiar to Eastern Christianity and also takes an apparently clear attitude towards manumission. According to the Apostolic Constitutions the brethren should collect money and spend it for the

... redemption of the saints, the deliverance of slaves

and of captives, and of prisoners, and of those that have been abused, and of those that have been condemned by tyrants to single combat and death on account of the name of Christ (24).

This passage would be unique in the Christian literature if what it meant was that church funds should be used for the emancipation of slaves in general (25). The context, however, suggests that the beneficiaries were not ordinary slaves but illegally captured Christian free citizens. This reading of the text is confirmed by the Apostolic Constitutions, which did not condemn slavery but accepted it, as perfectly normal.

There is an indication that already from the late first century Christians took care of their captives and, if we are to believe 1 Clement, that

... many have surrendered themselves to captivity as a ransom for others, and many more have sold themselves into slavery and given the money to provide others with food (26).

Unfortunately, apart from being highly rhetorical, 1 Clement did not make it clear whether this referred to Christians or to Jews (the expression 'our own people' having both meanings in the text).

A letter of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, belonging to the same period as the Apostolic Constitutions (mid-third century) reinforces the view that it was recently captured citizens that Christians had in mind when they wrote of 'deliverance of slaves'. Writing on the persecutions of Decius, Dionysius referred to some Christians as having been 'reduced to utter slavery by barbarian Saracens'. Of these enslaved Christians, 'some were with difficulty ransomed for large sums, others have not yet been, up to this day' (27). Cyprian also wrote of the need to rescue and redeem 'from the hands of barbarians by a sum of money' the captured brethren (28).

Finally, our picture of the early Christian attitudes to manumission is concluded with the edicts of Constantine. In Greece and Rome

manumission was performed in the pagan temples; in Greece it took the form of a sale to a God, while in Rome and other areas during the Roman occupation, it was performed in the presence of priests and sealed by an oath to the gods and to the emperor. Jews also practiced manumission at their sacred places; they followed a ritual similar to the pagan one and released their slaves at 'the house of Jewish prayers'. A Jewish inscription at Panticapaeum in the Crimea, which dates from AD 81, confirms the view that the Jews of the Diaspora kept their own customs unaltered (29). In Egypt, though many papyri referring to manumission have survived, the ritual is not confirmed (30).

From AD 313, Christianity gained a new position in the empire; it was officially recognized as a legal religion. Soon it was granted all the rights of the pagan religions. In the years 316 and 321, edicts were promulgated declaring that the Christians could emancipate their slaves in their own churches. This practice was called manumissio in ecclesia. The pattern of the ceremony was the same as the pagan one, possibly a little simpler. It is believed that it began in an 'informal' manner, perhaps following the pattern of manumission inter amicos, which Constantine formally recognized (31). This new privilege Christianity had gained has been seen by some scholars as further confirmation of its hostility to slavery. It is thus believed that Christianity 'gradually became one of the most potent causes of manumission' (32).

Such views must be totally rejected for two reasons. On the one hand if Christians had desired to, they could have liberated their slaves in other ways. Thus, slaves in Egypt were manumitted by Christians' testamentary grant as we gather from fourth century papyri. There are no grounds therefore for assuming that manumissions increased after the edicts of 316 and 321. On the other hand, the practice of manumission is not an act necessarily indicative of disapproval of slavery, but could be, and often was, in complete conformity with it (33).

It has already been argued that manumission was not only compatible with slavery, but an integral part of it. The edicts of Constantine must be construed as the transformation of Christianity into a ruling religion and nothing more. We can adduce as further proof that Christian ideals were not independent from the social developments of the age. In Africa, for example manumissio in ecclesia was not introduced until AD 401, although strong Christian communities existed there from a very early period (34).

3. Christian Freedmen.

Christianity was not against slavery, but it did not obstruct the manumission of slaves. Nor were freedmen, as far as we know, opposed to slavery. We know of several ex-slaves who became slave-owners themselves. We only have to glance at Trimalchio (the ex-slave hero of Petronius' Satyricon) to see how a freedman was expected to behave. Aulos Kapreilios Timotheos, the first century AD freedman who expressed pride in being a slave trader is one representative of his age (1). There is reason to think that Christianity was particularly successful with freedmen. But when we turn for supporting testimony, we find that it is exceedingly difficult to prove this statement. In this section I shall discuss the few existing indications and some problems posed by the Christianization of freedmen.

Freedmen unlike slaves, could be often easily disguised as freeborn, perhaps especially among the lower and middle classes. We can only know that someone was a freedman if we are either told so explicitly or given his full name with the indication libertus or liberta. In the case of the early Christian documents neither is done. We are usually given just one name, and as long as the person mentioned was not a slave, no information is given about his status (unless he was of high rank). Christian sepulchral inscriptions do not help much. Still, there exist a number of useful signs that must be carefully considered.

Canon 80 of the Synod of Elvira enacted that freedmen whose former masters were heathens could not become priests, obviously because of the rights and influence former masters had over their ex-slaves (2). Whether this canon was generally accepted or not we cannot say, for it stands quite isolated in the extant documents. But taking into consideration how Christians felt about slaves becoming clerics we have no reason to believe that this Elvira canon had restricted

application. However that may be, this enactment tells us nothing as to numbers of Christian freedmen. We do not even have any reason to believe that ex-slaves of heathen masters were discouraged from joining the church. Women were not ordained either, but this did not prevent them from becoming Christians. What is useful in this canon, from our point of view, is the clear distinction made between freedmen with Christian patrons and freedmen with pagan patrons.

To the mind of the early Christians, these two categories of freedmen belonged to two conflicting types of conversion. Freedmen following their patrons to Christianity were not only welcomed but also considered as doing something quite natural. Hermas, the famous freedman whose work The Shepherd was once regarded as holy Scripture, had been the slave, in all probability, of a Christian mistress (3). Callistus, the freedman who became bishop of Rome, also had a Christian patron (4). In the mid-second century, Christian freedmen of noble families began to take over in the Christian interest the cemeteries in which they were buried, and this could hardly have been done without their patrons' consent. Domitilla, Manius Acilius Glabrio and Titus Flavius Clemens, all of them patrons of Christian freedmen, are also thought to have been themselves Christians, although this is far from certain (5). But the entry of freedmen, whose patrons were pagans, into the Christian communities must have led, as a rule, to conflicts with their patrons. Not that such converts were not welcomed, but their acceptance created problems which the Christian movement was not willing to face. We have seen that slaves of pagan masters were normally not accepted at all in the communities. For Christianity the household was a religious unity of great value, and the respect due to the head of the household was of no less importance. It was not without internal conflicts and hesitations that the breaking of the household was accepted. Canon 80 of the Synod of Elvira is a reflection of these conflicts and hesitations.

The strongest confirmation that the early Christian communities contained many freedmen is found in the Pauline epistles. Paul mentioned a great number of names in the greeting sections of the epistles. Most of these names were common slave names, but since many of the bearers of these names have been identified as free persons it is highly probable that they were freedmen. Very briefly I have collected from the epistle to the Romans the following names: Phoebe, Prisca and Aquila (both identified as possible freedmen of a member of the family of Acilius Glabrio), Epaphroditus and Rufus (identified as free persons), Andronicus and Junias (possibly husband and wife and free persons), those of the household of Aristobulus and those of the household of Narcissus (all of them probably slaves and freedmen of the imperial house; Aristobulus being identified with a grandson of Herod the Great, related to Claudius, and Narcissus being identified with Tiberius Claudius Narcissus, the freedman of Claudius), Urban, Tryphaena, Persis, Philologus, Julia, Asyncritus, Phlegon, Olympas, Hermes, Hermas, Nereus and others. From the 1st epistle to the Corinthians: Fortunatus and Achaicus (probably free persons). From the epistle to the Colossians: Epaphroditus and Archippus. From the 2nd epistle to Timothy: Onesiphorus, Erastus, Trophimus, Eubulus and others. Finally, from the epistle to Titus, Artemas and Tychicus (6). The names mentioned above were common slave names but of course not all of them were exclusively used for slaves and, furthermore, for most of them we have no clue as to whether they belonged to slaves or freedmen. Much more can be learned by an examination of the names reported in the Liber Pontificalis, the Acta, Vitae, Passiones and Gesta of the martyrs. The most interesting information about early Christian freedmen comes, however, from the imperial household, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Christianity and the Familia Caesaris.1. Familia Caesaris.

From the point of view of church history, the imperial Familia deserves to be considered separately. The Christian success with members of a group from which state-officials were recruited, it has been argued, 'opened up political life to Christianity' (1). The Christianized imperial freedmen helped Christianity penetrate into the upper sections of Roman society, as they themselves advanced socially. The proximity of the members of the imperial slave-freedman group to the emperor influenced the official attitude of Rome to Christianity in several respects. Finally, the fact that Christianity was more successful with an élite slave group than it was with the bulk of the slave population is in conformity with what we know of the social character of Christianity, in so far as we can reconstruct it (cf. my last chapter).

The members of the household of Aristobulus and Narcissus, whom Paul greeted in his epistle to the Romans have been identified with members of the imperial familia. In an epistle sent some years later from Rome, Paul referred explicitly to the Christians who belonged to the imperial establishment as sending their greetings to the Philippians. The existence of the Christian imperial slaves and freedmen in the earliest Roman Christian communities has hardly escaped the attention of church historians and New Testament commentators. But if there had been no evidence about the existence of Christian caesariani in a later age as well, scholars would have had little ground for further speculations. The composition of the first Roman Christian community would have been peculiar to the earliest days, and, as so many other peculiarities, it would have subsequently disappeared. However, as I

shall try to show in the present chapter, there is evidence confirming that the imperial household was never, throughout our period, left without Christians. This is a phenomenon of some significance, which deserves attention.

The imperial slaves and freedmen are treated by ancient historians as a separate social category or group. From a legal point of view, slaves and freedmen were always clearly distinguished, and their legal differences had important social consequences. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to consider all members of the imperial familia as belonging to a single group because of a number of unifying elements which will be discussed presently. Other divisions within the familia are of greater importance. On the other hand, the top slaves and freedmen of the emperor were distinguished from the rest of the slave-freedman section of Roman society because, as we shall see, they constituted an élite status group. Many of the imperial slaves - not to mention the freedmen - had better social prospects than most of the plebs. In Roman society as a whole, the members of the imperial household were of special significance because of the nature of the duties assigned to them.

In the present chapter I shall first consider the Familia Caesaris examining in brief its internal structure and its socio-political importance. Next I shall review the most important pieces of evidence concerning the Christianization of this group. Lastly, I shall put forward a number of tentative propositions as to the significance of the Christianization of members of this group.

Christianity was confronted with the power of the Roman administration, as exercised by imperial freedmen at a very early stage. After being seized by a Jewish crowd, Paul was finally brought before

the provincial governor of Judaea called Felix, who was an imperial freedman. Felix kept Paul imprisoned for two years and when he left his post he handed Paul's case to his successor. Paul's relation to Felix was ambiguous and ambivalent - at least this is the impression given by the Acts, which are our sole source of information. Luke gave simultaneously two contradictory explanations for the prolonged imprisonment of Paul. On the one hand, Felix was said to have been impressed by Paul and his theological expositions; as a consequence Felix met Paul regularly and discoursed with him on these matters. On the other hand (or 'at the same time', to put it in Luke's words), Felix was said to have had hopes of a bribe from Paul - a not unusual expectation in Roman administrative practice - and to have prolonged Paul's imprisonment with this aim. I shall turn to this problem later. In the mean time, I shall consider in brief how people like Felix got to obtain such power.

The term Familia Caesaris has been used by modern scholars to designate the ensemble of the emperor's freedmen and slaves (2). From a legal point of view there was a clear cut division in the familia between slaves and freedmen. A freedman's position in society, no matter what obligations and what restrictions he had, was, as a rule, far more advantageous than that of a slave. However, within the Familia Caesaris, there were factors which united it - and other factors which divided it - far more important than the legal ones. All the members of the imperial familia served a common master/patron - the emperor. Their proximity to the most important person in the empire created in itself bonds which made divisions less strongly felt. Imperial freedmen/slaves were assigned posts of great importance for the running of the imperial establishment and the administration of the whole empire. These posts, during the early Principate, were normally never assigned to outsiders. There was a regular system of promotion for the members of the familia, in which the principle of seniority was

favoured over that of unrestricted patronage; there was also a high degree of correspondence between rank held and age of the slave or freedman; in other words age and promotion structure corresponded. Above all it is a striking observation that, some imperial slaves were emancipated roughly at an age, which corresponded to their level of promotion within the palace administration. Imperial slaves and freedmen, although they had no formal dignitas, could expect favourable treatment. In a way it can be claimed that the emperor's friends and favourites, which would include at least some of his freedmen and slaves, were immune from punishment. Many caesariani often had a common, general or special education and met regularly in common educational institutions. The above factors gave them a sense of superiority and identity. Not surprisingly, therefore, the members of the Familia Caesaris recorded their status of which, contrary to other slaves and freedmen, they felt proud (3).

Promotion and emancipation at more or less fixed ages, together with the other factors described above, contributed towards overcoming the divisions between slaves and freedmen in the imperial household - at least up to a degree. Of much greater importance and practical consequences was the distinction between those of the imperial slaves and freedmen who were near the emperor, under his immediate control and supervision - and a small minority of them who were juridically and economically independent, only by name connected to the emperor. Some imperial slaves, it must be noted, had economic but not juridical autonomy and only detailed analysis can decide their exact degree of dependence (4).

The Familia Caesaris was also divided into categories according to the nature of the duties assigned. Domestics were distinguished from members of the administration and the latter belonged to subclerical, clerical and procuratorial groups. How is it that imperial freedmen managed to reach the highest administrative positions

of procurators is not entirely clear. It has been plausibly suggested that 'their elevation is most easily explicable in terms of conflict between the emperor and the aristocracy' (5). Emperors employed their own freedmen in the administration to secure their control over it. However, from the second century, equestrians supervised freedmen in the palace administration, though procurators seem to have been more independent. Felix, whom we have mentioned earlier on, belonged to the administrative section of the imperial familia.

As assistants to the emperor in state affairs the imperial slaves succeeded the public slaves of the republic. Our fragmentary evidence suggests that imperial slaves and freedmen gradually advanced to important positions. At the customs of the Danube (and possibly elsewhere) in the later part of the second century, the clerical staff changed from slaves of the conductores to imperial slaves (6). Imperial freedmen on their part did not only gradually secure for themselves some of the highest administrative positions of the empire, they were also employed by emperors to resolve differences between aristocratic officials (7). Because of their posts and their patron/master, many imperial freedmen and slaves managed to amass great fortunes and to obtain considerable property (8). Members of this group were diffused in the upper grades of Roman society all over the empire. Often we meet with names of important personalities which immediately remind us of well known imperial freedmen; these names may have belonged to descendants or freedmen of imperial freedmen. It is very difficult to tell in what way the diffusion of the imperial servants influenced or affected Roman customs and institutions; but recent studies are beginning to demonstrate that in Egypt, for example, marriage patterns were affected by the reciprocal influence between common and imperial slaves (9).

Finally, to conclude the remarks on the Familia Caesaris and its position in Roman society, it is worth recalling that A.H.M. Jones

classified it as a hereditary group. Imperial slaves often intermarried and even when male slaves married freedwomen or ingenuae the children were claimed as slaves under the senatus consultum Claudianum (10). This law apparently restricted marriages between imperial slaves and ingenuae, but practically it served to secure the interests of the fiscus (11). This being as it may, the senatus consultum contributed in its way to safeguarding the continuity and unity of the Familia Caesaris.

2. The Christianization of the Familia Caesaris.

At about AD 56 when Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, Rome already had a Christian community of some significance - Paul wrote that 'all over the world they are telling the story of (their) faith'. As early as AD 50, according to Suetonius, Christians and Jews were expelled from Rome because of their conflicts. What the origins of this community were we can hardly tell, but its early date and the fact that it was not established by an apostle or some other important personality is striking. It is even more striking that Paul was acquainted with numerous Roman Christians before ever visiting Rome.

Among those whom Paul knew in Rome were the Christians of the households of Aristobulus and Narcissus, all of them members of the Familia Caesaris. A few years later, writing to the Philippians, Paul, by then a captive in Rome, singled out 'particularly those who belonged to the imperial establishment' as sending their greetings (1). Thus, if we are to believe Paul's authority (at this point I see no reason for doubting the authenticity of the account), among the earliest Christians in Rome there were members of the imperial household, who as a group were of some special significance. Their existence is 'confirmed' by the second century apocryphal Acts of Peter and Acts of Paul. Both these texts, as well as all the other apocryphal Acts, are generally unreliable as historical documents. The Acts of Paul reported that 'a great number of believers came to (Paul) from the house of Caesar' (2), while the Acts of Peter gave greater details. Paul, this second text reported, was surrounded by some Christians 'from Caesar's household'; the names of seven persons are given, one of them was a presbyter called Narcissus (3). Both Acts evidently relied upon the testimony of the Pauline epistles and therefore have no independent value; the presbyter called Narcissus was in all probability a fiction built upon the imperial freedman Narcissus, members of whose household

were Christians. However, the eminent position given to the Christians of the imperial household could either be a historical recollection, or a backward projection of a contemporary situation; possibly both as we shall see.

At the end of the first century the Roman Christians sent a letter to the Corinthian Christians, probably written by the Roman 'bishop' Clement (the term bishop cannot be applied in the strict sense in Rome at this age). The letter was entrusted to three men who had 'been irreproachable from youth to age'. These Christians must have been of the second generation, having been converted at about AD 50. The names of two of them, Claudius (Ephebus) and Valerius (Vito), also occurred with reference to imperial slaves. It has therefore been suggested that they belonged to those of 'Caesar's household' mentioned by Paul (4). Clement himself is also thought to have belonged to the imperial household and was perhaps a freedman of the Emperor's cousin and consul, Titus Flavius Clemens (5). These unverified suggestions may be also extended to include Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150-214) as a descendant from a freedman of the consul Clemens. The reasons given are the full name of the Alexandrian father which was Titus Flavius Clemens, a coincidence which 'cannot have been accidental' (6).

Our next evidence comes once again from Rome around the year AD 165. In the Acts of Justin we read that one of Justin's companions, Evelpistus was an imperial slave. (In a later and longer recension of the text Evelpistus replied that he was 'Once Caesar's slave' but now 'a slave of Christ'). Further information given in this Acts about this person is also of some interest. Evelpistus claimed to have received his faith from his parents who were at the time of the martyrdom in Cappadocia. Were the parents in the service of the emperor or was Evelpistus a captive? If the former possibility is true then it agrees with what we know of the existence of a Christian

section in the imperial Familia, but the argument cannot be pressed too far (7).

Irenaeus (AD 130-200), a close contemporary of the Alexandrian Clement, gave two pieces of information, both in texts dated at about AD 180. In his work Against Heresies he wrote:

And as to those believing ones who are in the royal palace, do they not derive the utensils they employ from the property which belongs to Caesar; and to those who have not, does not each one of these give according to his ability? (8).

The same idea of providing the poor with goods belonging to the emperor is expressed in the Acts of Peter. In these Acts, which at times have no respect for historical truth, the emperor (Nero?) said to one of his senators called Marcellus:

'I am keeping you out of every office, or you will plunder the provinces to benefit the Christians'; and Marcellus replied, 'All my goods are yours'; but Caesar said to him, 'They would be mine, if you kept them for me...' (9).

These Acts are contemporary with Irenaeus' text and possibly reflect the same reality, i.e. the fact that Caesar's household had an important Christian section. At the same time Irenaeus wrote a letter to the Roman presbyter Florinus; some fragments of this letter are preserved by Eusebius. Irenaeus wrote that while he was still a boy (c. AD 140-5) he knew Florinus, who was already a Christian, in lower Asia, as being 'a man of rank in the royal Court' (λαμπρῶς πράσσοντα ἐν τῇ βασιλικῇ αὐλή) (10). This might be taken to imply that Florinus (also known as an associate of the bishop of Smyrna, Polycarp) was an imperial slave or ex-slave.

The story of the later bishop Callistus (AD 217-21) is also very informative. Callistus was a slave of the Christian Carpophorus who was a freedman of Commodus; hence Callistus also belonged to the familia. Callistus was at some time (c. AD 185-92) condemned to the mines of Sardinia. Through the 'good work' of Marcia, a concubine of Commodus, Callistus and his fellow Christians in the mines were set

free. The letter of liberation was taken to the governor of Sardinia by an imperial eunuch called Hyacinthus who was in all likelihood a Christian presbyter. Thus, from a single story we learn that four persons of the Familia Caesaris in Rome had been Christians (11). A few years later, during the age of Septimius Severus, as it is clear from the testimony of Tertullian, there were still Christians in the imperial household, some of them of high rank (12)

From the time of Caracalla there are two inscriptions mentioning an imperial freedman and two slaves who in all likelihood were Christians. Both inscriptions will be considered in some detail in the next chapter.

For the subsequent period we have the combined testimony of Eusebius and Cyprian. According to Eusebius when Maximin succeeded Severus Alexander as Caesar,

... through ill will towards the house of Alexander, since it consisted for the most part of believers, (Maximin) raised a persecution, ordering the leaders of the church alone to be put to death, as being responsible for the teaching of the Gospel (13).

During the early reign of Valerian, Eusebius reported that the imperial house 'had been filled with godly persons' and thus Valerian's house was 'a church of God' (14). Cyprian on his part in reporting Valerian's rescript of AD 258 said that besides the leaders of the church and the high ranking Romans, the Christians of Caesar's household were also severely persecuted (15). The fact that a reasonably short edict had to refer explicitly to imperial slaves and freedmen is undeniable evidence of their significance. Eusebius also mentioned an Antiochian presbyter called Dorotheus who, being 'by nature a eunuch' was honoured by the emperor 'with the charge of the purple dye-works at Tyre' (16).

Finally, as we enter into the fourth century there is increasing evidence about the existence of Christians in the service of the emperor. Eusebius introduced his readers to the period of the 'great

persecutions' asserting that until then emperors and governors allowed the members of their households-wives, children and servants - to practice the Christian rites (17); while Lactantius reported that Diocletian in his early years considered it sufficient to forbid the practice of Christianity to officials at the court and the armed forces (18); the same information is confirmed by Eusebius (19). In the year 295 there were Christian soldiers in the bodyguard of the emperors (20). During the persecutions, the aforementioned Dorotheus fell victim together with 'the imperial servants who were with him'; of these last, two are known by name, Peter and Gorgonius (21). Other victims of the persecutions were Philoromus 'who had been entrusted with an office of no small importance in the imperial administration at Alexandria' (22), and Adauctus, who had passed 'blamelessly through the general administration of what they call the magistracy and ministry of finance' (23). The Gesta of the holy martyrs also reported that among the martyrs who laid in the catacombs, some were servants of the household of Caesar (24). We could also add the information given in a letter (generally considered as a forgery) (25) allegedly sent by the Alexandrian bishop Theonas (AD 281-301) to a Christian chief chamberlain of the emperor named Lucianus. Many persons belonging to the palace of the emperor, the letter reported, had been converted to Christianity by this chamberlain (26).

3. The Significance of the Christianization of the Familia Caesaris.

Much of the material discussed above is doubtful and unreliable. All the pieces of information put together give, however, a rather clear picture of the historical situation. It is beyond question that many imperial servants, throughout the empire were Christians; more particularly in Rome, an important section of the Christian community consisted of imperial slaves and freedmen. Furthermore - and in this sense it makes little difference whether our information is historical or fictitious - the very fact that all the stories discussed above were recorded with care, often with pride, and that they occur in several authors and documents of different nature, reflects an important aspect of the early Christian mentality. In the present section I shall discuss these two elements, i.e. the significance of the actual conversion of imperial servants and the ideas early Christians had about these conversions - ideas which even led them to devise imaginary conversions.

The importance of the actual conversions of members of the Familia Caesaris can be examined within the context of what K. Hopkins has called 'structurally differentiated institutions'. We have already mentioned that the imperial slaves and freedmen were in a sense the heirs of the public slaves; but this is not the whole truth. With the expansion of the Roman empire the former system of administration became inadequate. A new and complex administrative system developed during the Principate in which the traditional aristocracy could not fill in all positions of power, as it had done during the Republic. Some of the highest administrative positions were entrusted to imperial slaves and freedmen. The choice of these people was not accidental. The emperors in their attempt to centralize power and to strengthen their own position as opposed to the senatorial and equestrian orders, found their own servants more trustworthy and controllable. In this

sense, therefore, the imperial slaves and freedmen succeeded not only the public slaves but also the traditional aristocracy in some of its important functions.

Through the Christianized imperial slaves Christianity gradually advanced to positions of power. It is also possible that Christianity also managed to appeal directly to high ranking imperial freedmen. Felix gave a thoughtful and sympathetic hearing to Paul (perhaps it is not irrelevant that he had a Jewish wife). Others may have been converted. By controlling positions of power the new religion could influence public affairs and sometimes the emperors themselves - also, if we are to believe Eusebius, an emperor raised a persecution 'through ill will' towards his predecessor's household, which consisted for the most part of believers.

There is little information and we cannot argue with certainty on this point. But there is another side to the problem which is much better documented. Officials of the Christian church were not infrequently associated with the imperial familia. This is an observation which needs closer attention. The bishop and two of the leading members of the earliest Roman church may have been members of the Familia Caesaris. One of the close associates of the leader of a Christian school in Rome was an imperial slave. A Roman presbyter and close associate of Polycarp of Smyrna was an imperial slave. The head of the Alexandrian catechetical school might have been a freedman of the Familia Caesaris. A Roman bishop of the third century was a former imperial slave, while one of his contemporary presbyters was an imperial eunuch. An Alexandrian presbyter was also an imperial eunuch etc. All these cases put together have a special significance. It looks as if the Christians of the emperor's household did not lose their original privileged position within the Roman Christian community and that from their ranks leading members of the Roman Christian community were constantly being elected. So much we can

claim with certainty. We could, however, go a step further. I have no way of proving what follows and I therefore put it forward as mere speculation.

For some reason Paul's contemporaries managed to convert a number of imperial slaves and freedmen at an early period. We have no idea what happened to them during the persecutions of Nero but somehow some at least managed to survive. They played an important role in the reorganization of the Christian community in the city of Rome and when this was done they extended their influence to other churches such as that of Corinth or Alexandria later. (The Carthaginian church was also linked to Rome, but little is known about the early years). Their success was guaranteed by their comparatively superior organization, by their considerable wealth, which was used to support those in need in Rome and elsewhere, finally, by their connections throughout the empire. It is possible that the Christian community in Rome managed so soon to become the strongest Christian community, partly because it comprised some of the powerful imperial slaves and freedmen. But we have already gone too far with speculations and we had better stop here until further evidence confirms or rejects our hypothesis.

We still have to give some sort of explanation for the fact that the Christianization of the Familia Caesaris was so carefully recorded; also for the existence of so many myths of converted imperial slaves and freedmen. I can think of only two reasons, which would account for this attitude of the early Christian historians and document writers. Christians realized very early that the decisive factor in their battle would be the conversion of the emperor. Who else could influence an emperor more easily than his domestics and assistants? The hopes of the early Christians and their desires had already fictionally converted an eastern king and a Roman emperor (Abgar and Philip) into Christianity many decades before Constantine actually

became a Christian. The same hopes and desires can partly explain the myths about Christian imperial slaves and freedmen. But most of the recorded cases about Christian imperial slaves and freedmen are not mere wish-fulfillment; they are factual. My second reason accounting for the phenomenon is therefore that the early Christians not only wished, but actually worked towards that direction and managed to convert imperial slaves and freedmen. Having done that the rest followed of itself, - or almost.

PART II

CHRISTIANITY IN CITIES AND COUNTRYSIDE

From the Palestinian Countryside to the Cities of the Roman Empire, and back to the Countryside.

The urban character of early Christianity has been usually taken as a matter of course. The most significant Christian communities had always been city based: numerous, perhaps most, villages remained pagan for sometime even after the conversion of the empire; the early Christian missionaries had, as a rule, travelled from town to town, only occasionally visiting the suburban districts; and the great bishops who controlled the Christian movement, both spiritually and administratively, were residents of the provincial capitals. This much we have known from the Acts, the epistles of the early fathers, the early church histories and other related documents. The few cases known of early conversions of villagers do not appear to invalidate the general rule. Thus, Pliny, in his famous letter about the Christians in Bithynia seems to imply that Christianity was spreading from the towns to the countryside and not the other way round (1). The same seems to have been the case with Montanism: originally, it had struggled with the bishops in the cities of Asia Minor and only subsequently withdrew to the Phrygian countryside (2). Reports about an early mission of the apostles to towns and villages, as given in the Acts of Thomas do not have at this point any historical value (3). It should, therefore, come as no surprise that scholars such as A. Harnack or A.H.M. Jones have taken the urban character of Christianity almost for granted (4).

The sharp contrast between the urban character of early Christianity and the rural mission of Jesus has only recently begun to be investigated. Thus G.E.M. de Ste. Croix has demonstrated that

... the synoptic gospels are unanimous and consistent in locating the mission of Jesus entirely in the countryside, not within the poleis proper, and therefore outside the real limits of hellenistic civilisation (5).

It is, therefore, best, and more precise, to think of Christianity as an originally rural religion, confined to the countryside of Palestine, which only subsequently, though at a very early age, was transformed into an urban religious movement. The transformation has been ascribed by de Ste. Croix to the Pauline mission, but it is perhaps more appropriate to regard Paul as having continued the work which 'had already been begun by the disciples themselves' (6).

It is not easy to establish how the transition from the Palestinian countryside to the cities came about. What can be maintained with fair certainty is that in no way could Christianity become a world religion if it had not adapted itself to the culture of the cities. In its original rural character it would have remained a Palestinian sect. After close inspection the 'adaptation to the culture of the cities' proves to be a very complex process on which little thorough research has been done. In a book published in 1893, W.M. Ramsay drew attention to the fact that Paul had been significantly selective in choosing the cities of his mission,

The towns which (Paul) visited for the sake of preaching were, as a rule, the centres of civilisation and government in their respective districts - Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi. He must have passed through several uncivilised Pisidian towns, such as Adada and Mithia and Vasada; but nothing is recorded about them. He preached, so far as we are informed, only in the centres of commerce and of Roman life, and among these ranked Lystra, Colonia and Claudio-Derbe (7).

Ramsay came to the conclusion that Christianity 'spread at first among the educated more rapidly than among the uneducated' (8). But more about this later.

During the early second century - if we take Pliny as a guiding reference - Christianity started penetrating into the countryside. The earliest information available comes from Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt and N. Africa, though it is possible that in the Western empire similar developments were taking place; our sources fail us at this point and

it is, therefore, best not to judge from silence. Since Christianity reached the countryside of the Roman world in its new, urban form, we should expect it, as a rule, to be subordinated to the city-culture to which Christianity after Jesus had adapted itself. This, however, is not so. M. Weber had suggested that in Christianity, as in other 'rational ethical movements', the participation of the peasantry 'took place only in exceptional cases and then in a communist, revolutionary form' (9).

M. Weber's maxim is up to a point correct and, with modifications, it has been applied in recent and thorough investigations (10). We can suspect with fair certainty what had happened. Though Christianity had been transformed by Paul and the other early missionaries into a purely spiritual movement with its reformist implications inhibited, its contact with the countryside revived the prophetic, millenarian and reformative elements which could not be wiped off the earliest sacred texts.

In the following two chapters I shall basically deal with the spread of Christianity in the city of Alexandria and the Egyptian countryside. I shall attempt to demonstrate that in Alexandria, Christianity embraced highly educated and wealthy people to a much greater extent than usually maintained. Furthermore, I shall argue that Christianity penetrated rural Egypt earlier than generally believed, but found its first converts primarily among the Greek speaking and landowning peasants, who were by no means the majority of the rural population.

CHAPTER 4.

Christianity and the Cities

The Christianization of the Upper Classes - The Case of Alexandria

And at the same time in the reign of Commodus our treatment was changed to a milder one, and by the grace of God peace came on the churches throughout the whole world. The word of salvation began to lead every soul of every race of men to the pious worship of the God of the universe, so that now many of those who at Rome were famous for wealth and family turned to their own salvation with all their house and with all their kin.

Eusebius, HE , 5.21.1.

1. The Christianization of the Upper Classes.

In the earliest Christian community at Corinth, so Paul wrote, there were 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble' (1). Many scholars have taken these words to imply that the earliest Christian communities were predominantly poor and insignificant. Others have thought that all the Christian communities until Constantine were poor and insignificant. A few at least have noticed that Paul said 'not many' and that, therefore, a few wise, mighty or noble people may have existed (2). It seems to me that we cannot take the Pauline statement too seriously, not only because it is rhetorical, but also because we do not know Paul's standards. From what we know it seems that Paul had high rather than low standards.

In the present chapter I shall argue that no matter how we interpret the statement given about the Christian Corinthians in Paul's days, by the second half of the second century in large cities such as Alexandria, numerous, if not most Christians were of some education and wealth.

By the end of the fourth century in the eastern Roman empire and

the beginning of the fifth century in the western empire, the Christianization of the aristocracy was almost taken for granted. Modern scholars, no less than ancient, have explained the conversion of the aristocratic families principally in terms of the influence and pressure by Christian emperors. This, however, is not completely convincing. In Constantinople, as Jones has argued, the traditional governing classes were replaced by new men, whose dependency on the emperor led to their speedy conversion (3). But Constantinople was an exceptional city. In the rest of the empire, there is no evidence that similar pressures were operative (4), and in Rome itself imperial intervention seems to have had the opposite effect. To cut a long story short, I quote the following passage from P. Brown, with whose conclusions I completely agree:

The spectacular interventions of the emperors in the interests of Christianity, under Gratian and, to a lesser extent, under Theodosius and Honorius, not only solved nothing; they might even be said to have prejudiced the spread of their own religion by more peaceful means. When religion became involved with political issues affecting the authority of the emperor ... the process of adaptation to the new official religion was brutally halted; parties became crystallized around leaders, and men such as Symmachus, Flavianus and Volusianus were forced to bring their religious grievances into the open (5).

A careful consideration of the evidence suggests that overall the Christianization of the upper classes followed its own independent path. Traces of these changes can be detected even in the earliest stages of the new religion. What I propose to demonstrate is first that the upper classes were not immune to Christianity in the pre-Constantinian period, and secondly that the upper classes were principally conquered by 'peaceful' means and not by radical confrontations. The nature of the Christianization of the upper classes in the first three centuries, as I shall argue presently, explains up to a degree later developments, i.e. the change in the official religion did not take the form of a brutal rejection of the past, 'but of a transformation in which much of

the Roman secular tradition was preserved' (6).

The Aristocracy.

The aristocratic élite, strictly speaking included no more than six hundred members of the senate in the first three centuries A.D., but equestrians and leading members of the provincial capitals can also rather loosely be considered as members of the Roman aristocracy. It may be helpful to use the notion upper classes to embrace the aristocracy as just defined plus provincial town councillors. Sometimes, especially in the provinces, distinctions between social groups do not correspond to those at the Court or in the capital, so these terms are used rather loosely. In effect, due to the imprecise nature of the extant evidence, the notion 'upper classes' is used to indicate wealth and/or higher education.

Christian tradition, as it was fixed by the late second century, claimed that equestrians and even senators had been converted as early as the reign of Nero. Clement of Alexandria wrote that Mark preached the Gospel at Rome before some of Caesar's equites and the epistle of James also makes reference to a Roman of an equestrian status (7). In the Acts of Peter we are given the names of two Christian senators, Demetrius and Marcellus, and of two knights from Asia, Dionysius and Balbus (8). How far these early traditions can be trusted we cannot say. I am inclined either to accept the view of celebrated scholars, who believe that tradition on these points departs 'from historical truth by way rather of exaggeration than sheer invention' (9) or to see in these stories a backward projection of later events.

From the age of Commodus onwards the picture becomes clearer and the evidence more trustworthy. As a guiding reference historians use the quotation of Eusebius cited in the beginning of the chapter. Having said that, Eusebius went on to report the story of the martyr

Apollonius, 'a man famous among the Christians of that time for his education and philosophy', who, judging from the fact that he could defend himself before the senate, must have belonged to the highest ranks (10).

Tertullian's famous statement,

We are but of yesterday, and we have filled everything
you have - cities, tenements, forts, towns, exchanges,
yes! and camps, tribes, palace, senate, forum...

also belongs to the same period (11). If this exclamation seems nothing more than a rhetorical exaggeration, Valerian's second rescript against the Christians, issued in AD 258, emphatically confirms it. This rescript, which explicitly mentions senators and equestrians, 'takes notice of none but the upper classes and the members of Caesar's household, outside the clergy' (12). From the reign of Gallienus we also know of another Christian senator called Astyrius (13).

By the time of Origen there had been a 'superior progress' among 'councillors and rulers in the cities' (14), and, according to Eusebius, even the government of provinces was entrusted to Christians (15). There is no way of testing this piece of information; Eusebius is probably reporting an older tradition but apparently did not know a single name. The closest we can get to a confirmation is by the independent evidence of Hippolytus. In his Apostolic Tradition (c. 217), Hippolytus wrote that a military governor or a magistrate of a city who wears the purple must either desist (from public office) or be rejected by Christians (16). This prohibition is later repeated in the Canons of Elvira (c. AD 305), which forbade town magistrates (duumviri) from entering the church as long as they were in office (17). In his commentary on Daniel, Hippolytus reported the case of a Christian wife of a governor of Syria, who, it was said, could save Christians by influencing her husband (18).

Clement and the community of Alexandria.

The spread of Christianity among the upper classes, other than the aristocracy, is confirmed and documented by so many sources that it is impracticable to go over them all in detail (19). Outside the wealthy Christian community in the city of Rome, we know from Eusebius that in Syria, Palestine and Egypt many of the martyrs were 'distinguished for wealth, birth and reputation, as also for learning and philosophy' (20). This was not a rhetorical exaggeration, because Eusebius gave convincing biographical details. We can recall here Philoromus and Phileas of Alexandria, Pamphilus of Caesaria and others (21). In Lyons also Christians were far from being 'dregs of the population' and illiterates; already in the second century, they had their own slaves and numbered members of the liberal professions many of whom were Roman citizens (22). What I should like to do here is to examine one city which provides a typical profile of the early Christian communities, the city of Alexandria.

Alexandria was the prime centre of Christianity in the East. By the late second century, it had established lasting links with the Egyptian countryside and all the major cities of East and West. Prominent figures of other Christian communities gathered there to teach or to study in its school, which by the time of Origen had numerous distinguished students. The community of Alexandria itself recruited its members from among all strata, all professions and occupations, and all classes, including the poorest and the richest. Many Christian communities could see their own future in what Christianity was in Alexandria during the third century.

The Christian community of Alexandria is fairly well documented. But of course even for Alexandria, such statistics as would be desired do not exist. The best alternative is to study the Alexandrian fathers and seek in their writings the social composition of its

congregation. Modern scholars often regret that Clement gave so little information about the history of the Alexandrian church. Indeed, in his massive work he even failed to give the name of his temporary bishop in Alexandria. This failure is all the more striking when we recall that bishop Demetrius, of whom Clement wrote not a word, had kept his see for more than 13 years when Clement left Alexandria. During this time Demetrius organized the urban community, appointed bishops in the country and communicated with Rome on important ecclesiastical issues (Demetrius kept his see for 42 years in all). Nevertheless, Clement gave one valuable piece of information, which as far as I know has basically remained unexplored. This information emerges as soon as we pose the following question: To whom is he addressing his work?

Such questions are usually avoided. After all what conclusion could we arrive at, even if learned rather than uneducated readers can be detected? A small number of educated people could have read these works, and then could have expanded and popularized the ideas for a larger and possibly uneducated congregation. Our picture of the congregation would still remain dim.

By chance, one of Clement's works is a rather detailed exposition of 'rules for the regulation of the Christian, in all the relations, circumstances, and actions of life'. This work called Paedagogus, 'is addressed', as its modern editor correctly observes, 'to those who have been rescued from the darkness and pollutions of heathenism, and is an exhibition of Christian morals and manners, - a guide for the formation and development of Christian character, and for living a Christian life' (23). Rules about morals should give a picture of the social composition of the community. Besides, the Paedagogus deserves close examination for the additional reason that celebrated scholars, such as A. Harnack, have passed it by with a brief footnote:

The Paedagogus also proves that the church, for which its instructions were designed, embraced a large number of cultured people (24).

The Alexandrian church certainly embraced a large number of cultured people; but to leave the matter there amounts almost to a distortion of the facts. F.C. Burkitt has been much closer to the truth in asserting that,

Writing for a society more or less leisured and educated, Clement warns his readers at length and in detail against the perils of licence, luxury, and extravagance (25).

What Burkitt failed to notice is that Clement was writing for a Christian society with such qualifications.

More than half of the topics treated in the Paedagogus reveal immediately the social origins of its addressees. These topics include the correct use of costly vessels, ointments and crowns, jewels and gold; they refer to embellishing the body, baths etc. The rest of the topics, though apparently of interest to the common man (e.g. eating, drinking, clothes etc.), when examined more carefully, leave no doubt that wealthy people alone are taken into consideration. Let us, therefore, examine the section on eating, which occupies a large part of the work (26).

On Eating.

Clement himself made it clear that as far as he was concerned, his instructions applied to the Christian community as a whole and not simply to one section of it, regional or social. He repeated this in various passages scattered all over the work, although it is already obvious from the first paragraph:

Keeping, then, to our aim, and selecting the Scriptures which bear on the usefulness of training for life, we must now compendiously describe what the man who is called a Christian ought to be during the whole of his life (27).

Having clarified Clement's intentions, I should now like to quote a rather long paragraph which gives a vivid description of Alexandrian upper-class food customs:

For my part, I am sorry for this disease, while they are not ashamed to sing the praises of their delicacies, giving themselves great trouble to get lampreys in the Straits of Sicily, the eels of the Maeander, and the kids found in Melos, and the mullets in Sciathus, and the mussels of Pelorus, the oysters of Abydos, not omitting the sprats found in Lipara, and Mantinean turnip; and furthermore the beetroot that grows among the Ascraeans; they seek out the cockles of Methymna, the turbot of Attica, and the thrushes of Daphnis, and the reddish-brown dried figs, on account of which the ill-starred Persian marched into Greece with five hundred thousand men... (28).

So as not to leave any doubt on whether or not he was thinking of Christians (rather than pagans) in this paragraph, Clement went on by reproaching those who 'dare to apply the name agapē, to pitiful suppers, redolent of savour and sauces' (29).

I find it difficult to accept that the people to whom Clement was speaking in these words, were 'of no importance'. Even if no one ate the food described above (I am perfectly aware of the fact that Clement was exaggerating), that these people could be spoken to in these terms is significant. Lower class people would not be able to follow the argument. They had just about enough to survive - if they always had that. Even to middle class people this paragraph would sound strange. How can the following description apply to day-labourers?

For it is the mark of a silly mind to be amazed and stupified at what is presented at vulgar banquets, after the rich fare which is in the Word; and much sillier to make one's eyes the slaves of the delicacies, so that one's greed is so to speak carried round by servants. And how foolish for people to raise themselves on the couches, all but pitching their faces into the dishes, stretching out from the couch as from a nest, according to the common saying, "that they may catch the wandering steam by breathing it in!" ... For you may see such people, liker to swine or dogs for gluttony than men, in such a hurry to feed themselves full, that both jaws are stuffed out at once, the veins about the face raised and besides, the perspiration running all over, as they are tightening with their insatiable greed, and panting with their excess; the food pushed with unsocial eagerness into their stomach, as if they were stowing

away their victuals for provisions for a journey, not for digestion (30).

The Baths.

There is of course no need to go through all the rules. When Clement wrote of 'excessive fondness for jewels and gold ornaments', it is obvious what sort of people he had in mind. Once more Clement was not being rhetorical. He explicitly referred to members of his Christian community:

But these women, who comprehend not the symbolism of Scripture, gape all they can for jewels, adducing the astounding apology, "Why may I not use what God hath exhibited?" and, "I have it by me, why may I not enjoy it?" and "For whom were these things made, then, if not for us?" Such are the utterances of those who are totally ignorant of the will of God (31).

The mere fact that Clement regulated the Christian behaviour in the baths leads to no a priori conclusion. But when we read through this section, two points strike as strange; the description of the bath-buildings and the frequency of bathing. At some point Clement asked himself, what sort were the baths, and then went on to describe them:

Houses skilfully constructed, compact, portable transparent, covered with fine linen. And gold-plated chairs, and silver ones too, and ten thousand vessels of gold and silver, some for drinking, some for eating and some for bathing, are carried about with them. Besides these, there are even braziers of coals; for they have arrived at such a pitch of self-indulgence, that they sup and get drunk while bathing (32).

Later, while giving instructions on when the bath was to be used, Clement started speaking in the first person plural.

For we must not so use the bath as to require an assistant, nor are we to bathe constantly and often in the day as we frequent the market-place. But to have the water poured over us by several people is an outrage on our neighbours ... (33).

It is only women and men of great leisure who could have used the baths so frequently.

Τίς ὁ Σφζόμενος Πλούσιος.

There is no need to go into any further details. The picture which emerges is clear enough. We must not get the idea, however, that the Alexandrian Christian community consisted on the whole of rich families or individuals. In a number of occasions Clement advised his fellow Christians to spend some of their money in almsgiving. We have no reason to doubt that the poor mentioned by Clement were also members of the Christian community. With all their good feelings and almsgiving sentiments, Christians were very reluctant to feed the pagan poor. The occasions when people in need outside of the church were fed or helped are reported explicitly.

We should not even think that the wealthy members predominated in the Alexandrian community. Texts like the Paedagogus, with all their claims to present the Christian way of life, could be and were biased, reflecting the author's interests, or social environment. In Clement's case, however, the bias could not amount to complete distortion. His leading position in the catechetical school bears witness to this.

We can thus draw two general conclusions:

(a) The Christian communities of Alexandria, in the reigns of Commodus and Septimius Severus, consisted of wealthy families and individuals to such a notable extent, that a work of instruction could refer to them as if they were the whole community.

(b) The personal interests (or bias) of the leading instructor of that community were directed towards the wealthy and socially most respectable members. The personal interests of such an individual reflect the dominant Christian mentality of that period.

There was also a tendency towards asceticism in Clement which should be taken into account. This tendency could be superficially understood as a condemnation of wealth in general. In that case, the

Paedagogus can be seen as an exhortation to the rich to renounce their riches and live a life of deprivation. All members of the church would thus become practically equal, i.e. poor. Such a view is both superficial and totally mistaken. Nowhere did Clement exhort his fellow Christians to renounce their wealth. As a matter of fact, the exact opposite is true. Let us look into the matter.

Clement's translator of the Quis dives salvetur, W.G. Butterworth wrote that,

The rich man who was well-disposed towards the new religion had to consider many things which, as Clement in this treatise admits, often drove him to the conclusion that the church had no place for him (34).

Butterworth obviously held the traditional view that the church consisted in the main of poor people, and that when rich people approached Christianity (apparently on their own account), they faced a problem which was totally their own. Rich men were thought to be an exception and they were also thought to be treated as such.

If this was so, Clement's attitude in the Paedagogus and the Quis dives salvetur?, would be difficult to explain. Butterworth, who had to give some sort of explanation, was led to the even more improbable view that Clement set out to answer the question about wealth, because he was personally interested in it (35). But views such as the above are proved wrong for the following three reasons:

(a) Rich men were not, as a rule, attracted to Christianity on their own. Ample evidence, starting from the time of the Lukan Acts, the apocryphal Acts and other related documents, leads to the conclusion that special and (above all) conscious efforts were always made to bring to the faith the most prominent, the most distinguished in fame and wealth, figures all over the empire. The second and third century apologists addressed themselves to the educated class.

(b) The reconciliation of wealth and faith was not a personal problem. It was a problem faced by the Christian community as a

movement. The orthodox party, represented by Clement in the age of Commodus and Septimius Severus, had decided in favour of the inclusion of rich people (without any obligation on their part to abandon their wealth). Clement, in dealing with this problem, was replying to attacks of other groups, not necessarily heretical, which represented (in the main) the poorer countryside (see next chapter, section on Nepos).

(c) It is very unlikely that a figure of Clement's status and significance would be writing a work of regulations for the Christians, addressed to rich people, only because of personal interest in the matter. It must have been the already established social conditions of Christian Alexandria which led him to compose such a work.

I should like to quote from the above mentioned treatise, a passage which gives a clear idea of Clement's view on the subject.

For what wrong does a man do, if by careful thought and frugality he has before his conversion gathered enough to live on; or what is still less open to censure if from the very first he was placed by God, the distributor of fortune, in a household of such men, in a family abounding in riches and powerful in wealth (γένος ἀμφιλαφές τοῖς χρήμασιν καί τῳ πλούτῳ κρατοῦν)?... Why need wealth ever have arisen at all out of earth, if it is the provider and agent of death? (36).

It is only one step further to assert that a man can keep on gathering after his conversion also. The conclusion is clear. Clement was not against wealth; he was only against a self-indulgent way of life.

Clement of Rome and Clement of Alexandria.

There still remains one point which should not be left out without some brief discussion. I have already remarked that Clement in a number of cases advised his fellow Christians to help the poor. Although these cases occupy an extremely small number of lines in the Paedagogus, it is possible that someone who is 'not interested in

statistics', might use them to support the view that Clement was addressing himself equally to rich and poor. This is totally erroneous. To illustrate my interpretation I shall compare two passages, apparently on the same subject, one from Clement of Alexandria and the other from Clement of Rome. In the latter's passage we get a glimpse of the view predominant in Rome in the late first century. In the former's passage, a glimpse of the view predominant in Alexandria a century later. I start with Clement of Rome:

In Christ Jesus, then let this corporate body of ours be likewise maintained intact, with each of us giving way to his neighbour in proportion to our spiritual gifts. The strong are not to ignore the weak, and the weak are to respect the strong. Rich men should provide for the poor and the poor should thank God for giving them somebody to supply their wants (37).

This is what I would call equality in treatment. Rich and poor were being addressed alike. The Rich should do this, and the poor that. But let us come to Clement of Alexandria once more. I quote from a section which dealt with jewels and gold ornaments. It ended in the following words:

Let there, then, be in the fruits of thy hands, sacred order, liberal communication, and acts of economy. "For he that giveth to the poor, lendeth to God" (38).

The poor were still present and almsgiving exhortations were present as well. But as in all other similar passages in the Paedagogus, the poor were not told what to do. Clement of Alexandria, unlike Clement of Rome, was not speaking to the poor any longer. The centre of gravity had shifted. The social composition of the communities (and the significance of each social group) had changed in the course of one century. If we want to see what happened to the theology of poverty, we just have to turn once more to the Quis dives salvetur?

For when a man lacks the necessities of life he cannot possibly fail to be broken in spirit and to

neglect the higher things, as he strives to produce these necessities by any means and from any source.

And how much more useful is the opposite condition when possessing a sufficiency a man is himself in no distress about money-making and also helps those he ought (39)?

Some Linguistic Considerations.

A society sharply divided into classes needs status symbols... So in the ancient world the living developing speech of the common people, who had no literary education, was despised by those wealthy enough to have had a literary education and who found in the distinction between their purist speech and that of the masses just the kind of symbol they sought.

R. Browning (40).

The literary evidence usually tends to preserve the idiom of the most educated classes. There are two basic reasons for this. On the one hand it is the most educated members of a society who had the ability (due to appropriate education) and the time to write; such people obviously preferred the literary style rather than the 'common', 'vulgar' style of the masses. After all, this was what rhetorical studies were all about. On the other hand, even when common people wrote anything, they tended to imitate the literary style of the most learned, i.e. they wrote in an idiom other than the one they spoke. This tendency is even reflected in some of their private letters, let alone the official certificates and libelli, such as those preserved in Egypt and elsewhere. Official certificates were almost exclusively written in a uniform style - a technical language - which had little to do with the spoken language. It is frequent to find certificates of illiterate people written for them by professionals, but even in these cases the numerous mistakes betray the gap between spoken and literary language. It is probable that many illiterates did not even understand the language of the document they signed.

Under these circumstances the examination of the early Christian

literature would have little to tell us about the social composition of the communities which produced it. Fortunately enough for our purpose, the first Christian centuries were characterized by the revival of Atticism, which tended to replace the spoken koinē. This tendency, known as the second sophistic, had started from the last years B.C. and reached its peak, becoming a strong literary movement, by the middle of the second century AD (41). The koinē in the Hellenistic ages had not left unaffected even the most educated and had found its way even into literature. The Atticist movement was an attempt to push the Greek language a few centuries back. (We could add here that similar developments, though not so powerful were taking place with Latin as well). What we are facing is, therefore, not the usual discrepancy between the spoken and the written language, nor the usual discrepancy between the language of the educated and that of the uneducated people. The upper classes were attempting to replace an idiom, which they themselves had been using, with a 'pure' Attic style.

The New Testament was written in the koinē in an age when the second sophistic had not yet reached its peak. Other Christian texts which followed, used the same language, but gradually it became evident that the New Testament language was an obstacle to the spread of Christianity among the upper classes, which had by now moved to the Attic language. As Jones has argued, 'Men who had been through the grammatical and rhetorical mill found the Greek and Latin translations of the scripture intolerable' (42). Realizing this problem, Christian authors started replacing and finally succeeded in eliminating koinē altogether (except in the New Testament). Already by the time of John Chrysostom, the story could be told of an old woman who complained that she could not understand half of what John Chrysostom was saying (43). We can use the degree of success and the timing of the 'purist' movement, as it is reflected in the Christian literature, to detect the social composition of the Christian communities.

The New Testament itself was not written in a uniform language. As R. Browning has marked, 'Luke often corrects what he finds in Mark', while 'the Pauline epistles are more literary than the Gospels'. Of the documents which follow, 'The Shepherd of Hermas is a monument of spoken koinē as is also the Didachē; Clement of Rome has occasional literary pretensions'; and 'the New Testament Apocrypha are largely written in the vulgar Greek of the time' (44). However, the second century Christian apologists, such as Justin who was a converted Greek philosopher, tuned their language and style into the Atticising Greek of their pagan contemporaries. In Clement of Alexandria we can clearly notice the difference. Although the New Testament koine was still the spoken language, all of Clement's works were written in a rather Atticising, scholarly language. This is an indication of the status of Clement's audience. But although Clement felt quite at home when he dealt with the classical Greek authors, his language was not yet 'pure' by the standards of the most educated. Clement himself was conscious of this, for he wrote:

We have often said already that we have neither practised nor do we study expressing ourselves in pure Greek ... (45).

The fourth century fathers wrote and preached in the best archaising literary style. The avenue which had been opened up by Clement and Crigen for the conversion of the upper classes, was completed. - For similar developments in the west we can compare the 'bad Latin' of pope Victor (AD 189-99) with the 'good Latin' of Jerome (c. AD 347-420) (46).

Archaeological Evidence.

The archaeological material which could help us understand or add to our knowledge of the present problem is scanty. The discovery of a catacomb on the Via Latina on the outskirts of Rome is one of the

few exceptions. From its frescoes, which depict pagan along with Christian scenes, P. Brown has drawn the conclusion that this 'frank syncretism' was a peculiarity of the Christianization of the Roman aristocracy (47). Christianity had penetrated into the senatorial élite of Rome through a peaceful way and pagan symbols were preserved. Another interesting piece of archaeological evidence is that of the Christian mummies in Egypt. Unfortunately P.D. Scott-Moncrieff, who has collected the material, has not examined it from the point of view of social stratification (48). Many mummies and mummy portraits (of which several have been discovered after Scott-Moncrieff had published his book) belong to the Roman period; some of those definitely classified as Christian belong to the early second century. Since mummification and mummy portraits were too expensive even for those of middling wealth people, we can use them as evidence for the early Christianization of some members of the upper classes in Egypt. Once more a 'frank syncretism' accompanied the conversion of the upper classes (49).

2. Social Developments in the Cities.

The evidence considered above shows that the reign of Commodus inaugurated an era of unprecedented Christian success with the conversion of the members of the upper classes. Besides the scanty and scattered information about individuals, we have Eusebius' testimony, which seems to be based on a much more detailed knowledge of the situation. Relying on the independent authority of Clement, we have seen that in Alexandria, the Christian community embraced a large number of very wealthy people at about the same period. It is legitimate, therefore, to ask, what was so special about the age of Commodus that gave Christianity this new vigor. It would be interesting to know whether it was members of the traditional aristocracy who were being converted or Christians of lower birth who pushed Christianity upwards as they themselves advanced socially. We do know that some philosophers of high qualifications were converted to Christianity during their lifetime, but on the conversion of the municipal élite we can only speculate. I shall return to this problem in the next section. At present let us look at the reign of Commodus.

M. Rostovtzeff introduces his 'Ordeal of the Roman Empire in the Third Century' with the following words:

The reign of the Emperor Commodus, the son of Marcus Aurelius, ends the period of the enlightened despotism and also begins a new period of bloodshed and misery, in which the main feature is the power possessed by the army to settle at will the destiny of the state (1).

On the descriptive level Rostovtzeff's account is outdated; the attribution to personal merit of much that went on in the period that followed Commodus does not satisfy students of ancient history any longer. On the explanatory level, however, Rostovtzeff's anachronistic analytic concepts must be totally rejected. The imperial legions were not a 'peasant army', any more than municipal landowners

were a 'bourgeoisie' (2). Nevertheless, no one would deny that the security of the empire depended increasingly upon the army. By the age of Marcus Aurelius, the Marcomanni and other tribes on the Danube started pressing the Northern frontiers. The military problem, which led to a gradual build up of the army, brought with it financial difficulties. There were no institutions lending money and the Roman government never borrowed any; it had to either increase taxation or debase the currency by mixing copper with silver in minting new coins. But what do all these have to do with the Christianization of, let us say, the municipal aristocracy of Alexandria? Egypt was far away from the northern frontiers, and the Sassanids, who claimed Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor for the Persian empire, did not become dangerous until the middle of the third century (3). To answer this question we have to consider first some aspects of the structure of the Roman economy as a whole.

The interactions of money taxation, the development of a unified monetary economy and the growth of provincial cities have only recently been explored. I shall turn to the growth of the cities and its relation to the taxation of the peasantry in the next chapter. For the time being, let me give a brief account of taxation as a means of political alliances and of integration of the monetary economy. According to K. Hopkins, from whom I borrow the present arguments, the rate of taxation was kept practically constant (it was only once raised by Vespasian in some provinces) (4) and at a relatively low level; local élite groups could thus keep their own incomes high. The basic problem with taxation was 'that any attempt to increase taxes threatened the privileges of the prosperous intermediaries upon whom the central government relied' (5). It was not until a century later that taxes were increased. The Roman government did its best not to threaten its alliance with the local privileged classes. So the second alternative was forced upon them; the currency was debased.

By the reign of Marcus Aurelius the silver denarius had been devalued by 25 per cent compared with its first century level, and by the time of Septimius Severus by 50 per cent (6). Debasement was followed by inflation; after a period of economic stability, which had lasted for more than a century, money supply rose steeply from the age of Commodus; hence probably, inflation. The financial problems faced by bankers during this period are reflected in the story of the bankruptcy of the Christian slave-banker Callistus. 'After that there was confusion' (7). Prima facie, debasement and inflation had little to do with the provincial aristocracy. But let us go a little deeper into the problem.

'Towards the end of the second century and even more in the third the system of local government began to break down' (8). This is a statement with which most Roman historians would agree. It is corroborated by the reluctance or even refusal of many local notables to stand for office in the provincial cities. Duly qualified citizens were sometimes forced to become decurions and magistrates with ever increasing legal compulsion. Decurions and magistrates were expected to finance local festivals, games and the erection of new public buildings. The astronomical rise of prices, which was the immediate result of inflation, made the burden heavy even for some wealthy people, especially for renters who were letting land or buildings for money (although it must have been wage-earners who suffered most). The third century witnessed a notable decrease in the erection of public buildings. But to attribute the local government crisis in the whole empire to inflation, presupposes an integrated monetary economy.

On the basis of an analysis of more than 90,000 silver coins found in regions from all over the empire, K. Hopkins has shown that starting from the middle of the first century, for roughly a hundred and fifty years increases and decreases in the volume of coins were uniform for all regions (9). It should, therefore, cause no surprise

that all regions met with similar financial difficulties. But let us turn to the provincial cities once more.

Our evidence suggests that some 'duly qualified' citizens did not stand for office, obliging provincial governors to turn to legal compulsion, and that this period witnessed a marked fall in 'public' expenditure (that is to say fewer gifts of money and less private support for public games and erection of civic buildings). The alliance of the Roman central government with the local upper classes was to a certain extent shaken. It is perhaps in this context that we should also consider Severus' granting of a constitution of the municipal type to Alexandria; petitions for such a constitution, which was extended to other Egyptian cities as well, had been until then rejected. The mounting difficulties made the concession at some point preferable. But not all factions of the provincial upper classes suffered to the same extent. P. Garnsey has argued that 'the Antonine age was a period of prosperity for the primores veri and ruin for the inferiores within the councils' (10). The primores veri had no reason to complain and they must have kept their traditional good relations with the Roman government and its culture, i.e. the Imperial Cult etc. But the inferiores, both those of the traditional noble families and the newcomers, who were pressed into the councils because they had the minimum required wealth, did have reasons to complain. They were also 'found among the recruits to unrest and rebellion' (11). It is perhaps interesting at this point to quote de Ste. Croix, who has described the problem in the following terms:

The screw having already been tightened at the bottom of the social scale by landlords and tax-collectors about as far as it would safely go, and indeed farther, had from the second century onwards, and regularly by the third, to be put on the curial order. As soon as they began to change even to a small extent from the beneficiaries of the system into the victims, they made indignant protests, which have received unduly sympathetic attention from most historians (12).

If some curials and other members of the provincial élite lost

their places among the privileged groups, they had to be replaced by newcomers. Jones has argued that this was a new development of the late second and third centuries which succeeded a stable and rather static period (13). Garnsey and others find this very doubtful, although it is becoming increasingly accepted 'that a considerable degree of mobility characterized the society of the late Empire' (14). Jones' view is tempting because it is supported by legal evidence which he has analysed; the mobility of freedmen and of members of the Familia Caesaris also seems to have been greater from the late second century onwards. However, for the purpose of my present arguments it makes little difference when social mobility became more intense. What really matters is that at least from the second century onwards - if not earlier on - Roman society was notably mobile; this has been sufficiently demonstrated by Hopkins (15).

I have no way of proving my last proposition and I therefore put it forward as a mere suggestion. It seems to me that it is more than a coincidence that by the end of the second century some sections of the urban upper classes were shaken by the financial crisis which followed the military strain and that at the same time members of the same classes were abandoning their traditional religions in favour of a new cult which among other things did not sacrifice to the Roman gods and the emperor (16). My speculative and tentative proposition, based upon the timing and the nationwide character of the phenomenon, is, therefore, that the economic crisis, which led to a regrouping of the governing classes, had a peculiar effect upon the religious sentiments of some of the less wealthy members of the upper classes (i.e. the inferiores within the councils et al.), an effect that led some of them to Christianity. But more about this in the next section (17):

3. Patterns of the Christianization of the Upper Classes.

In section 2, I referred to some of the most important evidence, suggesting that the upper classes had not remained immune from the new religion, even in the period prior to Constantine. Aristocrats, administrative officials, army officers and veterans had been converted already in the late second and third centuries. Unfortunately, we have no idea as to the scale of the phenomenon. It seems rather certain that only a small minority of the upper classes was converted, while Christianized senators and equestrians must have been very few indeed.

In section 3, I outlined the prevailing social and economic conditions in the provincial cities. What we found there was a restless and unstable society. Within the old upper classes, important changes and new fragmentations were in progress. The already socially mobile Roman society became even more flexible, while some members of the traditional élite groups were losing not only some of their privileges but their faith in the central government as well.

In the present section, an attempt will be made to link the advance of Christianity into the upper classes with social and economic developments. The investigation will concentrate on what we may call patterns of Christianization of the upper classes. We can classify these patterns in three categories. In the first, the upward movement of Christianity followed the upward mobility of some of its adherents; in the second, Christianity entered the upper-class families through marriage or conversion of the head of the family; the 'conversion' of kings and emperors must be considered as a further motivating factor. It must be admitted, however, that patterns often intermingle and that the distinctions are basically tactical.

A. Upward Mobility of Christians.

Unfortunately there is no way of knowing whether Christianity moved easier and faster upwards by immediate appeal to rich pagans than by following the social success of some of its adherents. It would be of even greater interest if we could know whether Christianity itself helped, in any sense, some of its members to advance financially and socially. There is no doubt that at a later age some Christians took advantage of their position in the Christian communities to secure a better social position; but even as early as the middle of the third century it seems that this was not uncommon. In the age of Aurelian, 'an exceedingly large number of bishops' in a synod denounced and expelled the bishop of Antioch, Paul. The bishops of the synod gave some of their reasons:

But whereas Paul departed from the canon, and has turned aside to spurious and bastard doctrines, we are under no obligation to judge his actions... Though he was formerly poor and penniless, neither having received a livelihood from his father nor having got it from a trade or any occupation, he has now come to possess abundant wealth, as a result of lawless deeds and sacrilegious plunderings and extortions exacted from the brethren by threats... He considers godliness as a way of gain (1).

Paul was also accused that he made even the presbyters and deacons in his company rich (2). Because Paul was condemned as a heretic, his other 'misdeeds' were not further investigated. However, the orthodox bishops, who met at the synod, did not deny (and indeed implied) that some of their own number might have also been engaged in similar practices. It is known that as early as the beginning of the second century, clergymen were unfrocked because of 'excessive fondness for money' (3).

In the first part of the present section, I should like to consider the existing fragmentary evidence which suggests that the new religion followed the upward mobility of its successful devotees. Indeed, no matter how strange it may seem, it is even possible to date

the beginning of this phenomenon and to link it to another factor more easily traced. This factor was the expectation of 'the Day of the Lord' close at hand. With such an expectation prevailing, it is no wonder that some Christians of the first generation were 'idling their time away, minding everybody's business but their own'. In extreme cases the reaction had to be sharp: 'the man who will not work shall not eat' (4). As I cannot go into the subject in detail, I shall confine myself to an outline.

By the late first century - on the testimony of 1 Clement - the Christian community in Rome included rich and poor members alike. This does not seem to have caused any problems (5). Most converts must have been primarily concerned with the eschatological problem. Although Clement's letter was preoccupied with the 'weakness of the flesh', there are no signs that Christians at this age neglected their spiritual duties in order to concentrate on business or to accumulate properties. If some of them had been rich before their conversion, that was all right, so long as they cared for the poor.

But by the early second century, as we can see in The Shepherd of Hermas, the Christian community in Rome was in a different condition. The eschatological hope, or at least its immediate realization, was fading away. Some were now 'concerned with business' and did not 'cleave to the saints'. This was a new problem; not because some Christians were rich, but because they 'denied' the Lord. Hermas was clear about this. There were Christians he wrote, who

became rich and in honour among the heathen; then they put on great haughtiness (ὑπερηφανίαν) and became arrogant (ὑψηλόφρονες), and abandoned the truth, and did not cleave to the righteous, but lived together with the heathens, and this way pleased them better (6).

From the same period we have the similar passage of the Didachē, which referred to the eastern communities (Syria or Egypt). According to this document, Christians were instructed to choose 'overseers and assistants (ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διάκονοι) who are worthy of the Lord:

men who are humble and not eager for money', which means that many probably were eager for money. The same problem was acute in the Christian communities at Philippi (7).

This was a new situation, a new problem for the spiritual leaders of the Christian community, especially for those like Hermas who still entertained strong eschatological expectations. For our purpose, however, it is more important to notice that even in Hermas' mind, these Christians mentioned above, were not necessarily 'apostates', but remained in the faith; the problem was that in Hermas' eyes they did not do 'the work of the faith' (8). We must not forget, after all, that Hermas himself was prospering from a business of his own (9).

From that time onwards, and especially whenever a Christian community enjoyed a long period of peace, many Christians concentrated on business with the aim of maximising their profit. After more than a century had passed, without any signs that the 'end' was imminent, it seemed worthwhile to start caring for the present life also. Irenaeus wrote that 'in some cases there follows us a small, and in others a large amount of property', part of which was acquired by 'avarice' while they were still Gentiles or received from heathen parents, and part of which was being acquired even when they had become Christians (10). But the periods of peace did not last for ever. They were often interrupted by persecutions, if not by natural disasters. The charismatic leaders of the churches, following the best traditions of the Jewish prophets, interpreted the sufferings as a heavenly sign. Eschatological fears and hopes were revived. We get a glimpse of such an occasion in Cyprian's De Lapsis (c. AD.250):

It has pleased the Lord to prove His family; and as a long period of peace had corrupted the discipline which had come down to us from Him, the divine judgement awakened our faith from a declining, and 'should I so speak, an almost slumbering state...

Individuals were applying themselves to the increase of wealth; and forgetting both what was the conduct of believers under the Apostles, and what ought to be their conduct in every age, they with insatiable

eagerness for gain devoted themselves to the multiplying of possessions (11).

There is no doubt, therefore, that some Christians, without abandoning their faith, were interested in increasing their wealth and in advancing socially. We have also seen that these Christians often succeeded in their efforts, to the disapproval of some church-leaders. But is there any independent evidence that the Christians of our period had a good chance of becoming rich? To this question, I think we can answer in the affirmative.

As I have already argued earlier on, numerous Christians were freedmen or members of the Familia Caesaris. It has been argued by Roman historians that both these groups, had good prospects of social advancement. But let us first consider two other cases of even greater significance.

1) The Artisans.

Few ancient authors have given such clear indications about the social composition of the early Christian communities as Celsus. In a passage, preserved by Origen, Celsus wrote that Christians were found 'in private houses' among the 'wool-workers, cobblers, laundry-workers, and the most illiterate and bucolic yokels' (12). The context leaves little doubt that the 'illiterate and bucolic yokels' were also employed in similar occupations. This is hardly surprising if we recall an edict by Caracalla which reported that numerous Egyptian peasants fled to Alexandria to work as linen-weavers (13). The statement considered cannot be taken literally (for it bears the marks of contempt), but it is obvious that when Celsus thought of the contemporary Christians, he immediately associated them with artisans. This piece of information comes from the middle of the second century, but the situation could scarcely have been different before or

afterwards. Jesus himself is thought to have been a carpenter (though this is probably a misinterpretation) (14), Paul, Aquila and Priscilla were tent-makers. In the Slavonic version of Josephus' Jewish War it is written that the early Christians 'were working men, some only shoemakers, others cobblers, others labourers' (15). The Didachē was quite informative on this matter:

If the newcomer is only passing through, give him all the help you can - though he is not to stay more than a couple of days with you, or three if it is unavoidable. But if he wants to settle down among you, and he is a skilled worker (τεχνίτης) let him find employment and earn his bread (16).

The early third century Canons of Hippolytus stated that among the accepted occupations for Christians (provided they did not make idols) were those of goldsmiths, silversmiths, painters and other craftsmen (17). Theodotus an influential leader of a schismatic group and a contemporary of Hippolytus, was himself a cobbler (18). The above is only part of the evidence available but sufficient to illustrate Celsus' claim. Perhaps it is also worth noting that according to M. Weber, early Christianity was certainly from the beginning a religion specifically for artisans (19).

In relation to social mobility, the fact that numerous Christians were artisans, gives rise to certain observations. To begin with, in spite of the widely held view to the contrary, urban craftsmen were never hereditarily tied to their occupations until the end of the fourth century (and even then with little success). The argument, which was based by Jones on legal evidence, holds true even for the fourth century (and right up until the age of Justinian) when compulsion in this respect was only applied to the guilds of the Western empire (20). This is important enough, for although it does not suggest that artisans were occupationally or socially mobile, it proves at least that there was no law restricting it.

From a detailed, and unique in its kind, study on the Egyptian

artisans by I.F. Fikhman we gather the following information (21). Artisans did not work only in the cities; many of them were found in villages often working in jobs not immediately related to agriculture. For the Roman period 110 different artisanal occupations are recorded, their number increasing to 180 in the Byzantine age. This points to a great degree of specialization. In spite of ambiguities and controversies, it also seems justifiable to assert that among artisans free workers largely predominated. Many women were found among the Egyptian artisans, especially in the production of textiles, although it may be noted that women were paid less than men. Artisans in Egypt were generally poor. It looks as if many had no house of their own; even more had debts. Nevertheless, some must have been relatively wealthy, judging from the fact that they were creditors or guarantors, while others were among the curials (22).

Attention must also be paid to the internal organization of the artisanal clubs. (Perhaps the best term to use would be guilds if it did not so strongly recall the medieval corporations). In the Roman period, the Egyptian clubs had a more or less democratic character which gradually faded out. Juridical power, exercised by the club-presidents in a later period, originally belonged to the general assembly. For the Roman period it is also attested that these clubs fought for the rights of their members, even with what we could reasonably call strikes. These corporations also met on festivals and important social events such as marriages. Their social character also faded out by the late Roman period (perhaps because this role passed to the Christian church)

It is not possible to draw any definite conclusions about the mobility of Christian artisans. But on the basis of the above summary we can formulate a number of plausible propositions - at least for Egypt.

(a) Christian artisans, like all other artisans, were not tied by law to the job of their parents.

(b) As artisans worked both in cities and villages, the Christians among them could have helped the spread of their religion in the countryside.

(c) The textile manufacture seems to have been a privileged branch for Christian conversions; this could be related to the fact that numerous women worked in textile production.

(d) The fact that some artisans were rich enough to become creditors or guarantors suggests that some Christian artisans could also advance financially and socially.

(e) Once again, as in the case of wealthy freedmen, we may be observing a route through which Christians entered the curial order.

2) The Bankers (23).

Up to now we have seen that during the late second and the third centuries, some Christians grasped the chance provided them and became rich, to the astonishment of some church fathers. But could it be, in any sense, claimed that being a Christian opened in itself significant financial or social opportunities, as the case of Paul of Samosata suggests? Corruption, bribery and fraud were not unknown even among Christians (24). It seems, however, that some influential Christians were engaged in a business which promised them, precisely because of their good name, quick and accumulating profit. This was the banking business.

In the early years of the second half of the second century, orthodox Christians accused the Montanist prophets of lending money (25). Lucian; in his Death of Peregrinus (c. AD 170) reported a rather spectacular account of the Christian years of his hero. Lucian was not friendly to Christianity or to any other 'superstition';

but the details of the story reported (although written in mockery) represent the authentic Palestinian Christian milieu. Peregrinus Proteus, we are told, left his homeland in the Hellespont as a fugitive and went to Palestine, where he became a Christian. Passing through all the hierarchical grades, he finally became a bishop. As a Christian leader, he was arrested and imprisoned. Lucian gave the following account of what then happened:

... from the very break of day aged widows and orphan children could be seen waiting near the prison...

Indeed, people came even from the cities in Asia, sent by the Christians at their common expense, to succour and defend and encourage the hero... much money came to him from them by reason of his imprisonment, and he produced not a little revenue from it... So if any charlatan and trickster, able to profit by occasions, came among them (the Christians) he quickly acquires sudden wealth by imposing upon simple folk (26).

This last sentence could be a prejudiced assumption, but Tatian who happened to mention Proteus, confirmed the man's interest for money (27).

About fifteen years later, the imperial freedman Carpophorus started a banking business in Rome through his slave, the later bishop Callistus. Hippolytus gave the following revealing story:

To Callistus, as being of the faith, Carpophorus committed no inconsiderable amount of money, and directed him to bring in profit from banking. He (Callistus) took the money and started business in what is called Fish Market Ward. As time passed not a few deposits were entrusted to him by widows and brethren thanks to the reputation of Carpophorus (28).

A schismatic movement in Rome, which was in its prime in the early years of the third century, had a banker as its patron (29). It is significant that the contempt felt in the early years for the banking business, gradually faded out; many Christian writers and among them the Alexandrian bishop Dionysius (AD 248-65) compared the work of a good Christian leader with that of 'approved money-changers' (30).

In the light of the above, we can look at some further pieces of information which acquire a clearer meaning. Cyprian, thinking of

the situation in Africa in the pre-Decian period of peace wrote that,

Numerous bishops, who ought to be an encouragement and example to others, despising their sacred ministry, engaged themselves in secular vocations, relinquished their Chair, deserted their people, strayed among foreign provinces, hunted the markets for mercantile profit.

These 'numerous bishops' apparently could have been mere merchants, but Cyprian concluded his story in words which can hardly hide the true meaning:

(these bishops), tried to amass large sums of money while they had brethren starving within the church, took possession of estates by fraudulent proceedings, and multiplied their gains by accumulated usuries (31).

The early fourth century Canons of Elvira referred to bishops, presbyters and deacons, who left their places to engage in trade, in similar words as Cyprian. The Canons were concerned with those clerics and laymen who took usury (32).

The banking business, as is well known, required two things: accumulated money for capital and a good name. Their position in the community gave bishops and other clerics the reputation they needed; the money, they either got from their patrons, or they earned through trading. Origen had to admit that 'some became leaders of the Christian teaching for the sake of a little prestige' (33). We have already seen how this prestige was sometimes used. But the most astonishing development was that in the late third century the Alexandrian bishop Maximus (AD 264-82), through his assistant and successor Theonas, acted as a banker or depository for other Egyptian traders (34). That the Christian bishops gradually became members of the Roman aristocracy is well known. It is generally thought that this was a post-Constantinian development. The evidence discussed above suggests that the financial and social advancement of Christian bishops and other church leaders had its beginning much earlier, i.e. at an age when Christianity was still being persecuted.

3) Freedmen.

In chapter 2, I referred to three major rights, which I thought were applicable to most categories of freedmen. These rights were, the option of mobility, the right to possess property, and the right to have a family. To freedmen, therefore, the road was open, at least up to a degree, to social advancement. I can think of two arguments to support the theory that freedmen actually managed to take advantage of this open road. The first argument is based on archaeological evidence. In an article based on more than 1,000 texts of sepulchral inscriptions, M.L. Gordon has argued that 'It would be a cautious estimate to conclude that about one fifth of the local aristocracy of Italy was descended from slaves' (35). This conclusion has not met with general approval. To decide who was and who was not a freedman's son is not an easy task; furthermore, we do not know whether these inscriptions were representative of the population. We cannot enter into a discussion of this problem here, but we can agree with M.I. Finley that even if we reduced the percentage by half, it 'would not invalidate the conclusion that a significant number of freedmen had succeeded through their sons in attaining high social and political status' (36). My second argument is a logical one. The great majority of freedmen must have been former slaves who either managed to collect large amounts of money, with which they bought their freedom, or impressed their masters with their knowledge and skills. Of such people we have every reason to believe that they would succeed in one way or another after gaining their freedom.

The legislation of Augustus restricted participation by freedmen in local government positions; Claudius excluded them from the Alexandrian ephebate, while Marcus Aurelius excluded them from such high posts as the Athenian Areopagus (37). Other emperors restricted the privileges of freedmen in various ways. Judging from some typical

cases, we can conclude that prosperous freedmen reacted to these disadvantages by seeking to get their sons elected to positions of honour (38). This inclination of some freedmen can be considered as a further motivating factor for social success.

Gordon's article contains one more valuable piece of information. Up to the middle of the first century, there appear to have been very few decurions of servile origin. Things changed in the second and third centuries, i.e. the centuries when Christianity made its advance into the classes of wealth and rank; from then on there are numerous datable inscriptions, sufficient to justify the claim that the 'golden age' of freedmen had been reached (39). After all, it is only reasonable to expect that when pressure failed to provide adequate numbers from the traditional provincial upper-classes for the city-councils, prosperous freedmen would be the next to be pressed. Jones has concluded that 'Christianity rose in the social scale and gradually conquered the curial order', as prosperous freedmen began entering the city-councils (40).

We should certainly like to know more about the social origins of those Christians who, according to Eusebus, were among the 'eminent persons' (τῶν περιφανεστέρων) of their city, when the persecutions of Decius broke out in Alexandria. These people, we are told, came forward to sacrifice immediately through fear; some because they held public positions and were compelled to do so by their business, others because they were dragged by those around them (41). It seems that we are here facing the sort of Christians reproached by Hermas and Cyprian, who after gaining wealth became weaker in their faith. It is much less probable that these people had been converted to Christianity, while already in public positions. If my hypothesis is correct, we should expect to find among them the nouveaux riches freedmen and descendants of freedmen mentioned above.

4) The Familia Caesaris.

What has been said about the prospects of upward social mobility of freedmen, applies to a greater extent to members of the Imperial Familia, i.e. to the slaves and freedmen of the emperor. The reasons for treating this Familia as a social group of its own have already been given (see chapter 3). We have seen how the Familia Caesaris was in a sense the heir of another slave group, the servi publici of the Republic and how the posts assigned to its members and their common master/patron, account for their social and administrative significance. Their privileged position, already obvious from the time of Augustus, became of even greater importance for the empire from the reigns of Claudius and Nero onwards.

I shall first discuss the prospects and patterns of social mobility of members of the Familia Caesaris, and then on the basis of a rather unusual inscription, I shall give an example of a Christian Imperial slave with good prospects of promotion; there is every reason to believe that there must have been many others like him.

Upward Mobility of Caesariani.

It has been said, and with good reason, that 'Imperial freedmen ... provide dramatic examples of upward mobility' (42). Among the best known and most discussed cases of imperial freedmen, who became extremely rich or powerful, are those of Narcissus, Pallas and Nymphidius. But although significant enough, these extreme cases are exceptional, and no general argument could be advanced based exclusively upon them. What distinguished almost all members of the Familia from other slaves and freedmen was that they had better social prospects and better social status than most of the free plebs. It is known that some of the imperial domestics were well off. They

sometimes paid large sums of money to obtain higher posts or to influence the emperor in favour of friends. Such are the cases reported by Suetonius (43). But they were able to collect these large sums (in one case, Suetonius spoke of 10,000 gold pieces for a stewardship) and to approach the emperor for such a purpose, only because they already had close relations with him.

In their conflict with the senate and the equestrians, emperors sometimes employed their own slaves and freedmen in posts of administrative and political importance. Starting from the sub-clerical grades, imperial slaves and freedmen were employed in almost all the administrative posts including some senior grades (a rationibus, ab epistulis) and that of procurator. These duties either brought high social status immediately or opened the way for it. A few imperial freedmen were sometimes awarded honorary titles by the senate. Such measures might have been intended to please the emperor. Narcissus was awarded an honorary questorship and Pallas an honorary praetorship and fifteen million sesterces. Pallas was content with the title; he already had enough money to decline the second offer. Tacitus reported that Pallas was then worth three hundred million sesterces (44).

Some very interesting and instructive conclusions can also be drawn from the examination of the marriage patterns of imperial slaves and freedmen. Up to the middle of the first century marriage patterns of imperial slaves and freedmen did not differ much from those of other slaves and freedmen. But from then on until the middle of the third century large numbers of known imperial slaves and freedmen are found to have married free-born women (ingenuae) (45). We may thus conclude that whereas for common slaves and freedmen, marriage did not open prospects of significant social mobility, for the members of the Familia Caesaris the reverse is true.

The Christian Slaves and Freedmen of the Emperor.

The evidence which bears on the Christian slaves and freedmen of the emperor has already been examined in some detail in the third chapter. We saw there that during the reigns of Claudius and Nero the Christian community within the imperial household was considerable and significant. This is confirmed by the letters of Paul and speculatively deduced for the age of Clement of Rome. From the middle of the second century onwards, with intervals never greater than twenty years, we are repeatedly reminded that there were some Christians in the imperial household. To the evidence derived from Justin, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius and Lactantius, we must add one sepulchral inscription discussed by de Rossi and dated to AD 217. There is another inscription, from the same period, much neglected by historians to which G.W. Clarke has with good reason drawn attention. These inscriptions call for some closer examination.

The Inscriptions.

The only inscription of an imperial freedman which has received attention by ecclesiastical historians is that of Marcus Aurelius Prosenes who had risen to the status of imperial butler, steward, treasurer, and chamberlain. Upon his epitaph we read the phrase 'reseptus ad Deum'. Because of this phrase and the lack of any pagan symbols, de Rossi classified the inscription as a Christian one. Other, more careful commentators, have drawn attention to the fact that the inscription was written not by Prosenes himself but by his slave (46). If the phrase was certainly Christian, Prosenes would have been an excellent example of a Christian Caesarianus who had kept his religion after a typical gradual promotion. But the classification of inscriptions and private letters as Christian is now

considered to be a much more complex and difficult problem than was once thought. According to E. Wipszycka, the criterion of the use of θεός(or Deus) in the singular is not sufficient proof of its Christian character.

Par la suit, cependant, la publication de plusieurs nouveaux textes papyrologiques et les recherches sur la religiosité païenne ont montré que, surtout à partir du III^e siècle, des changements de la mentalité religieuse non-chrétienne et en particulier une forte tendance au monothéisme ont fait naître un langage religieux commun aux païens et aux chrétiens (47).

For this reason the case of Prosenes should be treated with more caution. The second inscription, however - the one to which Clarke has drawn attention - seems much more reliable.

The text goes as follows:

Alexander, slave of Augusti, erected in his own lifetime this tomb to Marcus his very dear son, a pupil of Ad Caput Africae, who was a keeper of the wardrobe and who lived 18 years, 9 months, and 5 days. I beg of you kind brethren, by the one god, to prevent anyone molesting this tombstone after my death (peto a bobis, fratres boni, per unum deum, ne quis hunc tite lo molestet pos mortem meam) (48).

Clarke gives first his reasons for classifying the inscription as Christian. The key-phrase is obviously, 'peto a bobis, fratres boni, per unum deum'. Here we have not only the word god in the singular, we also have the categorical remark that there is only one god. Furthermore, the expression fratres boni would have no meaning, unless it was addressed to brothers in god (49).

The social implications of the inscription are based upon the information that Marcus had been a pupil of Ad Caput Africae. Weaver notes, that it was in relatively early ages, that the slaves who were to serve in the élite administrative posts were selected. Ad Caput Africae, which was on the Caelian in Rome, was one of the senior training establishments for the young slaves of the Familia Caesaris (50). Marcus was thus already a member of a special group and had good reasons to expect a senior post. It is reasonable to expect

that he would probably marry an ingenua, even before his manumission, and that he could enter into the upper circles with de facto power even if not with a high rank. High rank could have been a further, though not inevitable, development.

The inscriptions examined are informative. They are not sufficient, however, to fill in the gap which separates our literary from our archaeological information about Christian imperial slaves and freedmen. The only possible solution to this problem would be to attribute the scarcity of the relevant inscriptions to security reasons. Although the imperial household does not seem to have been left without Christians, every now and then it became a very unsafe establishment for Christians. To speak only of the first half of the third century, we can recall the persecutions of the Caesariani by Maximinus (c. AD 238) and Valerian (c. 258). An adequate answer cannot be given before the pagan sepulchral inscriptions are examined in this context. But such a study does not seem an easy task, especially since, from the third century onwards the changes in the name-system do not allow us to detect imperial freedmen easily. I. Kajanto has touched upon this problem in his Onomastic Studies (51). Dating the inscriptions is also very difficult.

B. Family Politics.

Upward mobility of Christians was not the only way the new religion penetrated into the upper classes of Roman society. Mixed marriages (i.e. marriages between Christians and pagans) and the conversion of heads of the families also had positive results for the christianization of traditional aristocratic families. In the early republic, family bonds in upper class Roman society seem to have been too strong for outsiders and foreign cults to penetrate; but gradually

marriage became a means of political alliance and lost its former indissoluble character (52). The significance of mixed marriages for the spread of Christianity in the post-Constantinian period has been discussed by P. Brown (see section 1 above). The extant evidence suggests that already from the first century mixed marriages were having a significant effect.

1) Mixed Marriages.

The general instruction given to Christians in 2 Corinthians that they should not unite with unbelievers (Μή γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἄπιστους) never lost its significance. 2 John followed in the same line (53). What changed in the course of time was the emphasis placed on this Judaic inheritance. On the other hand, Christians were always instructed to preserve the marriages already made before their conversion, even when the other partner remained a pagan. Paul gave his motives for this instruction in the following words:

...εἴ τις ἀδελφός γυναῖκα ἔχει ἄπιστον, καὶ αὐτὴ συνευδοκεῖ οἰκεῖν μετ' αὐτοῦ, μὴ ἀφίετω αὐτήν· καὶ γυνή ἣτις ἔχει ἄνδρα ἄπιστον, καὶ οὗτος συνευδοκεῖ οἰκεῖν μετ' αὐτῆς, μὴ ἀφίετω τὸν ἄνδρα. ἡ- γίασται γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἄπιστος ἐν τῇ γυναικί, καὶ ἡγίασται ἡ γυνή ἢ ἄπιστος ἐν τῷ ἀδελφῷ· ἐπεὶ ὅρα τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀκάθαρτά ἐστι, νῦν δὲ ἅγια ἐστίν (54).

It is obvious that what Paul had in mind was that the preservation of these marriages could lead to the conversion of the pagan partner. The unity of the family was not of prime importance. If a pagan partner did not approve of the new religion and did not consent to live with a Christian husband or wife, divorce was the recommended solution. 1 Peter held exactly the same view with one difference: the instruction was addressed to women alone. The date of this letter is disputed but it is certainly much later than 1 Corinthians. It seems that by this later age women were usually the first to be converted in pagan families (55).

The conversion of women in early Christianity raises a number of interesting questions. The New Testament writings and especially the Acts, referred to women converts rather persistently and so did several later documents. Two well known passages in the Acts reported that Paul had convinced 'a good many influential women' at Thessaloniki and a fair number of 'women of standing' at Leroea (56). In these particular cases Gentile women were being implied but in other occasions the references were to Jewish women. We cannot exactly say whether there was anything special about these women. Their numbers seem to match and sometimes to exceed those of men. The perplexity of the early copyists of the New Testament texts, evident from the numerous variations observed in these passages, suggests that there might have been something odd about them. Had Christianity anything to offer to women, which other cults did not? Were Christian women more emancipated than their pagan contemporaries? Were wealthy or women of rank more attracted than others? I believe that though these questions need further consideration, the whole problem has been convincingly placed in its appropriate social dimensions by Averil Cameron in a recently published article. 'The major outlet for female activity in the Roman world', Cameron argues, 'lay in religion.'

Clearly Christianity benefited from this pool of available women converts just as much as rival creeds, and the spread with which converts were won suggests less a rising status for them in their social world, or a real new role now offered to them, than their own lack of public position, which took them to the mysteries, to Isis, and to Judaism as well as to Christianity (57).

Let us therefore see in what way the conversion of women to Christianity affected their pagan or Jewish families.

The official Christian attitude to mixed marriages never changed ever since Paul's regulations. But the fact that prohibitions had to be constantly reiterated bears witness to the increasing frequency of their violation. Clement of Rome referred to this sin in passing,

while Tertullian and Cyprian wrote about it persistently and at length. At the Synod of Elvira three canons were concerned with the problem (58). As far as we can tell women were often the first to be converted in pagan couples. Justin's story about the problems which a woman aristocrat faced because of the stubbornness of her pagan husband is indicative of the situation (59). Similar must have been the fate of Pomponia Graecina, wife of Aulus Plautius, though she was finally acquitted after being tried by her husband (60).

The most interesting information on the problem under consideration arises from what is known of a controversy which took place in the Roman church. Among the main issues of the controversy, which finally led to a schism, the attitude to marriage was not the least significant. In the final instance, the problem was whether or not church rules could deviate from Roman law. The disputed matter can be best understood if we recall some restrictions imposed by Roman law.

Let me give a brief account of the legal restrictions of marriage, though it must be understood that these restrictions were often violated. Slaves as it has already been mentioned, had no capacity to marry legally. A de facto relationship between slaves did exist (the so-called contubernium), but it had no legal status and could be dissolved at any time by the masters. There is evidence that the breaking up of slave 'families' often happened (61). Free people, otherwise capable of civil marriage (they had conubium in the absolute sense, as it is called), might not be capable of intermarriage. In an earlier period, marriage was not allowed between patricians and plebians but this restriction was gradually dropped. However, at least after a law of Septimius Severus, freedmen and freedwomen were forbidden on extreme penalty - such as condemnation to the mines - to marry their patron, their patron's widow or their female descendants. The Lex Julia (18 BC) prevented freed people from marrying men or

women of senatorial rank or their descendants through male to the third degree inclusive (62).

By the early third century, the above mentioned restrictions, had created in the Christian communities problems that could not pass unnoticed. Christian women, and what is more important for the present argument, Christian women of rank, outnumbered Christian men and especially men of high status. When the time to marry came some Christian girls with property or rank had to choose between marrying a pagan of their own standing or a Christian who was either poor or of lower rank. The first choice was utterly rejected by the church. The second had to be taken in defiance of public opinion; nevertheless, it was advocated by some Christian leaders, such as Tertullian (63). However, as it has already been mentioned above, some of these marriages were not only contrary to public opinion, but contrary to Roman law also. Women of senatorial rank had to overturn their rank if they wanted to marry freedmen; and no Christian woman freeborn or freed could marry a slave. At this point the controversy in the Roman church came into the open.

Christian freedmen and imperial slaves were quite numerous. Women of rank were, not surprisingly, in contact with some of them. Sometimes, these relationships led to unions, though of course not to legal marriages. What should the church do? The rigorist side, represented by Hippolytus, thought that these women should overturn their rank and marry legally; Hippolytus presumably did not consent to any marriage with slaves. This attitude had two weak points. Slaves had no way of getting married and marriages to freedmen could be performed at the expense of the loss of the Christian woman's very high rank. The other side was much more far sighted. Its basic advocate was bishop Callistus (AD 217-222). According to Hippolytus, who reported the story, Callistus

even permitted women, if they were unwedded, and burned with unworthy passion, or if they were not disposed to

overturn their own rank through a legal marriage, to have whomsoever they would choose as a bedfellow, whether slave or free, and that a woman, though not legally married, might consider such a one as a husband (64).

The motives of Callistus become clear as soon as we consider his ideas about the expansion of the church. It is known that Callistus was anxious to see the church expanding in a way never thought of before. The inclusion of men and women of rank was vital for his project. He could suffer not one title lost, while he struggled to convert as many aristocrats as possible.

At the beginning of the fourth century it seems that women were still more numerous than men. The Synods of Elvira and Arles dealt with this problem in several canons. There is little doubt that these canons were mostly concerned with educated and rich women, for it was mentioned that some were married to heathen priests and that women should not write in their own name to lay Christians (65).

The general conclusions must, therefore, be that, a) some Christian women married pagans, b) pagan married women were converted to Christianity often before their husbands, c) in both of the above cases, women helped Christianity spread, if not to their pagan husbands, at least to some of their children; strong evidence suggests that this included women of wealth and rank as well.

2) Conversion of Οἶκος and the Unity of Families.

Eusebius wrote that some people at Rome, who were famous for their wealth and family, turned to their own salvation with all their house and with all their kin (πανοικεῖ τε καὶ παγγενεῖ). The conversion of whole households was an established practice already from Paul's days (66). In several cases mentioned in the canonical Acts and the Pauline letters we are told that a new convert was baptised with all his family. Thus, Peter would preach to someone, and salvation would

be brought to him and his household (67). A woman at Philippi, after listening to Paul 'was baptised, and her household with her' (68). At the same city the jailer asked Paul what to do to be saved. Paul answered: 'Put your trust in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' Immediately after the preaching, the jailer 'and his whole family were baptised' (69). At Corinth, Crispus, who held office in the synagogue, became a believer 'with all his household' (70) Paul added that while at Corinth, he had also baptised the household of Stephanas (71). In all these cases, where the head of a family was converted, the religious unity of its members was preserved through collective baptism (72). Judging from later authors, such as Clement of Alexandria, the conversion of 'whole houses' never lost its importance in the spread of Christianity (73).

The religious unity of families (which must be examined in the context of Jewish and pagan religious practices) although not invented by Christianity was carefully observed by its missionaries. The Christian teachers were interested in converting whole households; they also took care to preserve them as congregational units. The first meeting-places for prayers and religious instruction were the family-houses themselves. It was much later that these units were united into a single community (74).

The structure of Christian households followed closely that of Roman households. The head of the family was by custom head of its religious cult. For the continuity of Roman families it was important that there should be a son to carry on the religious practices (75). A portrayal of Christian households is given in the Shepherd of Hermas. 'You shall therefore keep these things thus with your children and all your house, and if you keep them you shall be blessed' (76). This instruction was given in the middle of the second century, but it seems to have had an outlasting validity.

There is no need to go any further. Paul had converted the heads

of a number of important families and the whole households became Christian. . Other New Testament writings, Hermas, Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius are only a selection of authorities confirming the persistence of the practice. Its successful outcome accelerated the spread of Christianity in general, and among the upper classes in particular.

But the unity of the families could not be always preserved. Not many cases are known of children or wives who did not follow their father's or their husband's conversions. Parents were instructed to teach their children 'the word of the Lord' and 'bring them under with cutting stripes'; if the children went astray, parents would 'be condemned on their account' (77). There are numerous cases, however, of children or wives converted alone, without the consent of fathers/husbands, and indeed often in spite of serious objections of their kin. Perpetua's story and her father's efforts to change her mind are well known (78). The Christian Apphianus, when he returned to his house after his conversion, found that he 'could not consort with his relatives because of dissimilar habits' and therefore 'he quitted the life there' (79). There were many others like Perpetua and Apphianus. In view of such incidents we can better understand the saying attributed to Jesus which welcomed 'anyone who had left brothers or sisters, father, mother, or children' for the sake of the 'name' (80). The Apostolic Constitutions made it explicit that if parents, kinsmen, friends, wives or children became 'an impediment to piety', they should be renounced (81). It is, therefore, obvious that the unity of families was not an end in itself. If the family became an obstacle to faith, its unity had no value; although we can recall here that slaves were almost never encouraged to leave their pagan masters. It could be said that Christian 'family politics' had it both ways. When the head of the family was converted, the whole household was expected to follow; but when children or wives were converted (though not

slaves), they were expected to run away and start a new life.

C. 'Conversions' of Kings and Emperors.

Constantine's conversion was of decisive importance for the religious developments of the empire (82). One of the most significant consequences of Constantine's religious policy was the gradual Christianization of the governing classes, especially those living in Constantinople. Not a few members of the traditional aristocracy were converted by realizing how much in their own benefit it would be to please the emperor; but it was principally among the 'new men' promoted by Constantine to high ranks and offices that the new religion proved to be most successful; these 'new men' were little prepared to resist the religion of their patron. Being an emperor, Constantine had the financial and the administrative power to assist Christianity in the most effective way. Constantine proclaimed himself, as is well known, a bishop of those outside the church, explicitly acknowledging his missionary attitude (83).

Historians have not usually paid due attention to an additional detail. Constantine had turned to Christianity on his own, through an immediate communication with the divinity, not being instructed by any human agent; this is at least what he himself and his biographers wanted their contemporaries and future generations to believe. This detail has, as a rule, been neglected because it is of doubtful authenticity, and because even if true it does not seem to contribute much to the religious history of the period, apart from verifying the sincerity of Constantine's motives. In the present section, I shall argue that this detail is an essential feature of Christian mentality, a feature which can be traced to much earlier years. The story of Constantine's conversion followed a pattern which had dominated Christian mentality and which had made the rare protests against

imperial interference in church affairs (quid imperatori cum ecclesia?) ineffective (84). Furthermore, I shall try to demonstrate that no matter what degree of success Christianity had achieved in the conversion of the upper classes, Christians had always regarded the conversion of the emperor as the ultimate aim of their mission. Having succeeded in this, it was only a matter of time - they quite correctly believed - before the whole of the empire became Christian.

The full version of Constantine's miraculous conversion before his battle with Maxentius was reported 25 years after the event by Eusebius in his Life of Constantine. Eusebius claimed that he had been told the story by the emperor himself, when he was esteemed worthy of the emperor's acquaintance and familiarity. There seems to be no reason to dispute the claim that Constantine and his biographer had indeed discussed the matter, but I do not think that we can agree with Jones that 'The vagueness of the setting in which the incident is placed bears the stamp of truth'; nor does it seem reasonable to attribute the delayed publicity given to the story, to Constantine's reluctance to communicate his experience (85). Constantine had made known the essential feature of his conversion almost immediately after it had allegedly taken place. After the conference of Milan, a Gallic rhetorician addressed a panegyric to Constantine claiming that he had some secret communion with the divine mind which deigned to reveal itself to him alone. According to Lactantius, Constantine, in a dream on the night before the battle, was instructed to mark the heavenly sign of God on the shields of his soldiers (86). Eusebius, who wrote Constantine's biography after the emperor's death, claimed that before the battle with Maxentius the whole of Constantine's army had seen 'the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and an inscription, CONQUER BY THIS, attached to it'; the same night Christ appeared in the emperor's sleep 'and commanded him to make a

likeness of that sign which he had seen in the heavens, and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies' (87). This account of the conversion-story was only a further elaborated version which, there are reasons to believe, owes more to Eusebius himself than to Constantine.

As it stands, the Eusebian version is a close copy of the miraculous conversion of Paul, as reported in the Acts (88). Paul was on his way to Damascus, when in the middle of the day he saw a light from the sky, above the sun, shining around him and his fellow-travellers. All of them fell to the ground but only Paul heard the voice saying that it was Jesus who had appeared to appoint Paul as his servant and witness. Some early manuscripts (among them the codex Sinaiticus) reported that Paul should testify what he had seen, but other manuscripts made it explicit that he should testify that he had seen Jesus in person. A few years after his conversion in his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul referred to the event clearly demonstrating its significance. There were many who did not accept his apostolate and Paul was reminding them of the 'facts':

Am I not a free man? Am I not an apostle? Did I not see Jesus our Lord?

If Paul had been converted by any human agent, say Peter, in serious disputes (and there were many) he would have to submit to Peter. By appealing to the 'facts', he was as free as the other disciples to preach and interpret; for Jesus, after appearing to Peter, the Twelve and the five hundred had finally appeared to him as well (89).

Eusebius knew of another miraculous conversion of a king before knowing anything about Constantine. King Abgar V Ukkama of Edessa had written to Jesus asking to be released from his sickness. In his letter, Abgar wrote that he had already heard of Jesus' healings and

that he had concluded that Jesus was either God or son of God. Jesus replied that Abgar was blessed because he had believed without having seen. A few years later, after the ascension of Jesus, the apostle Thaddaeus was sent to Edessa to preach and heal. Having asked to see Thaddaeus, Abgar witnessed a Pauline type of miracle. As Thaddaeus entered, a great vision appeared to Abgar 'and all who stood around were amazed; for they had not seen the vision, which appeared to Abgar alone'. The ending of the story explains why it was that the king had believed in Jesus without having seen and why the vision had appeared to him alone. 'Then Abgar commanded that on the (following) morning his citizens should assemble to hear the preaching of Thaddaeus'. It is almost as if Abgar was commanding his citizens to become Christians. Royal power Abgar already had; what he had been lacking was unrestricted religious authority; he found that in his miraculous conversion (90).

Christians in Syria and elsewhere in the early third century and possibly earlier, were telling the story of yet another miraculous conversion of an oriental king. The apocryphal Acts of Thomas reported Thomas' mission to India. Thomas is said to have been using royal money for alms instead of building the palace the king had asked for. While the apostle was cast into prison for acting thus, the king's brother died discovering a royal palace built in heaven in the king's name. Being brought to life again he asked the king if he could buy that heavenly palace, but the king amazed asked, 'Whence should I have a palace in heaven?' Then the king, considering the matter understood where his money had really gone, and both he and his brother became Christians. It is interesting to notice that though the apostle had already met the king on his arrival to India, he made no attempt to convert him. The king was convinced by his own considerations. Truth was in a sense revealed to him, not taught. 'Being now well disposed to the apostle', the story concluded, the king and his brother followed Thomas 'departing from him not at all and themselves supplying those

who were in need, giving to all and refreshing all' (91).

Although king Abgar V and king Gundaphorus were both historical personalities and their reign falls within the first century AD, no one believes to-day that there is any element of truth in these stories. Christian dreams had almost converted Tiberius into a Christian and had made a pious Christian out of Philip Arab (92). We know little of the stories told about the alleged Christianity of these Roman emperors, but it seems likely that similar conversions would have been reported. What we do know, including Constantine's vision, is sufficient, I believe, to suggest the existence of a common pattern of ruler-conversions which had dominated Christian thought. My explanation is rather simple. After two or three generations had passed with no sign of the approaching end of the world, the Christian missionary activity, as developed by the religious exclusiveness of Christianity, led to the unavoidable idea of a universal conversion. Origen is only one of the best known exponents of this idea (93). After almost two centuries of intensive missionary activity, the spread of Christianity had met with notable success. However, there were still some sections of the population which had remained largely unaffected. One such section may have been the peasants of the western empire, but few Christians expressed real concern about them. Another practically unaffected section (in spite of some notable exceptions) was the aristocratic élite of the empire. The Christianization of this section seemed to Christians as vital as it was difficult. There was only one solution to the problem: if the emperor became a Christian then he had the power to convince the aristocracy. But his power had to be religious as well as secular. Paul had once been reproached for not having been one of the disciples. He answered back that he had seen Jesus in person and had been instructed by him. Christian mentality invested the pious ruler with similar powers, as Constantine and his

successors understood and exploited only too well. The Christian emperors helped Christianity to become universal and win over the aristocratic élite (at least in the East) as well as other resistant groups of the population. In return, they secured for themselves the top hand in ecclesiastical affairs.

4. Power and Leadership in the Urban Christian Communities.

The early urban Christian communities had highly complex social structures. It seems that almost all social classes were represented in most of them. For the first three centuries not many slaves were reported to have joined the Christian congregations. But even in the Christian community of Alexandria, though no slaves are ever mentioned, there must have been at least a few Christianized slaves. There were probably many middle class people, artisans, farmers living in the cities and other day-workers. Our sources are biased against such people; there was nothing special about them to be reported. Also, as we have seen, there were numerous men of leisure, of wealth, members of the local upper strata. The urban Christian communities were well organized and disciplined. A rigorous ecclesiastical hierarchy, with bishops at the top, controlled moral and social conduct. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to allow an examination of the social position of the members of the church hierarchy. All we have, is some information about the social status of some of the leaders of the Christian communities in the cities. In the present section, I should like to discuss this information, because it suggests that up to a degree, church hierarchy and social status corresponded. But first I shall consider the problem as it appears in the Christian community of Alexandria. I shall argue that the way in which the problem of power was solved was immediately related to the social composition of the Christian communities.

As the reign of Commodus was approaching its end, Demetrius became bishop of Alexandria (and was then the sole bishop in Egypt) and Clement took charge of the Catechetical School. Demetrius and Clement represent two poles of power and probably two different types of Christianity, though no clear boundaries separated their adherents and almost nothing is known about their theological differences.

Clement, being an inspired teacher, can be seen as the heir of the charismatic prophets of the earliest Christian communities (1). Of his predecessor and teacher Pantaenus, very little is known. Pantaenus belonged to Weber's 'transitional phase', which links the prophet to the teacher of ethics (2). It is reported that though he 'had charge of the life of the faithful in Alexandria', 'he was appointed as a herald for the Gospel of Christ to the heathen in the East, and was sent as far as India', being thus the last long distance missionary of the early church (3). On the other hand, Pantaenus was already half way through the transitional phase, for he expounded the divine doctrines both orally and in writing - a clear sign of the end of the prophetic age. Clement succeeded Pantaenus because of his reputation in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Like his predecessor, Clement seems to have had little to do with his contemporary bishop, of whom he says not a word. In his oral teaching and his massive written work, Clement was one of the first, along with Tertullian (and after Justin and Irenaeus), to develop Christian theology.

Clement was at the head of an independent institution: the catechetical school, which had its counterpart in several other Christian centres, including that of Rome. The chief aim of the school was to educate Christians in matters of moral conduct, but Clement had clearly in mind the importance of the organized church and recognized the necessity of a hierarchical organization. Clement's school opposed the Alexandrian Gnostics who rejected the idea of institutionalized authorities. In saying this I follow E. Pagels, who has shown that the basic theological difference between the Gnostic radical dualism and the orthodox monotheism 'offers nothing less than a theological justification for refusing to obey the episcopal authorities (4). Clement himself related his theology to church organization by claiming that

... the grades (προκοπᾶι) here in the Church, of bishops, presbyters, deacons, are imitations of the angelic glory ... (5).

But although opposing the Gnostics, Clement was far from being an Alexandrian Ignatius (in organizational matters) or an Irenaeus (in theological), for he struggled to attribute to the hierarchy the smallest possible significance. What really mattered to him was moral conduct, not institutions. We can hardly find a passage more revealing than the following:

Those ...who have exercised themselves in the Lord's commandments, and lived perfectly and gnostically according to the Gospel, may be enrolled in the chosen body of the apostles. Such a one is in reality a presbyter of the Church, and a true deacon of the will of God, if he do and teach what is the Lord's; as being ordained by men, nor regarded righteous because a presbyter, but enrolled in the presbyterate because righteous (6).

After all, Clement had always travelled as a true Greek philosopher, seeking knowledge and, as far as we know, making no contacts with church officials until he arrived in Alexandria.

On the theological level, Clement was also half way between the Gnostics and the orthodox Christians. Although he denounced the Valentinian or Basilidian gnosis he became himself an advocate of 'true' gnosis. 'As, then, philosophy has been brought into evil repute by pride and self-conceit', Clement wrote, 'so also gnosis by false gnosis called by the same name' (7). Clement was aware of the distinction between canonical and apocryphal literature but quoted from both with no hesitation to illustrate his points.

At the other pole we find Demetrius. He is said to have succeeded Julian as bishop of Alexandria. Of his predecessor nothing is known and it is very doubtful whether any such Julian ever was a bishop in a strict sense - and neither was Demetrius in his early years. Demetrius tried to establish a 'monarchical' episcopal authority in an area which had only known prophets and teachers. He himself was not appointed by other bishops, as the custom was, but by his fellow presbyters in

Alexandria, an exception important enough to strike Jerome (8). Elsewhere, as the monarchical episcopate developed, it gradually integrated all the Christian household communities of a city into a single community or a single Church. Leaving aside the early mythological bishops of Alexandria, I have noticed that Julian was reported by Eusebius to have been appointed to the episcopate of the churches (plural) in Alexandria, and so was Demetrius (9).

Subsequently the plural form disappears and is replaced by the singular παροικία, ἐκκλησία (the plural form reappears only twice again to designate a multiplicity of meeting places; there is only one Church as we are clearly informed), a sign of full development of the monarchical office (10).

Demetrius wrote nothing on theology or the like. He never intervened in Clement's work and, as far as we know, he did not question Clement's orthodoxy (Clement's orthodoxy was strongly criticized in a later age). His mind must have been preoccupied with problems of organization. It seems that his first concern was to bring the whole community of Alexandria under the bishop's control. Next he undertook the task of spreading Christianity into the rest of Egypt. Others might have reached rural areas before him, but there are no signs of any organized mission. Demetrius is said to have been the first to appoint bishops outside Alexandria (see next chapter). He remained bishop for more than forty years and before dying he could claim to be in control of the whole Christian community in Alexandria and in large areas in the countryside.

Clement and Demetrius represent two distinct institutions: the school and the monarchical episcopate. The first was, or rather tended to become, 'secular'. Like its philosophical, pagan counterparts it divided Christianity into sects on intellectual grounds. It had no hierarchy in the strict sense and was in need of no special funds.

Its members (or students) were promoted to the level of a teacher according to knowledge. The prime aim of all its devotees was to learn, hence the prime importance of gnosis (in both its Gnostic and its more orthodox sense): gnosis of god and moral conduct.

The monarchical episcopate was more religious (in a Derkheimian sense). It struggled to integrate all local communities into one Church. It was highly hierarchical, depended upon fixed salaries and organized charity - hence the prime importance of finance. Its members were promoted to successive degrees according to influence and power to organize and control.

The conflict between the two institutions was generally resolved with the dissolution of the school and the acquisition of absolute power by the episcopate. Some schools were strong enough to resist for a while. Others were thrust out of the church until they vanished (like Lucian's in Antioch) and others left the church by their own decision, being transformed into schismatic communities (like Theodotus' in Rome). In this last case, to survive, they had to organize themselves like the established communities, with bishops, salaries etc. (e.g. the schismatic Roman bishop Natalius). But even thus they could not escape the fate of their final dissolution. They were struggling in their opponent's terrain.

Demetrius must have been thinking to deal with the/Alexandrian school in some similar manner, only his position was still too weak and the catechetical school too strong. He had to wait. The opportunity to intervene arrived during the local persecutions under Septimius Severus. Unlike later persecutions, these fell only upon new converts, catechumens and laymen. Bishops and other church officials were not disturbed (11). In Alexandria, those who suffered were students of the catechetical school, lately baptised and others who had not yet been baptised. Demetrius and Clement are not reported to have been troubled and Origen, who soon succeeded Clement, was present at the martyrdom of

his pupils to the very end. Origen, although almost killed by the crowd as 'clearly responsible' for the death of his pupils, was not arrested by the authorities (12). At about that time Clement left Alexandria, but whether this was due to the persecutions or to increasing difficulties with Demetrius, we cannot tell. His alleged ordination as a presbyter in Palestine before his death and the fact that leaders were not persecuted, suggest that the second is more probable. H. Chadwick is right in interpreting Clement's (probable) ordination as a desire on the part of the bishop to bring lay teachers under ecclesiastical control; only it must have been not the Alexandrian but the Palestinian bishop who brought Clement under his control (13).

At the time of Clement's departure from Alexandria, Demetrius had already been bishop for more than 13 years and his position was by now much more secure. He agreed to Origen's appointment as head of the school - not necessarily whole heartedly - under popular pressure; but he imposed his own terms: no one else could assist Origen without the bishop's approval. Several attempts to have the school reorganized were rejected. Finally, Heraclas was chosen to assist Origen. Heraclas might have been Origen's pupil but later evidence proves that he was Demetrius' man. When Origen was condemned and expelled from Alexandria by Demetrius for being uncanonically ordained in Palestine as well as for doctrinal matters (though Origen was much less 'unorthodox' than Clement), Heraclas was appointed as his successor. Later Heraclas succeeded Demetrius as bishop of Alexandria and the same pattern was followed by his own successor Dionysius (first head of the school, then bishop). The conflict between school and episcopate was thus resolved in Alexandria with the gradual fusion of the two institutions.

In spite of the differences between school and episcopate, both institutions had - from the point of view of the present chapter - a common feature. The teachers of the school had to be men of great learning, while the bishops should have great influence and power. In the social structure of antiquity, both qualifications could only be found among the members of the upper classes. Prosopographic information, as I shall attempt to argue, confirms this view.

Clement was born around AD 150-160 and had an Athenian training, if he was not actually an Athenian. He remained head of the Alexandrian catechetical school for 13 years (c. AD 190-203). His full name Titus Flavius Clemens, as it has already been mentioned, strongly reminds us of the imperial Flavian family and indeed of Titus Flavius Clemens the nephew of Vespasian and consul in AD 95. Clement had such a wide learning that only a wealthy family could provide for (14).

Origen was probably born in Alexandria around AD 185-6. He also had a Greek education appropriate to a wealthy family. He remained head of the school for about 30 years (c. AD 204-232). His father, who died a martyr in Alexandria, had been a learned man as well, for he had been taking personal care of Origen's educational progress. How great their property was, it is not known, but it was confiscated for the imperial treasury. Subsequently, Origen was taken care of by 'a certain lady, very rich in this world's goods' (15).

Of their successors Heraclas, Dionysius, Theognostus, Pierius and Achilles little is known (Achillas was possibly succeeded by the later bishop Peter). Apart from the fact that they were all very learned, we are told that Dionysius had pagan and well-to-do parents, and that his extensive reading led him to Christianity; Pierius had elegance of language and was devoted to voluntary poverty; finally Achilles 'displayed a wealth of philosophy most rare and inferior to none' (16). Except for Theognostus, all the rest were clergymen and indeed the first

two became bishops of Alexandria (17). As it has been already said, after Origen, school and episcopate were closely linked. Interesting information has survived, however, for a certain Anatolius who later in his life became bishop of Laodicea. Anatolius was 'by race an Alexandrian'; Eusebius reported that 'for his learning, secular education and philosophy (he) had attained the first place among our most illustrious contemporaries.' It is also recorded that 'he had reached the pinnacle' in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, logic, physics and in the arts of rhetoric. For this reason he was asked to become head of the Aristotelian school in Alexandria. But the most important information about Anatolius' activities comes from the time when the Greek quarter at Alexandria was fighting against the Romans while the rest of the population in alliance with them. Anatolius assembled a council (βουλή) of the anti-Roman Alexandrians and failing to convince them to turn to the Roman side he persuaded many to desert to the enemy. 'He took care that first of all those belonging to the Church, and then the rest remaining in the city' should escape (18). It is not known what position Anatolius held in the Christian community of Alexandria, but it is certain that he combined extreme secular and ecclesiastical authority.

Of bishop Demetrius' social background nothing is known, while of his successors Heraclas, Dionysius, Maximus, Theonas and Peter all we know is that they were very learned and that they enjoyed great authority within the Alexandrian Christian community. But the cases of other cities, when information is available, suggest that bishops were often men of secular consequence as well. In Carthage for example, (we may note that Tertullian, the most important Christian teacher in Carthage was the son of a centurion) bishop Cyprian (c. AD 200-258) was reported to have been wealthy, with considerable landed property and a beautiful house with gardens. Cyprian was a converted rhetorician who never lost the friendship of high ranking

heathens (19).

In conclusion, it must be stressed that the outcome of the struggle for power, as expressed in the case of the Christian community of Alexandria, was directly related to the nature of its social composition. If the 'school' had prevailed, the Christian communities would have assumed a purely intellectual character with little place for the uneducated. The monarchical episcopate, on the other hand, brought together members from all the social classes, and united them under the authority of a rigorous hierarchy. The subordination of the 'school' to the episcopate preserved the intellectual aspects of the Christian communities, and hence the inclusion of numerous educated people, but allowed them to retain their complex social structures as well.

Christianity and the Countryside. The Case of Egypt.

1. The Spread of Christianity in the Countryside.

Peasant religious conservatism is something scholars usually take for granted. To employ, however, conservatism pure and simple as an explanatory notion is not only unsophisticated and simplistic, but a dead end to sociological considerations. What a sociologist would like to know is not only why a new religion, such as Christianity, spread faster in the cities than in the countryside, but also why some rural districts were more resistant than others. Furthermore, it is of interest to investigate whether religious instability and change was preceded by other social transformations, such as conquest or integration of an isolated region into a world economy; whether religious conversion was a one way development with no counter-conversions or notable residues; and whether more than one religious options were available. Finally, in rural districts, such as the countryside of most of the Roman empire, where the peasantry was highly stratified, it should be inquired which sections were converted first, the richest or the poorest, the most 'cosmopolitan' or the most culturally isolated.

Christianity in the first centuries was by and large an urban religion. The ancient Christian sources, starting with the quasihistorical documents, such as the Gospels and the Acts, both canonical and apocryphal, and going right up to Eusebius, leave little doubt as to the truth of this conjecture. As further evidence modern historians and sociologists have made use of the word paganus (countryman), which came to be used as synonymous to heathen (1). This rule, however, was not universal. Historians have noted parts

of Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt and N. Africa as exceptions, if only for the third and fourth centuries (2); nor are sociological explanations lacking. M. Weber has argued that in agrarian societies, peasants fell 'into a pattern of traditionalism' and that they turned against the ethical rationalization of the cities because they feared proletarianization (3). But no one, as far as I know, has started with the first and second century; and no one has treated the conversions of peasants as a social event in its own right (4).

The classical explanatory framework used in analyses of the slow Christianization of the rural empire is built around the opposition between cities and countryside. The same framework has been employed in investigations of the fourth century schismatic movements, some of which are thought to have been country-based. These movements are thus seen as symptoms of the emergence of the countryside amidst the 'crisis of the cities'. In other words it has been argued that peasants at first opposed Christianity because it was city based (or because peasants are simply conservative) and that when converted, they were inclined to heresies rather than to the city orthodoxy (5). This model has its value, but actual events were much more complicated. The notion of the 'crisis of the cities' is inaccurate (as has already been mentioned in the previous chapter), and the mere reduction of a religious change to socioeconomic and geopolitical transformations is not justified.

The present chapter touches upon the problems mentioned above, but with some strict limitations. Because of significant regional variations, I have restricted my study to rural Egypt. This seems an appropriate choice because we know more about the social and economic life of Roman Egypt than about any other province. We owe most of our knowledge to papyri preserved in the dry deserts 'from

which we can sometimes learn what actually happened, rather than what was supposed to happen' (6). Moreover, Egypt's capital Alexandria, soon became one of the major centres of Christianity which makes its relation to the countryside all the more interesting. From what is known of the history and social life of Egypt, it is clear that it is not directly comparable to any other Roman province. We thus arrive at the first serious limitation: the results of the present investigation do not necessarily parallel those arrived at by the examination of different areas. Comparison of the timing of the Christianization of the countryside must thus be postponed.

The second important limitation derives from the inherent character of the whole project. Having, as a rule left aside doctrinal and ritual matters, I am forced to neglect the important aspect of 'demonic confrontation' which is part of the conflict between the Christian God and the 'holy men' on the one hand, and the pagan gods and the 'magicians' on the other (7). That the Christian 'knowledge system' was more effective in therapeutics and in delivering people from suffering may have been relevant to its success. But this must be the subject of another study.

What I have tried to do is to trace the earliest stages of the spread of Christianity in the countryside and establish the stages of its development. Furthermore, I put forward a number of hypotheses which relate religious change to social matters and transformations, such as the development of land ownership, the penetration of Greek culture and the revival of the old Egyptian language associated with a new writing system, the Jewish rebellion, the integration of Egypt into a world system and so on.

2. City-Country Relations.

F. Braudel has outlined some basic characteristics of all the cities of the world; one very important aspect is the uninterrupted confrontation between cities and countryside(1). This view variously expressed, is shared by many scholars and has often been used as a key for the analysis of social developments. Before examining the case of Egypt in particular, it is worth making some general remarks about relations between city and countryside in Roman society.

A glimpse at a map showing the location of cities in the late Roman Empire gives the impression of an uneven distribution. N. Africa N. Syria, Asia Minor, a small area in central Greece, and Egypt all had a dense distribution, of cities and by and large a greater density of total population. In the rest of the provinces, cities were rather sporadic. This is significant, if we take into account the relations between city and hinterland. In some cases, extremely close bonds can be observed. (Unfortunately, the very notion of 'city' is itself highly problematic (2). In Egypt and N. Africa, for example, it is often very difficult to distinguish between large villages and cities. But since we are only dealing with general tendencies, the ambiguity of these terms does not affect the argument.) Generally speaking, most peasants had been to some degree influenced by the culture of the cities, since they were engaged in constant economic transactions with them; but remote villages could have remained practically culturally and economically isolated. In N. Africa many villages were 'converted' into cities in the second century AD, with the aim of securing the population from the native tribes. These cities were inhabited to a large extent by peasants who went out daily to the fields. The hinterland of these 'converted' cities must have been significantly affected by the dominant urban culture, because the peasants who worked there were in close contact with the Romanized

population.

In Egypt of the Ptolemaic period, most of the population lived in villages. Some of these were called metropoleis, although they were not, in fact, cities. In the second century AD, however, there was impressive urbanization. The new cities did not differ much from the Ptolemaic metropoleis, except for their administrative and economic significance. The foundation of Antinoopolis AD 130 was an expression of the urbanizing policy.

All these developments are reasonably firmly established. But when we look for explanations, we usually get Rostovtzeff's influential exposition:

No doubt these rich Greeks desired to live, not the miserable life of the Egyptian natives, but the comfortable life of their fellow countrymen in Asia Minor, Syria, and Greece. They needed a city life and they created it. The government did not interfere; on the contrary, it promoted the movement from the time of Augustus onwards, for reasons which will presently appear.

Rostovtzeff went on to recount the administrative advantages of the movement which remodelled life in Egypt, 'on the pattern of the other provinces'. But, so the argument goes, 'In Egypt more than in any other land the cities were a superstructure' for they did not affect the life of the peasants (3).

These quite commonly held arguments, obsessed with cultural and administrative aetiology, seem naive nowadays. Nor does H.I. Bell's explanation, that 'Hadrian, with his philhellenic tendencies and his urbanizing policy, was a great founder of cities', take us any further (4). Recent investigations discount such arguments and relate the growth of cities to matters of taxation and trade. Peasants required to pay taxes in money had to sell their surplus in the local markets to raise the money. Consumers of agricultural products in the provincial towns raised money in their turn to pay the peasants, by developing artisan production, which assumed much greater importance

than was once thought (5).

Thus taxation increased productivity, threw extra produce onto the market and helped the growth of towns, as this produce was transformed by urban artisans into goods exported in order to buy money to pay their taxes with (6).

This, I believe is the secret of the 'urbanizing policy' of the Roman emperors. When taxes started being raised in kind again, the cities declined, or at least stopped developing, some sections of the upper classes, as we have seen in the previous chapter, being worse hit than others. 'It is the fragmentation of the upper classes', P. Brown has argued, 'not necessarily any increased resistance or pressure on the part of the villagers, which marks the cultural and social history of the late Roman Syria' (7); Egypt and Syria, in this respect, had much in common.

3. The Case of Egypt.

Thmuis was a town of Lower Egypt, which in later years, having become of considerable consequence, enjoyed a separate government of its own. In about AD 303, just before the Great Persecutions, Thmuis had a new Christian bishop called Phileas. Not many years after his consecration, Phileas died a martyr in Alexandria - at the latest in AD 307. In more than one way Phileas was a typical Christian leader of his age. He was rigorous in matters of ecclesiastical order, siding with the orthodox party against the Meletians; he took good care and guided his flock, especially under the persecutions, when he stood firm and encouraged those under arrest, pressure or torture; when his turn came he met his own death with faith in God, Christian dignity and willingness. What makes him, however, an exemplary paradigm of particular interest to sociological investigations is his outstanding secular position along with his ecclesiastical status.

By cross checking biographical information known about Phileas from several documents, we can arrive at the following conclusions (1).

(a) Phileas was considered by his own flock and the pagan officials to be the indisputable ruler of the Christian community of Thmuis and of authority in Egyptian Christianity as a whole. Together with three other Egyptian bishops he took initiative in confronting the later schismatic leader Meletius. He was reproached by the prefect for having killed many by not sacrificing, his conduct being an example for the others. Even while a prisoner he was head of twenty clergymen representing them all in the interrogations. Being requested by the prefect to spare himself and all his people, he replied that it was in sparing himself and all those who 'belonged' to him that he refused to sacrifice.

(b) Phileas, we are told, 'was distinguished for the services he rendered to his country in public positions and also for his skill

in philosophy.' Elsewhere, he was admired for his secular learning and is said to have been 'ruler of Alexandria' (ὄρχων Ἀλεξανδρείας), which possibly implies that he had served there as a magistrate or perhaps as a curial.

(c) In an attempt to persuade Phileas, the prefect had said: 'Bear in mind that I have respected you. I could have subjected you to outrage in your own city, but I wished to respect you, and so I did not.' Explaining his motives the prefect continued:

If I thought you were in need and had thus got into this folly, I would not spare you. But you possess great wealth: you can support not only yourself but almost the entire district. Hence I wish to spare you and to persuade you to offer sacrifice (2).

Phileas seems, therefore, to have been a sort of a patron in his district supporting in times of need the peasants of the area (the term ἄγροϊκος used could also imply boorish in manners, but the Latin indigere points more clearly to those in need). In all likelihood Phileas belonged to a wealthy family, since his consecration had taken place only a few years earlier, and as a mere presbyter it seems improbable that he could amass the riches mentioned.

Combining these three pieces of information, i.e. Phileas' preeminence in the Christian communities, his secular reputation and his wealth, we arrive at an interesting picture of Egyptian Christianity. Christians at Thmuis and all over rural Egypt, as I shall argue presently-numbering among them peasants and people of need, but also men of consequence - were led by church rulers who already possessed dignity, secular learning and wealth. What made these church rulers effective in the practice of their duties was their own firm standing, especially in the days of trial, and their financial power to relieve those in need; whether their financial power derived from their control over the church funds or from their personal property, is

of little importance. On their part the rural church leaders were under the direct supervision and control of the bishop of Alexandria, as Phileas had been under the control of the Alexandrian bishop Peter. To understand the scale and the significance of the phenomenon we must first turn to a brief account of the origins of Egyptian Christianity.

The Origins of Egyptian Christianity.

The history of the origins of Egyptian Christianity is the history of the gradual emergence of orthodoxy out of a Jewish and a more or less Gnostic milieu. In a saying attributed to one of the Gnostic sects, that they were no longer Jews but not yet Christians, we must read the three stages of development of Egyptian Christianity (3). In the present section I shall trace these stages and I shall attempt to consider their social significance.

Our knowledge of the early spread of Christianity in Egypt is fragmented and dubious. It would be next to nothing if we had to rely exclusively on Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History and the works of the other early Christian authors including the Alexandrian fathers. Fortunately, papyrological and archaeological evidence have consolidated a basis for a number of plausible hypotheses. From papyri we can trace the Christianization of Egypt from the earliest years of the second century (4). As we shall see, the silence of the early authors is not irrelevant to the nature and character of the primitive Egyptian congregations.

The period under consideration can be divided into two sub-periods, the first from the earliest days until the Jewish rebellion under Tajan, and the second from Trajan's reign until the last decades of the second century, when the history proper of the Egyptian church begins. During the first sub-period, Christianity in Egypt depended in many ways upon the existence of strong Jewish communities in

Alexandria and the countryside. The first question to be answered is how did Christianity reach Egypt in the first place.

Judaeo- Christianity.

The day of the Pentecost symbolically marks the origins of the apostolic mission in general. Jerusalem of those days should be envisaged as the centre of a large area of commerce and of an even larger area of pilgrimage. Jerusalem was a meeting place for Jews and proselytes who gathered from all over the empire. Among such gatherings, Peter and the rest are supposed to have started their preaching. According to the Acts, inhabitants of Egypt were also present on this occasion (5). Jews in Egypt were numerous and special territories had been set apart for their settlements. In Alexandria, a great part of the city had been allocated to them (6). The Jewish element was so numerous and so notably Hellenized in Alexandria, that under Ptolemy Soter their sacred scriptures were translated into Greek (7). Alexandria is also known as the city of the great philosopher Philo (c. 30 BC-AD 45) who was head of its Jewish community. Philo is thought to have been the principle mediator between Hellenistic philosophy and both Christianity and Neoplatonism (8). Dispersed around Alexandria, on the shores of the Mareotic Lake, there was a numerous Jewish sect, the Therapeutae, whom Eusebius, judging from their ascetic way of life, identified with the earliest Egyptian Christians (an idea nowadays totally rejected) (9). In a passage of the Acts Stephen is reported to have been arguing for the Christian cause in the Synagogue of Freedmen with Cyrenians and Alexandrians, while 'The word of God ... spread more and more widely' (10). A second passage, as it is phrased in a Western reading of the Acts, refers to the Jew Apollos, the associate of Paul, as having been converted to Christianity in his native Alexandria in the middle of the

first century (11). Two apocryphal Gospels associated with Egypt (the Gospel of the Egyptians and the Gospel of the Hebrews) have clear Judaeo-Christian characteristics, while Pantaenus, the first historical Christian in Alexandria to be connected with the orthodox party, judging from his knowledge of Hebrew and the Judaeo-Christian tradition which he transmitted to Clement, must have been a Judaeo-Christian. The structure of the hierarchy of the Christian communities in Egypt link them to Palestine rather than to Asia Minor and the Pauline mission (12). Recent papyrological investigations have confirmed the close relations between Jews and Christians in Egypt in the earliest years (13). In view of the above we can infer with fair certainty that Christianity in Alexandria and Egypt had originally been of a Jewish character.

After the Jewish revolt, the religious setting in Christian Egypt changed suddenly and considerably. A distinct Christian community appears in history. The earliest Christian papyri discovered (with the possible exception of a fragment of a Christian copy of the Septuagint dated to about AD 90) (14) date from the reign of Trajan. It is interesting to notice that Christian papyri appear as traces of Jewish papyri disappear. That Jewish traces disappear is not strange. The revolt ended with the destruction - some say extermination - of the Egyptian Jews. While for the first 100 years of Roman rule, 300 documents with allusions to Jews are found, from the Jewish revolt in AD 117 up to AD 337 there exist only 44 such documents (15). After Philo, no Jewish philosopher is known at Alexandria, and Hellenistic Judaism died out everywhere (16). It is, therefore, plausible to conjecture that the defeat of the Jews obliged Christianity to emerge as a distinct movement. By the late second century, the two communities were so far apart, that Clement of Alexandria could write that he was making use of a few Scriptures 'if perchance the Jew also may listen and be able quietly to turn from what he has believed to Him on whom he has not believed' (17).

We also have the evidence derived from two more features of Egyptian Christianity which tentatively corroborate the view expressed above. One is the use of the so-called nomina sacra in Biblical manuscripts and the other is the adoption of the papyrus codex in the place of the rolls for the New and Old Testament texts. The nomina sacra were certainly words of Christian significance contracted by the omission of certain vowels and sometimes of consonants also. The best known of these words were θεός, κύριος, Ἰησοῦς and χριστός. The contraction was indicated by a line above the word (e.g. ΘΣ). Similar devices are also found in Hebrew and Greek texts but the differences observed do not allow them to be considered as the direct origins of the Christian nomina sacra (18).

In classical antiquity all manuscripts had the form of rolls. From the second century onwards, rolls started being displaced by codices which had more or less the shape of modern books. In the second century the proportion of codices to rolls (judging from the preserved documents) was just above 2% for non-Christian documents, while in the fourth century - the transition being almost completed - more than 70% of the manuscripts had the form of codices. When we turn to the Biblical texts of the second and third centuries, we notice that they are all, without exception, codices - though non-Biblical Christian manuscripts made use of both forms (19).

Several attempts have been made to explain the reasons of both innovations, ascribing them, as a rule, to practical purposes. The nomina sacra was a sort of an abbreviation, while the adoption of the codices made the search for Biblical quotations much easier. But why these innovations first appeared in Christian Biblical literature, we cannot say. The best insight up to now must be credited to T.C. Skeat who has written that,

The significant fact is that the introduction of the nomina sacra seems to parallel very closely the adoption of the papyrus codex; and it is remarkable that this

development should have taken place at almost the same time as the great outburst of critical activity among Jewish scholars which led to the standardization of the text of the Hebrew Bible (20).

The problem becomes even more interesting when we recall that the standardization of the Hebrew Bible was in all probability a reaction to Christian success (21). We thus arrive at the tentative conclusion of a reciprocal reaction between Judaism and Christianity, centred in Egypt (neither the nomina sacra nor the codex were used regularly outside Egypt before the fourth century). But as far as we know, what followed for the next sixty years was a more or less Gnostic type of Christianity with no clear signs of orthodoxy (22). Even if this seems to be a too strong assertion, most modern scholars would at least agree that no district boundaries separate orthodoxy from heterodoxy during this period in Egypt.

Gnosticism.

The anti-heretical fathers and above all Irenaeus gave a picture of Egyptian Christianity as being originally strongly influenced by Gnosticism. Judging from the comments made by Clement of Alexandria it looks as if 'almost every deviant Christian sect was represented in Egypt during the second century' (23). All the outstanding Christian representatives until Pantaenus (including Carpocrates and his son Epiphanes, Basilides and his son Isidore, Valentinus and his followers Ptolemaeus and Heracleon) were leading figures of the Gnostic schools or sects. A number of recent papyrological discoveries, which are translations of mid-second century originals, all belong to the Gnostic schools.

At this point mention must be made of the strong objections presented by C.H. Roberts against the theory of an originally predominant Gnosticism in Egypt. Roberts noted that most of the

gnostic texts from Egypt were written in the fourth and fifth centuries, 'when orthodoxy was at the height of its power'. Only one out of the 14 documents (a fragment of the Gospel of Thomas) dated definitely before AD 200 'may be reasonably regarded as gnostic' (24). This, I believe, is the strongest argument Roberts brings against the theories which argue that Christianity in Egypt was originally of a Gnostic type. In my opinion, the evidence of the manuscripts is interesting but misused. What is not taken into consideration is the relative importance of written texts. The orthodox party (influenced by Marcion in this respect) was keen on putting its tradition into writing much earlier than the Gnostics. The Gnostic Basilides is said to have composed 24 books on the Gospel (25) of which not even a fragment has survived. The reason is that the Basilidians made very few copies of their documents and even those they kept carefully out of sight. 'It is not at all fitting to speak openly of (the) mysteries', they thought, 'but right to keep them secret by preserving silence' (26). Such sects cannot be expected to have left behind traces of written documents. It was only much later that the Gnostics felt compelled to multiply their literary activities; even so, most of the Gnostic texts came from the discovery of a single library - that of Nag Hammadi.

That Gnosticism emerged out of a Judaeo-Christian milieu seems obvious enough from what has already been said. The Nag Hammadi library alone includes, quite suggestively, three Apocalypses of James, the leader of the Christian church in Jerusalem and principal representative of the Judaeo-Christian trend (27). Apart from Jewish theology, Gnosticism made use of a great variety of sources including Hellenic, Babylonian, Egyptian and Iranian systems of thought, though neither of the above in its orthodox form (28). The relative importance of each source in Gnosticism is a matter greatly disputed; it seems, however, reasonable to conjecture that what motivated the

Gnostic movement was the failure of the Jewish apocalyptic hopes after the failure of the disastrous revolution in the early second century. This explains the conflicting observations of strong influences and of radical rejections of Judaism on the part of the Gnostics.

One last point that must be made about the character of second century Egyptian Christianity is its adoption of an extreme 'syncretism'. This attitude is clear from an alleged letter of Hadrian to the consul Servianus and the archaeological evidence which points at an 'extraordinary jumbling of Christianity and paganism' (29). According to Irenaeus, Basilides attached no importance to meats offered to idols, and made use of them without any hesitation; he allegedly held also the practices of other religious rites and of every kind of lust, a matter of perfect indifference (30). 'Syncretism' saved the Gnostics from the persecutions, but it deprived them from the exclusiveness which gave orthodoxy its rigour and its strength.

Orthodoxy.

The first signs of an organized orthodoxy in Alexandria appear with bishop Demetrius and Clement, the head of the catechetical school, who both resumed their positions in the last decade of the second century. The gradual shift of Egyptian Christianity towards orthodoxy went hand in hand with an increasing association between the Alexandrian and the Roman churches. To grasp the significance of the transition we must consider the internal developments and foreign involvement.

From Eusebius, as I have already mentioned, we learn next to nothing about Christianity in Egypt before AD 180. The list of Alexandrian bishops which he gave up to Demetrius (AD 189-231) is undoubtedly fictitious. So is the story relating how 'Mark was the first to be sent to preach in Egypt the Gospel which he had also put

into writing, and was the first to establish churches in Alexandria itself' (31). Apart from one exception, no papyrus of this Gospel dating before the fourth century has been found in Egypt (32). Mark's legend, however, is informative in another sense. According to tradition, Mark was sent to Egypt from Rome; this probably reflects a historical mission from Rome to Egypt, which took place in the late second century. Prior to the fourth-century 'Monarchian' prologues to the Gospels, no author was aware of the legend. It is to this late appearance of Roman orthodoxy in Egypt that we must attribute Eusebius' reluctance to give any information of the origins of the Egyptian church (33) (though suggestions that we must attribute the silence about Egypt to the fact that it did not enter into Paul's sphere of activity, with which almost all our documents are concerned, must be also considered) (34).

The evidence of the early relations between the Roman and the Alexandrian Christian churches is scanty but it increases rapidly as we enter the third century. It has been noticed that the church of Alexandria was organized in parishes approximately in the same way as in Rome (35). A second century fragment of the Shepherd of Hermas has been found in Fayum, specially marked for reading aloud. The existence in Egypt of the fragment of this document, which was written in Rome not many years before, points to theological communication between the two communities (36). A fragment of Irenaeus' Adversus Haereses, has been found in Oxyrhynchus, dating also a few years after the composition of the original (late second century). Irenaeus was not living in Rome but was an immediate associate of the Roman bishops. The presence of his work in Egypt is a clear indication of an anti-heretical campaign (37). At the end of the second century Demetrius started corresponding with Rome on the Easter controversy and some years later Origen, who had in the mean time succeeded Clement, travelled to Rome in person and remained there for a while 'Desiring to

see the most ancient church of the Romans' (38).

As far as the motives of Rome's intervention in Alexandrian Christianity are concerned, nothing can be said with certainty. It seems, however, probable that Rome was responding to an ever increasing Gnostic influence in its own territory. Valentinus himself had lived and preached in Rome at least until c. AD 165; his disciples gave his system a new vigour and leading figures of the late second century Christian movement, as far away as Mesopotamia (such as Bardesanes of Edessa) had not been immune from Valentinianism (39). Marcellina one of the Carpocratians, had also gone to Rome in the same period as Valentinus, achieving notable success (40). Roman church leaders may have felt that the only lasting reaction to Gnosticism was to attack it in its very homeland, i.e. Egypt. The later history of Egyptian Christianity shows that Gnosticism faded away, but how far this was due to internal factors or Rome's intervention we cannot say.

Social Differences Between Gnosticism and Orthodoxy.

Archaeological and other evidence suggest that Gnosticism had been more successful among the less Hellenized natives of the Nile valley, while orthodoxy conquered first the city of Alexandria with its Greek-speaking and more educated population. Plotinus reproached the Gnostics for having taken much from Plato's doctrines, supplementing them with new ideas 'outside the truth', and added that 'what is said by the ancients about the intelligible world is far better, and is put in a way appropriate to educated men' (41). This could be so, for Gnosticism, in spite of its Greek philosophical background, was open to syncretism, and Egyptian peasants, who were closely attached to their traditional religion, could adapt themselves to it more easily. Orthodoxy, on the other hand, had assimilated theological and

philosophical elements of the Greek thought and was tending towards a rationalism alien to mysticism and magic.

There is evidence, however, to the contrary. The Gnostic leaders were all Greek speaking and with philosophical education. Their system was far too complicated for the uneducated and for the peasants. On these grounds it has been suggested that Gnosticism had powerful attractions 'for Christians of moderate or mediocre education who were troubled by the more sub-Christian parts of the Old Testament and repelled by the crudity of uninstructed believers' (42). Orthodoxy, for its part, had not emancipated itself completely from old Egyptian religious remains. It could also be that 'reaction to Gnosticism led simple believers to make strident denials that baptismal faith required any supplementation and correction by higher and more philosophic knowledge' (43).

I believe that the problem calls for more sophisticated explanations. Ordinary members of a Gnostic sect were not expected to read and understand Basilides or Valentinus any more than ordinary members of the orthodox party were expected to read and understand Origen. That both trends had their philosophers and their theoreticians is adequately attested. It also seems beyond doubt that simple and uneducated adherents were found among the Gnostics as they were found among the orthodox. In the short run I am inclined to attribute the relative success of each trend basically to the merits of individuals rather than to the content of the theology preached. In the long run, orthodoxy prevailed not because it was more appropriate to the bulk of the population than Gnosticism, but because it favoured (and its theology allowed for) a more disciplined and better organized community, which enjoyed the support of the Roman and other powerful churches.

4. Social and Economic Developments in Rural Egypt.

Before considering the spread of Christianity in Rural Egypt, I shall attempt to present in a schematic and static way the principal social and economic developments from the time of the Ptolemies to the early third century. Religious transformations cannot be reduced to either economic or political factors. There exist, however, such factors, which in a sense activate or at least make possible the religious developments. The present section is concerned with these factors. Emphasis will be laid on the problem of land, which is of central importance in all agricultural societies. Three questions will be raised throughout: (a) who were the legal owners of the land, (b) who tilled the land, and (c) how was the surplus product exacted as determined by the relations of (a) and (b). Throughout the period examined, it is unlikely that the level of living of the bulk of the peasantry changed substantially. Productivity, with all its seasonal and annual variations, did not increase or decrease beyond certain limits, and the exacted surplus whether in form of tax, rent or compulsory labour was kept fairly constant. The bulk of the peasantry was probably poor, although it must not be forgotten that even villages often were highly stratified(1). What changed, however, as Egypt passed from one form of legal ownership to another were the customs and laws of land inheritance, land sales and leases. One effect of the introduction of private landed property was the widening of the gap between the different classes (2) and the transition from a more uniform to a more stratified peasantry (3). What was also affected was the family structure, its sense of security and some of its practices. For methodological purposes, I have divided the period under consideration into four phases, although strictly speaking

history has no hard and fast phases. I shall start with the Ptolemaic era.

1) Agricultural production in Egypt had always been based on a complex system of irrigation, which was centrally supervised and kept in function or expanded by compulsory labour imposed upon peasants. The importance of the irrigation system remained unaltered throughout the history of ancient Egypt.

Under the Ptolemies we can distinguish three categories of land ownership. By far the largest area belonged to the kings (βασιλική γῆ); next came the land belonging to the priesthoods (ἱερατική γῆ); last, for the first time in Egyptian history, house land and garden land (γῆ κατοικική, γῆ κληρουχική) was sometimes allocated to private proprietors (γεοῦχοι), usually settled soldiers of Greek origin. To the above we must add the waste land of the later Ptolemaic era which was either ownerless (ἀδέσποτα) or dry (χέρσοι) due to neglected irrigation.

The land belonging to the kings and the temples was cultivated almost exclusively by native peasants. These natives, although not free in the classical Greek sense, were not chattel slaves - a category almost unknown in Ptolemaic Egyptian agriculture. The land belonging to private owners was cultivated either by natives or by the settlers themselves, with or without assistance.

All cultivated land was subject to taxes according to its legal classification (κληρουχικόν, γῆ βασιλική) and to the type of its cultivation (arable, vineyards, orchards and gardens). Taxation rates of royal lands were much higher than those imposed on sacred and private land, though strictly speaking this was more of a rent than a tax. There was also a poll tax, a transfer tax and some other forms of additional taxation (4).

2) With the conquest of Egypt by the Romans (by Augustus in 30 BC. when it became a Roman province) several changes took place. The land once belonging to the Ptolemaic kings, together with the private fortune of Cleopatra, augmented by her late confiscations, passed to the Romans. Some historians believe that part of the land was taken over by the emperor and his family as their personal property but it seems more likely that the confiscated land became ager publicus and was brought under the imperium of the Roman people - which in effect meant the emperor and the senate. Administratively, this land was controlled by the Egyptian fiscus (διοίκησις).

The temples continued to function as religious centres, but were deprived of most of their landed property. It is also possible that they were deprived of the control of some of the remaining land. Control of the confiscated land was vested in the fiscus. The priesthood thus lost the economic base of its power, which had been an effective means of controlling large numbers of peasants. On top of the priests, including those of the Greek and Roman temples, a High Priest was appointed, who was actually a Roman procurator. In addition, Egyptian priests were now subjected to personal taxation. Under these circumstances it is justified to say that the power of the temples was 'crushed once and for all' (5). But the priesthood retained control over a part of the former temple land, which it leased and could perhaps sell.

Those of the old Greek settlers (the κληροῦχοι), whose land had not been confiscated, were granted full rights of ownership (possessio). But whether Roman veterans were also settled in Egypt under Augustus is not clear. The two forms of granting land peculiar to the Pharaonic and Ptolemaic kings (δωρεάι and κληροί) were unlikely to have continued under Roman rule. Δωρεάι was a category unknown to Roman law and κληροί were unnecessary for an occupation force (although this is a disputed matter).

A large part of the confiscated land was sold to investors from Rome. Investment in Egyptian land was encouraged by the opening of a world market for Egyptian products. In this investment we can trace the origins of the large estates to be found later in Egypt. Among the first and principle investors we meet the relatives and close associates of Augustus.

Efforts were made to reclaim neglected or unproductive land. Natives were encouraged to buy such land with the incentive of the rights of possessio. Sometimes, when it was not possible to find buyers or tenants for unproductive or heavily assessed land, the Roman administration imposed cultivation upon tenants and owners of neighbouring parcels or even to whole villages. Enforced cultivation was already known from the Ptolemaic period but under Roman rule it grew into a regular institution, taking the forms of διαίρεσις, ἐπιμερισμός and ἐπιβολή. Augustus used his troops to help clear some irrigation canals. Apart from this, almost all the agricultural labour, including the usual maintenance of the irrigation system, was done by the native peasants. The best land, which still remained state property, and most of the privately owned land was leased to tenants. Only a small part of the privately owned land was cultivated by the Greek settlers themselves. Alongside these forms of cultivation, farmers with very small holdings never ceased to exist.

Agricultural slavery gradually appeared, but never became widespread during the Roman period. Slaves made up something like a tenth of the total population. Only a small number of slaves was employed in cultivation, since free workers for both continual service and hiring by day, were usually easily available. Slaves in such numbers and at such low prices as to replace the cheap tenants and day workers, were much more difficult to find. The evidence comes mostly from the larger estates, but it could not have been very different in smaller holdings, though these last named seem to have

employed proportionately more slaves than the larger ones. In Egypt slavery 'appears not so much as a mode of production, but rather as a method of recruiting supplementary labour, particularly to help a family in the medium term through a crisis caused by death or by the needs of dependent children' (6).

The conclusion from this first period of Roman occupation is that private owners of either large estates or small holdings replaced the Ptolemaic kings and the temples to a considerable extent. Exact calculations cannot be made but this process continued during the following years. It is just to claim that the institution of private ownership of land was 'one of the most radical changes introduced in Egypt by the Romans' (7). It can also be observed that the area where Christianity later spread most significantly, the Arsinoite (the Hadriatic Antinoopolis was soon to follow), had a heavy concentration of Graeco-Macedonian inhabitants as well as of privately owned land. This area (and that surrounding Antinoopolis) became also known in the fourth century for its monastic movement (8).

3) The middle of the first century AD may be considered as the beginning of a new period in Roman Egypt. As soon as private ownership of land was introduced in Egypt, it became a custom among Egyptian farmers to bequeath their landed property to all their children. To this fragmentation of land, we must add the measures inaugurated under Nero leading to the liquidation of many of the large estates. These measures were meant to favour resident rather than absentee landlords. The motives of the policy must have been to facilitate taxation, which had become difficult to administer because many of the absentee owners were influential senators and members of the imperial families. Evidence from mid-first century Egypt makes it clear that there existed an active market in land. Judging from Tebtunis, a village of the Arsinoite nome, roughly one tenth of the

agricultural land was either leased or sold in a single year (AD 75/76). Although the class of landowners did not cease to expand, no new large estates were formed until the third century.

Nero's reign is also known for what has been called an 'economic crisis' in Egypt, which led to complaints from both the upper and the lower classes. Peasants responded to the crisis by flight (ἀναχώρησις), a traditional reaction which became frequent under Nero. We can note in passing that the third and fourth century Christian ἀναχωρηταί were following the example of the distressed and oppressed villagers of earlier times. During the same period Egypt became the first province where the agricultural population began to be tied to the soil. In later centuries this was to become a common practice in the empire. Edicts from the time of Nerva in AD 104 are known to have ordered peasants to return to their lands. Hereditary ties to a locality were originally meant to facilitate the administration and the collection of the poll tax (9).

4) Our last phase starts with the Jewish war, which accelerated a process of decay already manifest in the previous period. The Jewish war was followed not many years later by an insurrection of the Egyptian fellaheen which during the reign of Antoninus Pius endangered the corn-supply of Rome. Under Hadrian, part of the domain land was converted into quasi-private holdings. This land, called βασιλική γῆ ἐν τάξῃ ἰδιοκτητήτου ἀναγραφομένη or ἰδιωτικῶ δικαίῳ ἐπικρατουμένη (such as that in the Apollonopolite nome) was taxed like private property. The intention was to lower the rent - now called tax - and thus help overcome the agricultural difficulties. Hadrian apparently went even further by selling unproductive domain land to private purchasers. Such measures may have been necessary because large areas seem to have been left uncultivated, being gradually abandoned by the farmers.

Private ownership of land was also strengthened with the settlement of discharged veterans, some at least receiving allotments of land in such cities as the newly founded Antinoopolis. The veterans settled by Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, and more systematically under Septimius Severus, are supposed to have been recruited from the Greek and Graeco- Egyptian elements of the population. Constant efforts were made to force fugitive peasants to return to their lands.

Temples continued to possess landed property up to the mid fifth century. In the second century the financial administration of the temples was assigned to the so-called ἴδιος λόγος. The administration of the temples must have been a very complicated matter due to the different methods of collecting revenues from each temple. It has been suggested that the motives for employing different methods were the government's desire to fester jealousy between the temples. The Bucolic revolt which took place in the years of Marcus Aurelius and spread to be a nationwide movement is proof that such precautions were necessary, since the rising assumed a religious character and was led by a priest (10).

Hadrian's and subsequent reforms might have not been successful to the expected degree. However, the general tendency which led to the establishment of peasant proprietors was well established; it continued uninterrupted almost until the fifth century. In the early fourth century the bulk of Egyptian land was still held by peasant proprietors. It was not until the sixth century that the situation changed considerably (11).

The Financial Position of the Christian Church.

The Christian church of the fifth, sixth and early seventh centuries became the successor of the Egyptian temples in their function as factors of agricultural production, i.e. as landowners and organisers

of production (12). The question is whether the Christian church acquired this function after the conversion of the empire or earlier. What we know of the landed property of the Egyptian Christian community in the second and third centuries is next to nothing. No papyrus extant from this period gives any information about the economic activities and position of Christianity. But inferences from ancient testimonies suggest that it was involved in agricultural production already from an early age. Considering the information provided by ancient authors in close connection with later developments, I have arrived at the following conclusions.

1) The Christian communities had an income from the earliest days, the main source (for some time the exclusive source) of which was the offerings of the faithful. These offerings, which were in kind and/or money, were administered at first by specially appointed members of the communities (13). Some of the offerings were distributed to those in need, but some were kept to support the missionaries, the teachers and others. It is possible that donations included land, or that land was being bought with the money collected, for it was needed as burial ground (14).

According to early second century regulations, officials of the communities were sustained by the brotherhood. These officials were given both money and food. Christian farmers gave their firstfruits to this end, a practice which proved to be of long duration. The administration of the church finances passed to the church officials and when the monarchical episcopate emerged, to the bishops (15).

From the mid second century (at the latest) fixed salaries were sometimes being paid to church officials, while from the end of the second century at least one bishop was paid a fixed salary. Presbyters in Carthage were paid a monthly stipend in the age of Cyprian (16).

2) Christian communities quickly developed two further very important sources of income: banking and urban property. Of banking and the involvement of influential Christians in it, enough has already been said in the previous chapter. A few details must be given, however, about the financial significance of urban property.

Contrary to standard views, P. Garnsey has demonstrated that revenue from urban property was far more important to Roman economy and the wealthy classes than their ideology allowed to be revealed in their public statements. Urban property brought in a higher return than rural property; Cicero's urban property, for example, contributed almost as much as his extensive country estates. The problem with urban property was that it was less secure and that it brought no prestige. For these reasons aristocratic funds were usually diverted to the rural sphere. However, as the case of Cicero illustrates even aristocrats could benefit considerably from urban investments (17).

The Christian communities were the owners of church buildings from the earliest days. In the beginning, common houses were converted for this purpose but by the second century, special buildings were purchased and sometimes erected. At the time of the great persecutions the Christian communities were in possession of urban estates rented to artisans or to lodgers. Although the exact legal titles of the church property are not known, it is certain that by the time of the emperor Aurelian, Christians could appeal as legal owners to the Roman administration about their property (18).

By good fortune an Egyptian papyrus has been preserved, which gives us an idea of what a village church was expected to possess in the early fourth century. The text was written in the name of a lector of the former church of the village of Chysis near Oxyrhynchus in AD 304. The relevant section reads as follows:

I reported that the said church had neither gold nor silver nor money nor clothes nor beasts nor slaves nor land nor property either from grants or bequests,

excepting only the bronze gate which was found and delivered to the logistes to be carried down to the most glorious Alexandria (19).

Written during the persecutions and the confiscations, the above text is probably insincere. The only thing that the lector admitted the church possessed was the bronze gate which could obviously not be hidden. What exactly the church did possess we cannot tell, but the list given includes items that the Christian communities did own at that age.

3) Landed property used for cemeteries, the Christian communities had from the early years. Christians held assemblies in the cemeteries where they commemorated their martyrs. During the persecutions, the prefects took care to forbid them even to enter the cemeteries, for it was known that they would be used for prayers. One well known case is that connected with the Alexandrian bishop Dionysius (20). During the late persecutions, the Christian churches were in possession of land used for agricultural purposes; it was restored to them by Constantine and Licinius. Further information is not available, but from what has already been said it is clear that the churches lacked neither the funds nor the organization to become landowners. With the exception of the periods of severe persecutions, they could administer their property according to Roman law without obstructions. If aristocrats took always good care to invest their wealth obtained from banking or urban estates in land, why should it be any different with the Christian church? Starting from the fourth century and with the imperial aid, the Egyptian church became one of the most important landowners. It is even probable that the Egyptian church took possession of the same domains, which had once belonged to the temples, especially since it is known that already in the late third century monastic saints found shelter in deserted temples of Serapis (21). Christianity must be, therefore, seen not only as the religious heir of the temples but as their heir in the process of production as well.

How religious and financial interests intermingled we can see in the information given by the Alexandrian bishop Dionysius about the persecutions of Valerian. One of the instigators of the persecutions was 'the master and ruler of the synagogue of the Egyptian magicians', who felt threatened not only in his 'abominable and disgusting incantations' but also in his secular aspirations, for he was a 'minister over imperial accounts as a whole' and was desiring to see his sons even higher (22).

5. Christianity in Rural Egypt.

The Gnostic Basilides, who was active from the time of Hadrian to the time of Antoninus Pius, did not confine himself to cities alone, but extended his activities to the surrounding rural areas also. Among other places, he is reported to have visited the suburbs of Prosopitis, Atribis, Sais, Alexandreopolis and Alexandria. These places lie on the delta, between Memphis and the sea. In the late fourth century, there were still Valentinian Gnostics in these areas as well as in Arsinoë and Thebais (1). In the late second century, according to Clement, Christianity had spread to 'every nation, and village and town' (2). Unfortunately, Clement was not interested in writing history and many of his statements suffer from rhetorical inaccuracy. Furthermore, Clement had been travelling a lot before settling in Alexandria and it is not easy to decide whether or not he had Egypt in mind. According to tradition, the Alexandrian bishop Demetrius (AD 189-232) was the first to appoint bishops outside Alexandria, a certain sign of expansion and penetration into the countryside (3). Early in the third century the bishop of Jerusalem was corresponding with a Christian community at Antinoë (4).

Martyrs from Egypt and the whole of Thebais were brought to Alexandria during the Severan persecutions, but this information, given by Eusebius, could be a projection backwards of later events (5). More significant is Origen's distinction between 'Greek' and 'Egyptian' Christians, a notion applying to the native non-Greek speaking population. Unquestionable evidence comes, however, from the Alexandrian bishop Dionysius (AD 248-265). In one of his letters, Dionysius described how a whole company of a marriage-feast, taking place in a village not far from Alexandria, called Taposiris, had saved him from arrest during the local (Decian) persecutions. Referring to a subsequent exile of his in a village called Cephro -

which was not far from the previous one - he described how the heathen natives 'left their idols and turned to God'. While at Cephro, he continued, 'a large church also sojourned with us, some brethren following us from the city, others joining us from Egypt'. When he was removed to yet another village next to the above, called Colluthion, he was encouraged by the fact that while Cephro brought much more intercourse with the brethren from Egypt, Colluthion was nearer Alexandria and he could see more constantly those 'really beloved and most intimate and dear'. They would come he expected, and stay the night, and, as in the more remote suburban districts, there would be sectional assemblies. Finally, when freed, Dionysius visited the Arsinoite nome to settle theological disputes and called together the presbyters and teachers of the brethren in the villages (6).

Not more than forty years after Dionysius' death, the Alexandrian bishop Peter (AD 301-11) ordained fifty-five bishops in Egypt, all of them in cities and villages outside Alexandria, while the schismatic Meletius had been ordaining at the same time twenty nine bishops in Egypt apart from the four presbyters and the three deacons he had in Alexandria along with one country presbyter (7). It is therefore obvious that by the early fourth century the Christianization of rural Egypt had advanced to a notable extent with bishops responsible for almost the entire country.

The above evidence, scarce for the second century but quite suggestive for the third and fourth centuries, suffers from an unfortunate drawback. Although villages were explicitly mentioned, the whole notion of 'rural Egypt' is too vague for the needs of the present investigation. Large villages in Egypt cannot be easily distinguished from 'cities', and furthermore, there were many villages inhabited, partly at least, by a Greek-speaking population which had, in spite of intermarriages, remained separated from native peasants.

Direct testimonies from ancient authors cannot fill in the gap of our knowledge on this subject. To form an idea of the degree of Christianization of the native population we have to turn to linguistic considerations.

Strangely, the narratives of the early Christian Acts, canonical and apocryphal, make little mention of linguistic problems. The early missionaries, for the most part, neglected the countryside, travelling from city to city. In the cities of the East, most people would be able to communicate in Greek, even if it was not their native tongue. But peasants, in most areas, never forgot their ancient language even when they fled to the cities for a better life. To speak of Egypt in particular, we know from an edict by Caracalla issued in AD 215, that Egyptian peasants who had fled to Alexandria could easily be recognised among the linen weavers by their speech (8).

Native peasants in Egypt were by far the largest group of the population. Judging from two late second century villages in the Delta we can infer that the purely or partially Greek population was less than a sixth of the total, while the Romans were even fewer (9). As we go up the Nile, peasants are found to be less and less Hellenized. But even linguistic considerations have their drawbacks. Wealthy people, even those living in villages, tended to use Greek names and sometimes even spoke Greek although most of them were not actually of Greek descent. In addition, late antiquity was characterized by important cultural changes such as a revival of the local vernaculars. For these reasons the linguistic evidence must only be used with caution. The most I can do is formulate a number of tentative propositions. Before doing so, it will be helpful to summarize our general information about writing, reading and translating sacred texts up to the third century.

Writing, Reading and Translating the Bible.

You are asked then to read with sympathetic attention, and make allowances if, in spite of all the devoted work I have put into the translation, some of the expressions appear inadequate. For it is impossible for a translator to find precise equivalents for the original Hebrew in another language. Not only with this book, but with the law, the prophets, and the rest of the writings, it makes no small difference to read them in the original.

(From the Preface to the Ecclesiasticus, written in Egypt in the reign of King Euergetes c. 288-21 BC.)

Tradition in primitive Christianity was predominantly transmitted by preaching, teaching and conversing. Writing and reading for religious purposes, though not unknown were valued much less than oral communication (10). Attempts to attribute this phenomenon to the scarcity of copies available are not convincing (11). Almost all religions - with the possible exception of Islam - passed through an oral phase in their early development. Reading, writing and commenting upon the sacred documents only became important when internal controversies reached intolerable intensity.

A religion transmitted orally leaves behind no traces of written documents. It cannot be ascertained, therefore, whether or not native languages were also used in primitive Christianity alongside Greek. Missionaries and preachers translating the divine message into native vernaculars could have existed from the earliest days, but how can we tell? The fourth century 'interpreters' in Egypt could have been their immediate heirs, but this is a mere hypothesis (12). A passage in the beginning of the Acts claiming that the 'twelve' inspired by the Holy Spirit, began to preach in all the native languages, though fictitious, reflects the difficulties with which the first missionaries met (13). Despite inspiration, Peter is reported to have had not one but two interpreters, Mark and Glaucias (14). The same impression is given by

the first attempts to have the New Testament translated into Latin. The same willingness and weakness is manifest. 'In the early days of the faith', Augustine was to write some centuries later, 'everyone who happened to get possession of a Greek manuscript and who thought that he had any facility in both languages, however slight it might be, ventured to translate it' (15). With the early translations we come close to the written phase of Christianity.

I believe that Papias of Hierapolis, who wrote before the middle of the second century, may be considered as the last authority of the great church to be heard claiming:

For I imagined that what was to be got from books was not so profitable for me as what came from the living and abiding voice (16).

Fifty years later Irenaeus, who it must be said was greatly influenced by Papias, wrote that the apostles 'handed down to us in the Scripture' the plan of our salvation, 'to be the ground and pillar of our faith' (17).

A systematic reading of the Bible started in about the middle of the second century. All second century apologists exhorted their readers to study the Scriptures, which in their terminology meant mostly the Old Testament. At the same time we have the first evidence of a house-to-house visitation by instructors who read aloud the Christian texts (18). 'The God-fearing man should consider it a great loss if he does not go to the place in which they give instruction, and especially if he knows (how) to read' wrote Hippolytus (c. AD 217), being confirmed by several other documents (19). I take systematic reading to imply that the Text as such had acquired a central position in the congregations.

The same period witnesses the emergence of the churches sine literis, i.e. the barbarian churches who believed in Christ 'having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper or ink' (20). In the late second century, Irenaeus knew of the churches in

Germany, Spain, Gaul, Egypt, Libya and others which though speaking different languages were allegedly keeping the same tradition (21). It should not come as a surprise that natives, as everyone else, became acutely in need of written translations. What is strange is that not all areas have left behind traces of such translations. This problem has been clearly formulated by P. Brunt:

Why individuals conceived the idea of producing translations in some vernaculars and not in others, and how the Gospel was ultimately conveyed to the peasants in (say) Gaul, if they knew little or no Latin and preachers little or no Celtic, are questions to which I have found no answer (22).

To deal with Brunt's problem we have to look into the history of translations a little deeper. First of all, translating the sacred scriptures was not a Christian innovation. I am not concerned here with pagan religions. They had no scriptures of comparable importance; the closest to a religious text that the ancient Greeks had, were the Orphic poems, but they probably did not preach anything uniform or systematic (23). But the case of Judaism is instructive. Apart from the Greek translations (the Septuagint and others), Jews had translated their Torah only into Aramaic (the Greek translation in the third and the Aramaic in the fourth centuries BC) (24). The first Latin translations of the Old Testament were certainly Christian and based on the Septuagint version, so highly valued by Christians. The earliest translation of the New Testament was into Syriac in the late second century followed soon by the Coptic translation (25).

As reading became central to Christian religion, the Greek and the Roman churches parted in attitude. The former did not hesitate to encourage translations into native languages such as Syriac and Coptic and later Armenian and others. The Roman church, on the other hand, was much more conservative in this respect. Up to the end of the second century, it had itself used the Greek original for liturgical purposes. The first bishop known to have written theological

treatises in Latin was Victor at about AD 190. Even so, it seems that the first Latin translations were made outside Italy, possibly in Africa, the native place of Victor. They were subsequently introduced into Italy through Milan, where they were probably first adopted for liturgical purposes. When Latin was finally accepted by the Roman see, it was jealously kept in the whole of the West (26).

At the time of Theodoret, in the fifth century, it could be claimed that 'what was once said in the Hebrew language is now translated not only into Greek but also into Latin, Egyptian, Persian, Indian, Armenian, Sythian and Sauromatian - in short, into the languages of all nations' (27). All the languages named (except for Latin) came from the Eastern and more Hellenized areas; the vernaculars of Gaul, Spain and N. Africa for example were not mentioned. For the time being we have no theory to explain this difference between the churches of East and West. A. Harnack's belief that the motive for the early translations was 'the earnest desire to place the Scriptures in the hands of the faithful for their private use', does not take us an inch further (28). In my view, the differences between East and West were related to the respective policies followed by each church in its attempt to secure its dominance, i.e. its control over the production and distribution of 'sacred knowledge'. But what determined each policy must remain open to further investigations. The difference in policies serves, however, as a first approach to Brunt's problem, why translations were made in some vernaculars and not in others (29). The case of Coptic will help to elaborate further.

Coptic.

The Egyptian aristocracy had been more or less Hellenized ever since the Ptolemaic era. This did not change with the Roman conquest; Latin was confined almost exclusively to administrative purposes. But

the Egyptian language, which was restricted to the countryside (it is not known to what extent it was still in use in the big cities such as Alexandria), survived as the vernacular of the peasantry. In its history, the Egyptian language had successively passed through three types of writing: Hieroglyphic, Hieratic and Demotic, all three differing considerably from each other but none being accessible to the majority of the population. During the first century AD, the Greek alphabet was adapted to the Egyptian language and was used in the writing of magical texts. A later and much more successful combination of the Egyptian language with a modified Greek alphabet (known as Coptic) gradually achieved wide popularity (30). The earliest surviving Coptic text to be used by the Christians dates from the late second or early third century and is a Graeco-Coptic glossary (31).

Coptic and Christianity soon became extremely closely connected in Egypt. The earliest phases of this relationship remain unknown, but a piece of information given by Eusebius suggests that it started much earlier than is usually thought. In an argument explicitly based on an adversary of the Gnostic Basilides, Eusebius wrote that the Gnostic leader had 'set up prophets' inventing for them barbarous names' to astonish those who were influenced by such things' (32). Obviously, these barbarian names could not have been Greek. Hebrew was usually referred to by Christians as Ἑβραϊκὴ διάλεκτος, and furthermore, Hebrew names were too common to have impressed anyone, the same holding true for Latin (Ρωμαϊκὴ φωνή etc.). Basilides was, therefore, either making use of some strange language - such as Persian - or making use of the native Egyptian language. The fact that Basilides had visited the native-speaking suburbs of the cities (see above) suggests that he was probably introducing Egyptian names, not to impress, but to make himself understood. It must have been the Greek speaking population of Egypt which was astonished; astonished by the emergence

of the old Egyptian language (33). The first native reported to have written biblical studies in Coptic was born in a village - called Leontopolis - not far from the villages visited by Basilides.

A whole Christian library discovered near Nag Hammadi consisted of Coptic documents. Some of the originals - all of them presumably Greek - date from the second and third centuries, others are even earlier. The exact date of the translation cannot be established with certainty, although it is clear that all the Coptic manuscripts were finished before the fourth or fifth centuries, when the whole library was hidden. By the end of the third century there existed a Coptic version of the New Testament, while the first original works in Coptic were written by Hieracas and Pachomius in the early fourth century (34). These authors may have had a predecessor who flourished in the time of Decius and was 'educated in the learning of the Greeks and Egyptians' (35). The Christian village lector mentioned earlier on, who had signed a document in AD 304, was said to have been illiterate; but what must have been really meant was that he knew no Greek; the village church outside Oxyhynchus was therefore, Coptic speaking (36).

If we can rely on names as proof of ethnicity - which I think we cannot, especially in the case of Egypt where as K. Hopkins has argued, Greek names were being adopted by natives for social purposes - then it is worth noting that all the fictitious Alexandrian bishops of the first two centuries have Greek or Roman names (37). There are some martyrs, however, of the Decian persecutions with clearly indigenous names, and the Coptic calendar mentioned a native Egyptian bishop who suffered martyrdom under Hadrian. But most of the Coptic martyrs in the calendar belong to the early fourth century (38).

The Gnostics are considered to have been the first to use Coptic in their preaching, and Gnosticism is thought to have retained a privileged relation to the Coptic language for a long period (39).

The case of the Nag Hammadi library, which was in use up to the fourth century, is suggestive, for it is both, Coptic and Gnostic. These assertions seem plausible but cannot be proved. A further assertion, on the other hand, is much more problematic. Combining the use of a national language with heresy and monasticism, some scholars have spoken of Coptic as being the language of dissent and some have suggested the existence of an Egyptian nationalism invested in Coptic Christianity (40). My opinion is rather in agreement with P. Brown who claims that Egyptian 'isolationism' in the fourth and fifth centuries was pagan, and that 'Coptic, by contrast was a literature of participation' in the culture of the empire (41). This view finds some unexpected support in the so-called Acta Alexandrinorum, which testify that from the late first century to the beginning of the third century AD it was pagan Greek speaking political rebels who struggled 'to preserve Greek culture and law against the barbarism of Roman domination'. In these Acts, Roman officials are portrayed as ruthless and venal, whereas in the Christian Acts, Roman officials are presented 'in the main as honest and scrupulous in performance of their duties' (42).

Gnosticism's relation to the Coptic language was, after all, not that substantial. A typically Egyptian product, with pronouncedly Gnostic elements, the Gospel of the Egyptians, used in the early second century by the Gentile - Christians (in contradistinction to the Gospel of the Hebrews, which probably belonged to the Alexandrian Greek speaking Jews) was Greek not Coptic (43). The well known leaders of the second century Gnostic schools, preached and wrote mostly in Greek. This is the case with Basilides and Valentinus and their reputed Greek education, with Carpocrates who was married to a Greek woman from Cephalenia and others. The first person known to have used Coptic for ecclesiastical purposes was Hieracas, whom I have already mentioned. Hieracas' orthodoxy was according to Epiphanius

doubtful, but he had nothing to do with Gnosticism (44).

The problem of the use of Coptic by Christians has a further aspect which makes it difficult to draw any definite conclusions. As it has already been mentioned Coptic was principally used in the countryside, Greek in the big cities. But from the first half of the third century, Greek seems to have started declining in the whole of Egypt. Christian evidence dating from the second century is a certain sign of Christian penetration into the rural population. However, most references to Coptic used by Christians come from the third century and later, i.e. during the period when the prestige of Greek was declining anyway (45). I mention this as a matter of caution. The use of Coptic in the third and fourth century cannot be interpreted in the same way as its use in the early Roman period.

To conclude, we can say that up to the end of the third century, Greek remained the principal language of the Christian liturgy, and was later replaced by Coptic. Nevertheless, there is clear linguistic evidence that many non-Greek speaking natives had been converted from an earlier period (46).

Other Archaeological Data.

The Nag Hammadi library is not the sole papyrological evidence of interest about Christian Egypt. Ample material - and not only papyrological - has been collected which points to an early spread of Christianity among less Hellenized rural areas (47). More recent and better investigated discoveries have confirmed this view for the third century onwards (48). At first glance it looks as if there is a further source of information. Many third and fourth century certificates of sacrifice (the so-called libelli) have been found in Oxyrhynchus and Arsinoë referring to inhabitants of remote villages.

This does not imply that all these people were or had been Christians; Decius' edict of sacrifice was expected to have a universal application. However, it seems unlikely that such edicts would have been actively enforced in villages where there was no suspicion of Christian penetration (49). Among the undeniable evidence we can refer to the numerous fragments of second and third century papyri found in villages around such places as Oxyrhynchus; a third century New Testament fragment discovered in a remote village of the Arsinoite nome (50); and an official document arresting a native of a village called Mermertha of the Oxyrhynchus region. This papyrus dated in AD 256 preserves the epithet $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$ as a distinguishing mark of the person under arrest. What is most interesting in this document is that the arrested man 'did not conceal his religion' and, as the editors have noted, he 'could be identified by it among the inhabitants of Mermertha' (51).

The Social Character of Christianity in Rural Egypt.

Egyptian Christianity progressed in the course of three centuries from a Judaizing tendency, through a more or less Gnostic reaction, to full scale orthodoxy. This development, although more clearly observed in Alexandria than in the countryside, applied in general lines to Egypt as a whole. The monastic movement of the late third and the fourth centuries, in spite of its rural and ascetic character, backed the Alexandrian see in its struggle with the rigorist Meletians in c. AD 330 (52). However, there is a certain lag in the timing of the significant development in rural Christianity. Late in the third century, there were still all over Egypt strong millenarian and apocalyptic communities, which had successfully resisted the Alexandrian bishops and their catechetical school. Since only very little is known about these communities it cannot be claimed that they were the successors of the Gnostic sects, but they certainly had much in common

with them.

Information about the social character of Christianity in rural Egypt derives first of all from Clement of Alexandria. In a treatise known as Quis Dives Salvetur?, Clement dealt in a highly allegorical way (μή σαρκίως) with the passage about the rich man reported in the Synoptics: 'If thou wilt become perfect' the Lord had said, 'Sell what belongs to thee'. Clement argued that the Lord had not actually meant

... what some hastily take it to be, a command to fling away the substance that belongs to him and to part with his riches, but to banish from the soul its opinions about riches (53).

To justify this interpretation Clement had to emphasise the 'If thou wilt' clause, not to be found in Luke, and to omit the final clause, 'and give to the poor'. Nevertheless, not many of those interested were prepared to make a fuss about these 'details'; the rich Alexandrian Christians seem to have accepted Clement's interpretation. But who were they who wished to take the Bible literally, and what happened to them in the following century?

Clement's opponents had a rural bishop called Nepos as their leader. This we can infer from the writings of the Alexandrian bishop Dionysius, who wrote a treatise against Nepos in the middle of the third century. At that time Nepos was already dead and it is possible that Dionysius was only recalling a youthful memory of his opponent, when he wrote that 'in many other respects I approve and love Nepos' (54). Half a century before the composition of the treatise, when Clement was writing his Quis Dives Salvetur? Dionysius was already about twenty years old, which makes it very likely that Nepos and Clement were active at the same time. Of course it could have also been some predecessor of Nepos', whom Clement had in mind. For a long time before Dionysius' initiative, the 'deviant' doctrine was 'prevalent, so that schisms and defections of the whole church had

taken place' (55). Nepos' doctrine is striking, for it sounds exactly like that attacked by Clement. Nepos had written a book called Refutation of the Allegorist in which he had claimed that 'the promises which had been made to the saints in the divine Scriptures should be interpreted after a more Jewish fashion', i.e. more literally (56). We are also told that the anti-Allegorists

consider the law and the prophets of no value and disregard the following of the Gospels and depreciate the epistles of the apostles, yet make promises concerning the teaching of this treatise as if it were some great and hidden mystery ... (57).

All these characteristics do not necessarily make the teaching under consideration a Gnostic one. It could be that we are already a long way from early second century Gnosticism. But the fact that it simultaneously appealed to a Jewish fashion of interpretation and considered the Jewish law and the prophets of no value are suggestive similarities with classical Gnosticism. The same applies to the idea of a hidden mystery lying behind the treatise of the leader and the expectation of a 'millennium on this earth devoted to bodily indulgence' (58).

Clement's allegorism was taken over by Origen who, dealing with the same Synoptic passage argued at about AD 248 that 'not even a stupid person would praise the poor indiscriminately; the majority of them have very bad characters' (59). In Dionysius' days the anti-Allegorist movement, which was strong in the area around Arsinoë, had a new leader called Coracion. Dionysius had succeeded in persuading Coracion to abandon his doctrine, but not all the anti-Allegorists rejoiced, as Dionysius himself made clear. Five years after Dionysius' death in AD 265, Antony, in his village in the nome of Heracleopolis Magna in Upper Egypt, was hearing and taking literally the same saying of Matthew's which Clement had attempted to neutralize (60). Some modern scholars, following Antony's biographer, bishop Athanasius, believe that 'Antony's Biblicism was his alone' (61), but this is not

at all so. From what has already been said it is clear that the literal interpretation of the New Testament was not an innovation, and, as it is known, Antony was soon followed by many others. The Alexandrian bishop Athanasius had his reasons for presenting Antony as an isolated phenomenon. Following the tradition of his predecessors (Dionysius was only one of them), he was attempting to win his opponents over, by persuasion rather than confrontation. He had made a saint out of Antony but he had deprived him of his social inheritance. In the fourth and fifth centuries, there were still in circulation numerous Judaeo-Christian and apocalyptic texts, as the papyri discoveries of Oxyrhynchus suggest; and so were Gnostic texts, as the Nag Hammadi library proves. After four centuries of intensive orthodox efforts, the old trends of Christianity in rural Egypt had still not died out.

Clement was appealing to middle and upper class people. In rural Egypt all these instructions on the correct use of excessive luxury would have made small impact. It is, therefore, not surprising that the rural Christian leaders were making use of a different language. But Nepos and his followers were too far apart from Alexandrian Christianity for it to be a mere difference in tactics. Millenarianism has an appeal upon people who have known what poverty and suffering means even if they are not themselves extremely poor. Antony was known to have been a wealthy farmer, but among his fellow villagers many were leading a life of privation. The doctrinal confrontation between the Allegorists and the anti-Allegorists must have had a touch of class antagonism between city-men and country-men. These considerations, however, do not exhaust our problem. The persistent perplexity caused by the Synoptic saying about the selling of one's possessions, points to landowning peasants rather than to Egyptian 'serfs'. Whether they were small or large holders makes little

difference. Now we know that, starting from the age of Augustus landowning farmers did exist and multiply in Egypt. My final and most tentative hypothesis is, therefore, that Christianity in rural Egypt appealed first to the - mostly Greek speaking - possessors, who were the product of Egypt's integration into the Roman world. It gradually passed on to the natives - hence the increasing use of Coptic. Still, it looks as if it was not the 'dregs' of the peasantry but the better off who were converted, at least during the first three or four centuries.

CONCLUSIONS

A. The Social Structure of the Early Christian Communities and the Formation of a 'New World'.

Sociological inquiries into early Christianity must start and end by acknowledging the limitations and the fragmentary nature of the existing evidence. The first systematic history of Christianity was written in the fourth century, when the traces of its early development had already faded away. The piousness of early converts preserved many significant documents but not the most historically informative. Our principal sources for the first centuries are apologetic and theological tracts. The anti-Christian literature and the writings of the heterodox Christians have, with few exceptions, been left to perish or were even destroyed. The difficulties created by the scarcity of the preserved literature and the indifference of the early Christians towards the recording of events for history's sake have partly been overcome with the help of archaeological discoveries. But on the whole, the material which has been preserved does not allow the reconstruction of a continuous and reliable history of the early Christian movement which would provide a solid base for sociological investigations.

To trace the social origins of the early Christians and the social character of early Christianity we have to fill in the gaps by inferences and speculations. Very often we have to go into lengthy discussion of details which would otherwise appear worthless and pass unnoticed. Often, only the combination of many small details makes some more general conclusions possible. The risks of such an endeavour are doubtlessly high and the outcome of even the most laborious considerations may seem at times meagre. Our only methodological guarantee in dealing with the early Christian communities is to place their history firmly in

the context of the much more reliable Roman history. After all 'the early history of Christianity is Roman history' (1). Even so, in reconstructing the social structure of the early Christian communities we often have to resort to hypotheses, which cannot be tested beyond the simple criterion of plausibility in the light of the extant evidence.

Given the above restrictions, the present study addressed itself to the problem of the social origins of the early Christians. This problem is significant in the context of both ecclesiastical and Roman history. Within ecclesiastical history the problem refers to the assessment of the social character and function of Christianity in a time of religious tumult. Its relevance to Roman history derives from two considerations. On the one hand Christians influenced the Roman state as a result of both the direct Christianization of the upper classes and the increasing participation of the Christianized members of the middle classes in positions of power. On the other hand, Christianity succeeded in integrating into a common religion not only diverse regions but also town and country. (Hence the interest expressed concerning the problem by Roman and ecclesiastical historians alike) (2).

The investigation has been developed at two related yet distinct levels: the level of intentions and the level of facts. At the first level, conclusions have been based either upon the few but more or less reliable explicit and direct remarks, or upon inferences. Intentions speculatively detected from the actions of the persons involved are no firm ground for detailed sociological contemplation ; nevertheless, in spite of the obvious limitations and dangers, a number of conclusions can be drawn without difficulty.

a) Slaves were treated by the early Christian missionary movement with indifference. This attitude had two notable exceptions: the small

number of slave-favourites (those classified by Artemidorus as slaves who enjoy the confidence of their master) and the slaves of the Familia Caesaris (who belong to the much greater and with internal cohesion group of 'anyone in the court of the king'). (On Artemidorus' 'sociology', see introduction). These two fractions of the great 'slave class' were considered by Christians with care-often with affection. But the mass of the agricultural and other urban slaves were simply ignored. It took the Christian movement more than three centuries to turn its attention systematically to the 'gangs of slaves' but it was already from the seat of power that it addressed itself to them (and this in a period which goes beyond the chronological limits of the present research).

b) The other end of the social ladder was considered by the early Christians with exactly opposite sentiments. Aristocrats were not only accepted, they were persistently and warmly encouraged to join the Christian churches. Conversions of aristocrats were remembered with pride, their story was recorded with joy and their case was set as an example to others. The second and third century propagandists of Christianity, known as apologists, addressed their works to the educated, to the leading members of the upper classes and potentially to the emperors as well. It is unthinkable that emperors ever read these ambitious apologies, but it is quite informative to read in their introductions the names of the emperors as potential addressees.

c) Peasants, villagers and generally the rural population (which is almost absent from Artemidorus' classification) seem to have passed unnoticed by Christians for a long time. When circumstances led the Christian leaders and missionaries to the countryside-circumstances almost always beyond their own will - they preached and encouraged villagers to join the churches, but as Dionysius, the great bishop of Alexandria expressed only too well, their heart longed to go back to those 'real-

ly beloved and most intimate and dear' i.e. the urban Christians. How far apart this attitude is from that of Jesus who always remained at heart a real compagnard (3)! We must not forget however that peasants, especially when they were free farmers, emerged into the picture whenever the time to offer their first-fruits came. Such oblations remained for a long time a major income of the early Christian churches. But these farmers were probably city-dwellers.

d) We are left with the great mass of the urban population, the artisans, the merchants, the day labourers, the men of letters (philosophers and orators), the athletes, the usurers and their debtors, the sick and the poor, the widows and the orphans, the Roman and Greek citizens, the Jews and the natives, the officers and the soldiers etc., i.e. all those people who appear without distinction and without detailed information (known to us from the pages of the oneirocritica as 'hopeless and hopeful'). Among these people, whose echo is always present in the early Christian texts, the early Christian teachers must have preached and laboured; but what is most common and ordinary is rarely recorded.

So much for intentions. Let us now briefly summarize the conclusions derived from the actual outcome of the missionary process. Obviously, the 'two levels' which I have distinguished for methodological purposes cannot be clearly separated, and in the thesis they have for the most part been considered together. Intentions and success in most aspects of the problem under examination seem to have gone hand in hand. But there are a few exceptions, which cannot escape the notice of the investigator. For example, most educated people and the high aristocracy resisted for a long time all attempts of the early Christians to convert them. They proved to be much more difficult than other groups which were considered with less interest. Idol-makers and astrologers, who had to abandon their occupations before being accepted, seem to have knocked

the Christian doors in much larger numbers than the new religion was ready to absorb; and women for whom Christianity expressed contempt in more than one ways, left those expressions pass unnoticed and joined willingly the Christian movement. But these remarks suffice to distinguish intentions and desires from outcome and success. For this last, we get in brief the following picture.

Although there is no reliable direct evidence, there is every reason to suspect that the great majority of Christian communities consisted of freedemen, artisans, free farmers, many of whom lived in the cities, and other workers. The cases of bankers and members of the Familia Caesaris are well documented. Similarly, we know with certainty of the conversion of numerous wealthy and educated people.

There were only a few Christian slaves. The well known and much discussed cases of some of them have led scholars to exaggerate their numbers. To use a Christian expression, Christian groups 'contained even slaves' and this is precisely how it was. Those cases of slaves about whom we know, came to be reported precisely because they represented exceptions. Furthermore, as we have seen, most of them were domestic slaves closely associated with their Christian masters. Indeed, Christianity directed them to accept and fulfil their duties as slaves and offered an ideological justification of slavery in principle.

In the countryside there do not seem to have been many Christians in the earliest years. Our scanty evidence seems to suggest that gradually the new religion spread to peasants and agricultural workers. The Christianization of the countryside in the eastern empire was well on its way in the third and fourth centuries and in the west perhaps somewhat later. But from my analysis of Egypt it looks as if this process had started earlier. We should perhaps ascribe the prevailing general impression of a retarded spread in the countryside more to lack of evidence than to

the actual events. More precisely, concerning the geographical spread of Christianity, we can tell from the case of Egypt that Christianity reached the countryside primarily through the Hellenised population and only subsequently passed to the native-speaking peasants. Furthermore, we may suspect the landowning villagers as the earliest converts rather than the 'serf'-like Egyptian farmers. Though Christianity assumed a socially more radical character in the countryside, it is clear that it never grew completely independent from the cities whence it spread.

The case of the Christian aristocrats is rather more problematic. Most scholars agree that only a very small section of the Roman aristocracy had been converted to Christianity prior to Constantine. This is probably true but it does not exhaust the problem. Christians taken as a whole were a minority in the Roman world. What we should like to know is whether there were proportionately more aristocrats in the Christian communities than there were in Roman society. Though there is no way of ascertaining precise numbers, it seems that they were fairly well represented in Christian communities. But more significantly, there is evidence to suggest that these communities drew their leaders from among the ranks of influential, wealthy and highly educated recruits. These provided the nucleus around which the whole community was structured. The position of secular privilege was complemented by the resumption of religious authority. In times of trial and persecution they provided not only material but also moral support to their flocks.

A general conclusion may be drawn that the early Christian communities had a complex social structure. Early Christians, to put it in Eusebius' words, differed greatly in 'matters which concern the mind' and 'in manner and sphere of life'. Judging from the information discussed in this thesis, we can accept the picture of the martyrs of Palestine drawn by Eusebius, as fairly typical of the Christian communities:

(Presbyter) Pamphilus traced his descent according to the

flesh from a noble stock, and played a part with fame and distinction in the public affairs of his own country, while Seleucus had been honoured in a most notable way with positions of high rank in the army; others belonged to the middle and ordinary class in life. The group which they formed contained even slaves. For the attendant in a governor's household was of their number, as also was Porphyry, who outwardly was a slave of Pamphilus, but..

.... never failed to imitate his master in everything (3a).

Leaving aside its precise informative content, this passage is also quite revealing as far as the mentality of early Christian historians is concerned. Though it is evident that people belonging to the middle classes constituted the majority of the group, prosopographic information is only given about the two leading members and the two slaves.

B. The Spread of Christianity and the 'Essence of Religion'.

In the introduction I referred to the 'syndoulos story', illustrating how this term came at first to be employed, and how it was subsequently overpowered by the familial metaphor. The investigation carried out provides us, I believe, with strong arguments to support the case that the choice of language reflected a developing new reality; i.e. equality was being pushed aside in the early Christian communities and began to be replaced by hierarchical and class divisions. The doulos part of the term once used was never forgotten, for it was not man's relation to God which was at stake. But the prefix syn gradually lost its meaning.

We have also seen, for each case separately, how economic, political, intellectual and geographical factors were related to the Christianization of the Roman World, and how these factors may partly account for

the social composition of the early Christian communities. But historians and sociologists, who have often discussed the hypothesis that Christianity was a social movement of discontent, with a potential for changing society by 'revolutionizing the ranks and classes of society' (Harnack), are proved to be misled. This hypothesis has been handicapped by two types of shortcomings: of historical accuracy and of methodological perspective. Some writers premise the assessment of the social function of Christianity on the evidence of the teaching of the New Testament. The message of the New Testament was, however, associated with the early rural mission of Jesus and was quickly abandoned or transformed by allegorization into purely spiritual statements devoid of specific social reference. Other writers, either due to the problematic nature of historical evidence, or due to total neglect, attempted to assess the role of Christianity according to the content of its theology. Alternatively, M. Weber, although echoing such considerations, was able to advance an important step further; by examining the dual character of the message of Christianity, the expectation of the second coming and the recognition of the importance of the charismatic gifts of the spirit, he reached the conclusions that individuals were required by Christianity to abide in the position of their calling and to bow to the authorities (4). In fact, Christianity advanced within the limits determined by the social factors mentioned, but there seems to be no way of reducing it to any one of these factors alone.

What lies behind the problem of the social structure of the early Christian communities is nothing less than the 'essence of religion', which touches upon all aspects of social life and unites everything into an order of its own. From the perspective of the present study we can speak of a unification into a single Church (a Church with a capital C to exclude the heretical churches) of people belonging to a great range of social classes and groups. Indeed, as we have seen, the early

Christians differed greatly in matters which concern the mind and in manner and sphere of life (Eusebius).

This unifying process- the last notion which attracts our attention- brings us back in a partial way to the Durkheimian definition of religion, which seems thus to be somewhat re-confirmed without a priori concessions (5). However, this new union was achieved on the condition that new boundaries were being drawn. Within these new boundaries the Christianized Graeco-Roman world was born, nourished and developed. The best way to conclude the investigation undertaken is perhaps by outlining the terms of this new union, which are the terms of a new division.

C. The Formation of the New Testament Canon and 'the Exclusion of the Spoken Word'.

The Christian Church was developed as an institution, which united into a single moral community all those who adhered to its unified system of beliefs and practices (Durkheim), by securing the solidarity of its members, irrespective of their former social positions or intellectual aptitude and attitude. In accepting new members it demanded obedience to its organisational network and to its moral commandments. The other side of this unifying process was the exclusion and rejection of all the "others". The idea of an elect nation distinguished from the rest of the world goes beyond doubt back to the origins of Judaism. But devoid of racial bonds, Christianity sought soliarity on the basis of a common privileged access to a sacred collection of written documents. We cannot look here at the history of the formation of the New Testament canon, which goes back to the transition from an oral stage to the scriptural stage of Christianity, and has to do with the tension between prophets and priests (6). What matters most at present is to stress that

the existence of a closed corpus of scripture served as the means of exclusion of various other discourses and hence of exclusion of their bearers. The first major exclusion was that of the spoken word by subordinating it to the written texts, by rejecting it, and often by totally prohibiting it.

This exclusion left out of the Church, and subsequently out of the 'new world'; not only the (rejected) prophets, who were now disclaimed and dishonoured, but also the Sophists and all philosophical discourse, which was creative, spontaneous and unpredictable. But leaving aside the conflict between the written and the spoken word, we come to pay attention to what is of equal and perhaps even greater interest; i.e. the exclusion of the heretics, the heathens and the Jews. (Perhaps we could add the exclusion, in a very different way, of women. From the time of the apostle Paul, the orthodox trend in Christianity ruled out female discourse in the church, contrary to the most outstanding case of the 'heretic' Marcus, who promoted simultaneously female and prophetic discourse as inspired and authoritative) (7).

D. The exclusion of the Jews, the Heretics and the Heathens. The Creation of a Christian World.

Formed within the common inheritance of the Old Testament, Christianity succeeded over a period of less than two generations in detaching itself from Judaism. The origins of this process were related to the conflict between Gentile and Jewish Christianity. The mission of Paul and his associates, the problem of the Judaizers and the death of Stephen, the destruction of Jerusalem under Vespasian and the rebellion of Bar-Chochebas (AD 132) are the commonly known events which mark the separation of the two religions.

The early developed mutual antipathy and hatred, reinforced by per-

secutions of Christian instigated by Jews, along with the gradual displacement of the Jewish law and its subordination to the Christian law, led to an emotional and theological cleavage of such a degree, that the common roots were remembered with disgrace (a process already visible in the Apocalypse of John).

The separation of the two religions found its symbolic and its actual representation in the formation of the New Testament. In Christian terms the Gospels were the fulfilment of the Law, an idea radically rejected by Judaism. As the process of the formation of the New Testament canon proceeded, and especially as the new documents achieved equal footing with the Old Testament, a strong weapon was placed in the hands of Christians. Jews became those who, though in possession of a holy tradition, rejected the fulfilment of the Word, now codified in the New Testament canon. As a result, attempts were also made to deprive Jews even of their own tradition. The Old Testament documents were, according to Tertullian, 'full of darkness, even for the Jews themselves whose own the scriptures seemed to be' (8).

The New Testament canon became the point of reference in the struggle of the orthodox Christians with the 'other' Christians, i.e. the heretics. Heretics were accused of adding, mutilating, misinterpreting or altering the holy scripture. Long debates on the interpretation of the Scripture took place between the rivals, and numerous anti-heretical texts have reached us, as evidence of the intensity and bitterness of the conflict. At some critical moment the anti-heretical literature of the Irenaeus type proved to be insufficient; heretics were denied the right even to use the Scripture, and orthodox Christians were called by Tertullian to abstain from any discussion of the Scripture with the heretics (9). The situation led to the development of a peculiar kind of literature in the form of lists. These lists, of which the

"Muratorian" fragment is the best known, served first to make known which book should be read by orthodox Christians and second to describe the rejected books.

Finally, Christians were sharply distinguished from the heathen world on the basis of their literature. 'Abstain from all the heathen books' (10), Christians were emphatically ordered. The words of God are written 'into our books', Tertullian claimed (11). This distinction between the Christian and the Heathen literature was reproduced for many centuries. In fact, Christians were never able to abstain of Greek philosophy, from the time of Origen (and even earlier) they struggled to absorb and to incorporate as much as they could from the Greek wisdom. On the other hand, however, they never failed to mark the difference; a difference which remained alive a long time after all the bearers of the non-Christian Greek tradition had ceased to exist. The struggle continued with their spirit.

It was not class but religious divisions, which dominated the minds of men in the coming centuries. The Roman world, before Constantine, had fought many wars and on many levels, but it never thought of dividing society in religious terms. If Romans persecuted Christians it was because of the intolerance of the new religion, not because of the intolerance of the old world. The history of the early Christian communities points at some important developments in the history and function of a world religion.

We have looked for positive arguments to relate the success of Christianity to other social factors and we have ended up with a somewhat negative position, which leaves religion functioning on its own level and in its own peculiar way. This negative position is perhaps the strongest and most positive basis upon which a further and deeper in-

vestigation into the essence of Christianity may be placed.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Actes du Colloque</u>	<u>Actes du Colloque 1973 sur l'esclavage.</u> Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon, 182. Paris 1976.
<u>AF</u>	<u>Apostolic Fathers,</u> Loeb 1912-3.
<u>AJP</u>	<u>American Journal of Philology.</u>
<u>ANCL</u>	<u>Ante-Nicene Christian Library.</u> Edinburgh.
<u>ANF</u>	<u>Ante-Nicene Fathers.</u> (American reprint of the Edinburgh edition) Michigan.
<u>Apost. Const.</u>	<u>Apostolic Constitutions.</u>
Athenagoras	
<u>Legat.</u>	<u>Legatio pro Christianis.</u>
<u>Aufstieg und Niedergang</u>	<u>Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt.</u> H. Temporini and W. Haase, editors. Berlin, N.Y.
<u>BJS</u>	<u>British Journal of Sociology.</u>
<u>CAH</u>	<u>The Cambridge Ancient History.</u> 2nd ed. 1961-.
<u>Can. Ancyra</u>	<u>Canons of the Synod of Ancyra.</u>
<u>Can. Arles</u>	<u>Canons of the Synod of Arles.</u>
<u>Can. Elvira</u>	<u>Canons of the Synod of Elvira.</u>
<u>Can. Gangra</u>	<u>Canons of the Synod of Gangra.</u>
<u>CCC</u>	<u>Creeds, Councils, and Controversies.</u> J. Stevenson ed. London SPCK 1973.
<u>CEHE</u>	<u>The Cambridge Economic History of Europe.</u> 2nd ed. 1966-.
<u>CHB</u>	<u>The Cambridge History of the Bible.</u> 1970.
<u>CHLGEMP</u>	<u>The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy.</u> 1967.
<u>CIG</u>	<u>Corpus Inscriptiorum Graecarum.</u> Berlin 1911-29.
Clement of Alexandria	
<u>Strom.</u>	<u>Stromata.</u>
<u>Paed.</u>	<u>Paedagogus.</u>
<u>Quis Dives.</u>	<u>Quis Dives Salvetur?</u>
<u>CMH</u>	<u>The Cambridge Medieval History.</u> 1967.
<u>CQ</u>	<u>Classical Quarterly.</u>
<u>CR</u>	<u>Classical Review.</u>
<u>CSSH</u>	<u>Comparative Studies in Society and History.</u>
<u>DCA</u>	<u>Dictionary of Christian Antiquities.</u> London 1875, 1880.
<u>DCB</u>	<u>Dictionary of Christian Biography.</u> London 1911.
<u>ECW</u>	<u>Early Christian Writings.</u> Penguin 1978.
Eusebius	
<u>HE</u>	<u>Ecclesiastical History.</u>

	<u>Mart.</u>	<u>The Martyrs of Palestine.</u>
Hippolytus		
	<u>Comm. on Daniel</u>	<u>Commentary on Daniel.</u>
	<u>Ref.</u>	<u>Refutatio Omnium Haeresium.</u>
<u>HTR</u>		<u>Harvard Theological Review.</u>
<u>JEH</u>		<u>Journal of Ecclesiastical History.</u>
<u>JJP</u>		<u>Journal of Juristic Papyrology.</u>
Josephus		
	<u>JA</u>	<u>The Jewish Antiquities.</u>
	<u>JW</u>	<u>The Jewish War.</u>
<u>JRS</u>		<u>Journal of Roman Studies.</u>
<u>JTS</u>		<u>Journal of Theological Studies.</u>
Justin		
	<u>Apol.</u>	<u>Apology.</u>
	<u>2 Apol.</u>	<u>2nd Apology.</u>
<u>NE</u>		<u>New Eusebius. J.Stevenson, editor.</u>
<u>NTA</u>		<u>New Testament Apocrypha. E.Hennecke, editor.</u>
<u>NPNF</u>		<u>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.</u>
<u>OCD</u>		<u>Oxford Classical Dictionary.</u>
Origen		
	<u>Cels.</u>	<u>Contra Celsum.</u>
<u>P.Antin.</u>		<u>Antinoopolis Papyri.</u>
<u>P.Giess.</u>		<u>Griechische Papyri im Museum...zu Giessen.</u>
<u>P.Oxy.</u>		<u>Oxyrhynchus Papyri.</u>
<u>PP</u>		<u>Past and Present.</u>
<u>SCH</u>		<u>Studies in Church History. D.Baker, editor.</u>
<u>Schiavitù</u>		<u>Schiavitù, Manomissione e Classi Dipendenti nel Mondo Antico. Roma 1979.</u>
<u>S.G.</u>		<u>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Graeca. J.P.Migne, Paris 1857-.</u>
S.H.A.		Scriptores Historiae Augustae.
Tacitus		
	<u>Ann.</u>	<u>Annales.</u>
Tatian		
	<u>Oratio</u>	<u>Oratio ad Graecos.</u>
Tertullian		
	<u>Apol.</u>	<u>Apology.</u>
	<u>Idol.</u>	<u>De Idolatria</u>
<u>Travaux</u>		<u>Travaux du VI^e Congrès International d'Etudes Classiques Madrid 1974.</u>

NOTES

Introduction

1. In the classical Greek tradition, men and women were never thought of as slaves of the gods.
2. In the later Roman empire, for example, common people became accustomed in signing their letters to their superiors as from "your humble slave".
3. Hegel (3), p.175
4. The word σύνδουλος appears in several ancient authors such as Herodotus, Euripides, Aristophanes, Lysias, Lucian etc., see Δημητράκου, Μέγα Λεξικόν τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσης, "Σύνδουλος", volume 8, p.6907. One ancient lexicographer (Moeris) suggested that σύνδουλος was the Greek word for the Attic ὁμόδουλος, but Pollux was probably more correct in explaining the term as indicating the slaves of the same master, leaving ὁμόδουλος to indicate merely fellow-slaves; see Liddell and Scott, "Σύνδουλος".
5. Cicero, p. 88
6. eg. 1 Clement 37, in ECW p. 42.
7. Virgin Mary, the mother, came into the picture much later, in the 5th and 6th centuries; see A.Cameron (1). However, several other "mothers" had already appeared at a much earlier stage, especially among the Gnostic sects, eg. "Sophia", "Grace", the "Holy Spirit" as mother etc.; see H. Pagels (2), pp.48-69.
8. The appointment of the "Seven Men" as "deacons" was more a sign of rivalry between the "Twelve" and the "Hellenists" than a sign of a growing hierarchy; see A. Harnack (4), p.30.
9. Harnack has correctly suggested that the "Twelve" along with the Old Testament and the sayings of the Lord, were absolute authorities, which kept within narrow limits the freedom of the individual, and also his independence and equality, already from the earliest years; A. Harnack (4), p.23.
10. Matthew 18:23ff; the translation which follows is from the New English Bible, adopted when necessary to accord more literally with the Greek original.
11. R. Buttmann (1), p. 189; for the discussion which follows see ibid.

- p.p. 188-192.
12. The next time we come across the term *syndoulos*, it is in the epistles of Ignatius, in the first decade of the second century. *Syndoulos* has already in these texts a restricted meaning. Ignatius used the term four times referring always neither to his fellow-Christians nor to his fellow-clergymen, but only to the deacons of various churches; see Eph.2, p.75; Magn.2, p.87; Philad.4, p.112; Smyr.12, p.123 (It looks as if Ignatius identified himself with the group of deacons and not with that of bishops as Eusebius would have us believe).
 13. C. Lévi-Strauss, p.162.
 14. Ibid, p.100.
 15. M.I.Finley (4), p.149.
 16. E.G.Turner, pp. 196ff in the Greek translation.
 17. eg.J.Allegro ; G.Vermes (1); E.H.Pagels (2).
 18. P.Brown (5), pp.57-8.
 19. A. Harnack (3), volume 2, p.337.
 20. K.J.Dover (1), p.241.
 21. F.C.Baur, vol. 1, p.xi.
 22. See J.D.Y. Peel (2) pp.129f. The Alexandrian Gnostics and the Alexandrian church fathers did not complain, as far as we know, about the common Egyptian practice of brother-sister marriage; this cannot be regarded as a tendency to syncretism; see K. Hopkins (8).
 23. cf. H. Chadwick (4), p.1: "The study of church history, in a degree perhaps unparalleled among the various branches of historical study, combines both the analysis of flux and change and also the continuities and constants that somehow remain through the vicissitudes and disasters of human history;" On the whole, however, Chadwick has a different idea about what remained constant and what changed, than I do; cf also J.H.W.G. Liebeschutz.
 24. F. Cumont (2), pp.26-7
 25. E.R. Dodds (2).
 26. Ibid pp.356
 27. P.Brown (5), p.8

28. Ibid, p.23.
29. Ibid, p.50.
30. Artemid^{us}, p.21. Valuable information about occupations in antiquity is given by Firmicus Maternus in his Mathesis.
31. E. Wipszycka (3), p.206: "La plupart de ces textes sont extrêmement pauvres de ce point de vue (pour l'étude de la vie social). Cela s'explique par le fait que la plupart des lettres privées que les papyrus nous ont fait connaître, sont l'oeuvre de gens appartenant à des couches sociales peu cultivées, par conséquent peu habituées à exprimer par écrit leurs problèmes et leurs sentiments".

Part I

- I. F.Engels (5); first published in Die Neue Zeit, vol.I, pp. 4-13 and 36-43, in 1894-5.
2. K.Kautsky. As P.Anderson has noted, the theorists who succeeded Marx and Engels in the generation after them were involved in theories 'which the later Engels had briefly probed. The general sense of these works was that of a completion, more than a development, of Marx's heritage.' P.Anderson (2), p. 6.
3. F.Engels (5), p. 281.
4. For a Soviet Marxist view, see I.Lenzman.
5. See R.Bultmann, vol.2, pp. 242-3. E.Renan wrote that 'The antipathy of the new German school to Christianity dates from Goethe...Hegel has not less decidedly pronounced in favour of the religious ideal of the Hellenes...'; E.Renan (2), p. 36.
6. See J.Hyppolite, p. 532.
7. Hegel (4), p. 328.
8. Ibid., p. 327.
9. See A.Harnack (1), vol.I, p. 34.
10. E.Troeltsch (2), pp. 99-100. Harnack was inclined to reject the Hegelian dialectics but as Troeltsch has noted, 'what Harnack, the historian, refused to adopt from the philosophers and what Harnack, the theologian, did not want to take over from the Tübingers, his instinct derived directly from the sources in Goethe'; ibid., p. 104.
- II. F.C.Baur, vol.I, pp. x-xi.
12. See F.Engels (5), p. 289. B.Bauer's views are not accepted any longer; an echo of it, however, can be found in W.Bauer who has argued that 'Rome...was from the very beginning the center and chief source of power for the "orthodox" movement within Christianity'; W.Bauer, p. 229. The importance attributed by B. Bauer to Philo for the development of Christianity had already been advocated by Hegel; Hegel (4), pp. 330-1. For the views of the young Hegelians, see Z.Rosen and R.W.K.Paterson; also A.Harnack (2), p. 20.
13. L.Feuerbach (1), p. 14.
14. F.Engels (4), p. 344. E.Renan was of a different opinion; in an article on 'M.Feuerbach and the new Hegelian school', he wrote that 'if the nineteenth century must see the end of the

- world, it would certainly be he (viz. Feuerbach) who must be called the Antichrist'; E.Renan (2), p. 37.
15. See translator's note in L.Feuerbach (2).
 16. M.I.Finley (4), pp. 173-4.
 17. F.Engels (2), p. 183.
 18. F.Engels (5), p. 283, also (2), p. 183; cf. E.Renan (1) chs. 5 and 7. 'As a mere question of Christian history, socialism and cenobitism are its primitive features'; ibid., p. 67.
 19. The view that Christianity was successful with slaves is taken for granted in works such as: A.Harnack (3), vol.I, p. 168 n.1, vol.2, pp. 33f.; R.H.Barrow, p. 163, who wrote that Christianity 'was notoriously spread by slaves'; M.L.Gordon (1), p. 189; W.G. de Burgh, p. 328 n.2; W.L.Westermann (5), p. 117, T.M.Lindsay, p. 95; W.H.C.Frend (2), pp. 189, 257, 275; S.Treggiari (1), pp. 205, 209; et al.
 20. M.I.Finley (8), p. 13.
 21. See discussions in J.Vogt (2), p. 204 and M.I.Finley (8), pp. 15-6. H.Wallon, vol.3, ch. 9.
 22. F.C.Baur, vol.2, p.251 n.; also pp. 148 n., 243 n.
 23. H.Wiskemann, Die Sklaverai, 1866; F.Overbeck, Studien zur Geschichte der Kirche, 1875; E.Ciccotti, Il tramonto della schiavitú nel mondo antico, 1899. See J.Vogt (2), pp. 175ff. and M.I.Finley (8), pp. 15ff., 42ff.
 24. F.Engels (1), pp. 177-8. For the slaves of Athens, Engels accepted the greatest number ever suggested, ie. 365,000 slaves; F.Engels (3), p. 284. For a critique of this number see W.L.Westermann (2). The smallest number suggested is 20,000 slaves, see A.H.M.Jones (3).
 25. F.Engels (1), p. 178.
 26. F.Engels (3), p. 310. For a recent study about women in early Christianity see A.Cameron, and discussion in chapter 4 below.
 27. K.Kautsky, p. 460.
 28. A.Harnack (2), pp. 88ff. The fact that Jesus was seen as a liberator of slaves by the early protestant scholars can be explained by their own efforts to liberate Christianity from the yoke of the Church.
 29. J.Vogt for example claims that 'the contrast between slave and master within the new Christian community could only be a relative one'; J.Vogt (2), p. 145.
 30. M.Weber (2), pp. 484-5.
 31. K.Kautsky, pp. 408-15. Kautsky, however, did not want to exclude the possibility of the existence of slaves in the earliest days; he even claimed that 'We do not know the attitude of the first

- Christians with regard to slavery'; ibid., p. 412.
32. W.M.Ramsay (1), pp. 56-7, 133-4, 147. In a later work Ramsay insisted that the 'educated middle class' constituted the Church and that it had been its task to absorb the 'ignorant proletariat'; W.M.Ramsay (2), p. 72.
33. E.A.Judge (1) and (2); H.Kreissig (1); G.E.M.de Ste. Croix (3); R.M.Grant (4).

Chapter I

Section I

- I. This is stressed by B.Hindess and P.Hirst, p. 109. Some of the problems posed by the notion 'slave society' are discussed in K.Hopkins (4) and (6), pp. 99f.
2. Aristotle, pp. 25-54.
3. Hegel (1), p. 237.
4. J.Hyppolite, p. 170.
5. J.Lacan has located the Hegelian dialectics at the level of human experience by asserting that he is 'speaking of the master in Hegel, not of the master of antiquity'; J.Lacan, pp. 212ff., 219ff., and 254f.
6. Hegel (2), vol.3, pp. 172-5 and Zusätze to §§432 and 435.
7. P.Garnsey wrote that, 'at the risk of dogmatism, I would suggest that slave labour was never dominant in agriculture outside Italy and Sicily.' What he probably meant was that non-slave labourers outnumbered slaves; but this hardly makes non-slave labour dominant; P.Garnsey (4), p. 35.
8. Aristotle, p. 37.
9. M.I.Finley (1), p. 72.
10. cf. A.H.M.Jones (3), p. 8.
11. M.I.Finley (8), p. 86.
12. The sketch given is based on the first chapter of K.Hopkins (6).
13. Pollux, Onom. 3.83; see 'Helots' in OCD. W.L.Westermann (3) uses the term ἡμίδουλος. Also M.I.Finley (3) and (5), pp. 62ff.; K.Hopkins (6), ch.3.
14. Juvenal, 6, p. 135.
15. Perhaps the Roman institution of clientela can explain this difference. On race mixture see the controversial article of T.Frank (2). For the Roman law of slavery see W.W.Buckland (1).
16. P.Vidal-Naquet, and response in G.E.M.de Ste. Croix (4), p. 30.
17. M.Weber (2), p. 484.

18. Tacitus, Ann. 14, p. 334.
19. F.Bömer, vol.I, pp. 184ff.
20. Canons of Elvira, 41; in C.J.Hefele, p. 154.
21. J.Johnson, p. 8; see comments by A.D.Nock in his review of the above: 'While the great civic cults were the affair of the city as a political unit, and authority could therefore be delegated only to citizens and in some cases only to patricians, here (at Minturnae) on the other hand the unit was geographical, and social status was irrelevant'; A.D.Nock (2), vol.I, p. 412. See note 9 in section 4 below.
22. Livy, pp. 401ff.; A.D.Nock (1), pp. 72-3, 285.
23. On the spread of Mithraism through slaves see F.Cumont (1), pp. 63ff., 70f., 78, 189; on the spread of Syrian cults through slaves see F.Cumont (2), p.106; also A.D.Nock (1), pp. 131-2.

Section 2

1. Slaves could be also owned by a state or groups of men; Roman Law recognised types of slaves without owners; see W.W.Buckland (1), p. 2.
2. Mt 5:17.
3. In what follows in the present section I am heavily indebted to G.E.M.de Ste. Croix (3). For all the references to slavery in the N.T. and discussion see C.J.Cadoux, pp. 131-5. The Pauline view is well presented in M.Goguel, pp. 554-7; in 554 n.2, Goguel discusses the two possible interpretations of I Cor.; overwhelming support is given to the interpretation: 'If you may become free, remain rather a slave.' To the scholars who favour this interpretation add A.Harnack (3), vol.I, p. 167 n.4. The decisive factor is Chrysostom's exegesis: Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος τὴν ἀρίστην αὐτοῖς εἰσάγων συμβουλήν ἔλεγε· Δοῦλος ἐκλήθης; μή σοί μέλει· ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι, μᾶλλον χρηῖσαι· τουτέστι, τῇ δουλείᾳ παράμεινε. S.G. 62, 704. See also R. Bultmann, vol.2, pp. 230-1. The Gospel passages are also discussed from a different angle in J.Vogt (2), pp. 142ff.
4. For Aristotle's theories of natural slavery, see The Politics, book I. For discussion see R.Schlaifer; M.I.Finley (5), pp. 81-2, 156-7; P.Camus; et al.
5. Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 31-2, p. 4.
6. Euripides, Medea, 54-5, p. 6.
7. Seneca, letter 91, p. 182.

8. Seneca, letter 47, pp.90-6.
9. For Paul's relation to Seneca, see H.Wallon, vol.3, ch.,I; J.N.Sevenster; also J.Vogt (2), pp. 138ff; K.Hopkins (6), pp. 121f.
10. Eph. 6:5-9. Paul addressed men and women in the same way; cf. Eph. 5:22-33.
11. I Clem. 38, p. 43.
12. The Didachē 4, p. 229. From then onwards, texts tended to copy each other; cf. The Epistle of Barnabas 19, p. 218.
13. Apost. Const. 4.12, p. 114; also 7.13, p. 183; 7.32, p. 244.
14. Tertullian, Apol. 3.4, p. 21.
15. Clement, Str. 4.3, p. 411. Early traces of this theory are found in Xenophon, Oecon. 1.21-2.
16. Clement, Paedagogus 3.12, p. 293. According to Clement, slaves should be corrected by their masters; ibid., 3.11, p. 288.
17. Chrysostom, NPNF 12, pp. 108-9; cf. Origen, Cels.3.54, p. 165.
18. Chrysostom wrote that 'if the unbeliever sees slaves conducting themselves insolently on account of their faith, he will blaspheme, as if the Doctrine produced insubordination', NPNF 13, pp. 465, 533.
19. Hippolytus, Canons, part 2: 16.4, canons 3, 4, 5, 23, 24, pp. 23, 27, 28. Commenting upon the church's refusal to baptize slaves without their masters' consent, de Ste. Croix wrote that, 'Such a sacrifice of the immortal soul of the would-be christian slave to the property-rights of a master seems to me indefensible on christian premises'; G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (3), pp. 20f.
20. Hippolytus, Ref.9.12.24; in NE, p. 166. See discussion in ch. 4.
21. Apost. Const. 8.33, pp. 246-7. For leisure days in the pagan world see Cato 13.
22. Apost. Const. 8.47.82, p. 268. Apost. Canons 82 (81), in J.Hefele, p. 490.
23. The Council of Elvira, Canon 5, in NE, p. 306; Canon 41, in C.J.Hefele, pp. 140, 154.
24. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (3), p. 23; for the sexual exploitation of women slaves by free men see S.Treggiari (2), pp. 192ff.; discussion in Arethusa, vol 12,2, chiefly A.Dalby; also M.I.Finley (8), pp. 95f.
25. See C.J.Cadoux, pp. 135, 199.
26. J.Vogt (2), pp. 143ff. Quotation from p. 145.
27. Chrysostom, NPNF 13, p. 465.
28. Athanasius, The Life of Antony, 18, p. 45.
29. Justin, 2nd Apology 12.4, p. 192. See section 4, n. 12.
30. Eusebius, HE 5.1.14, vol. I, p. 413.
31. Irenaeus, fr. 13, part 2, p. 165.

32. Tertulian, Apol. 7.3, p. 39; 27.5,7, p. 145.
33. The Council of Ancyra, Canon 3, in Hefele, p. 203. Canon 3 referred to people ὑπὸ οἰκείων παραδοθέντας, which probably means slaves; see NE, p. 311.
34. Origen, Cels. 3.53-4, pp. 164-5; 6.13, p. 327.
35. Chrysostom, NPNF II, p. 74. For a discussion of 'Love Communism' see M.Hengel, pp. 31ff.
36. E.Renan (I), ch. 5.
37. Acts 1:6-7; for a state of fear see also ibid. 2:43; 5:11 etc.
38. Ibid. 2:43ff. The story occurs a second time in 4:32f., in a slightly longer version.
39. Lucian, The Death of Peregrinus, 13, p. 14. '...their first lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brothers of one another after they have transgressed once for all by denying the Greek gods and by worshipping that crucified sophist himself and living under his laws. Therefore they despise all things indiscriminately and consider them common property, receiving such doctrines traditionally without any definite evidence.'
40. Hegel (3), pp. 87-8.
41. K.Kautsky, p. 415. Engels' view was that, 'The traces of common ownership which are also found in the early stages of the new religion can be ascribed to solidarity among the proscribed rather than to real equalitarian ideas'; F.Engels (6), p. 235.
42. C.J.Cadoux, for example, writes in a footnote: 'I resist the temptation to discuss this interesting topic - at most a passing phase of early Church life...'; C.J.Cadoux, p. 131 n.5.
43. E.Troeltsch (I), p. 62; also R.Bultmann(2), vol. I, p. 62 and G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (3), p. 15. Kautsky had referred to the problem before E.T.; among the Christians, Kautsky wrote, 'communism had originally been a communism of consumption...' but then adds: 'But consumption and production are today still closely related in country districts, and this was then far more the case. Production meant production for private consumption, not for sale...'; thus the idea of communism of consumption loses its weight; K.Kautsky, p. 410.
44. A.Harnack (3), vol. I, p. 151 n.2.
45. Hippolytus, Canons 4.19.5, p. 300. The incident described must have taken place not long before AD 202-4. In a free translation the text cited goes as follows: 'The brothers were led into a state of such fear and cowardice, that they abandoned their lands

and their fields, while most of them sold their possessions.'

46. Ibid., 4.I9.7, p. 300. '... they were later found to be begging.'
47. J.Allegro, pp. III, I64; G.Vermes (I), pp. 29-30; (3), pp. I26, I28.
48. See discussion in ch. 4.
49. J.B.Mullinger, 'Slavery', in DCA, vol.2, p. I904; De Rossi, Boll. di Arch. Crist., I866, p. 24; P.Grossi Condi; O.Marucchi, p. 223.
50. A.Harnack (3), vol.2, pp. 33-4; also vol.I, p. I68 n.I.
- 5I. I.Kajanto, pp. 6-9.

Section 3

- I. See introduction to Part I above.
2. Lk I7:7-8.
3. Cyprian, Ep. 80.I; in NE, p. 259.
4. M.Weber (I), p. 400.
5. Cato, 56, p. 70; Columella, I.8.I6, p. 92.
6. See discussion in M.I.Finley (4), p. I54; J.Kolendo, pp. I62f and figures I, I2.
7. Pliny, 3.I9, p. I06.
8. Josephus, JW appendix 4, p. 400.
9. Athenagoras, Legatio, ch. II, p. I34: '...among us you will find uneducated persons, and artisans, and old women...'; Tatian, Oratio 32,33, p. 78.
- IO. Minucius Felix, Octavius, 8.4, p. 335. I cannot see how R.H.Barrow p. I63 takes the expression ultima faece to refer to slaves. How could slaves 'gather together' and 'organize a rabble of profane conspirators, leaged by meetings at night' etc. The Christian reply leaves no place for slaves.
- II. Minucius Felix, Octavius, 36.3ff., p. 425.
- I2. Tertullian, Apol. 39.6, p. I77; On Idolatry I7, pp. 7I-2.
- I3. Origen, Cels. 3.44, p. I58; also 3.55, p. I65.
- I4. W.W.Buckland (I), p. 76.
- I5. Plutarch, Cat., p. 349; Varro, I.I7.5; 2.I.26, p. 328; 2.I0.6-7, p. 408; Columella, I.8,I9, p. 94. See discussion in T.Frank (2), pp. 48f.; W.L.Westermann (5), pp. 76-7, M.I.Finley (5), p. 86; for family ties among slaves revealed from the inscriptions at Delphi, see K.Hopkins (6), pp. I63ff. K.J.Dover (2), p. 97, wrote about the classical Greek world: 'There is a certain tendency in comedy to treat masturbation as behaviour characteristic of slaves, who could not expect sexual outlets comparable in number or quality with those of free men.'

16. Asceticism, monasticism, celibacy, hermitism etc., are phenomena compatible with Christianity, though of a marginal character. The hermit, for example, can be conceived as the counterpart of the Christian civilian; he could not live in total isolation.
17. Eusebius, Mart., pp. 380-1; Pliny, 10.96, p. 294; Ignatius, Pol. 4, p. 128.
18. Paul to Philimon; Eusebius, HE 5.1.17ff., vol. I, pp. 414ff.; H.Musurillo (1), pp. 66ff., 106ff., 147; Eusebius, Mart. pp. 373, 380, 387, 391; Hippolytus, Ref. 9.12.1, in NE, p. 160.
19. Diodorus Siculus, 3.12-14, vol.2, pp. 119-21; for the mines of Spain, see ibid., 5.35-8. See also Lucretius, 6.813-5, p. 503: 'Do you not see or hear in how short a time they are wont to perish, how their vital force fails, who are held fast in such work as this by the great constraint of necessity?'
20. A.S.Barnes, pp. 163f.
21. Acts of Paul 6, in M.R.James, p. 287.
22. Eusebius, HE 4.23.10, vol.1, p. 382; Tertullian, Apol. 36.6, p. 177.
23. Hippolytus, Ref. 9.12.1-13, in NE, pp. 160-2.
24. The epistle of Phileas, in ANF 6, p. 164; NE, p. 283; Eusebius, HE 8.12.5, vol.2, p. 295; Epiphanius, Panarion, 68.2, mentioned by W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 540 and n.29.
25. Cyprian, Ep. 76 and replies, 77, 78, pp. 402ff.; Eusebius, Mart. pp. 353, 360, 361, 364, 366, 371, 384, 396, 398, 399; Apost. Const. 51.1, p. 115.
26. Theodocian Code 9.40.2; see discussion in M.I.Finley (8), p. 127.

Section 4

1. S.Ferenczi, pp. 65ff.; A.Freud, pp. 109-21.
2. Hegel (1), p. 236.
3. S.Ferenczi, pp. 65ff.
4. Varro, pp. 227-9.
5. Juvenal 15, p. 263.
6. 'Slavery', by M.I.Finley, in OCD, p. 996.
7. Juvenal 9, p. 199.
8. Phaedrus, p. 255. Attention to this passage was drawn to me by G.E.M. de Ste. Croix.
9. For the Lares Compitalia, see Cato, p. 15; for the Lares Augusti see J.Liebeschuetz, pp. 70-1; for the cults of Ceres, Venus, Spes and Mercury Felix, see J.Johnson, p. 8; for the Bacchanalia, see Livy, pp. 401ff.; A.D.Nock (1), pp. 72-3, 285; for the Saturnalia,

- see J.G.Frazer, pp. 208, 764; for Mithraism, see F.Cumont (2), p. 106.
10. Only Eunus, as far as we know, may have been truly inspired by religious revelations in his revolutionary ideology. Diod. 34,2. 10 - 14. : The rebelled slaves 'chose Eunus to be their King, not because of his courage or military ability, but expressly because of his magical powers...', see discussion in J.Vogt (2), pp. 51ff.
11. In C.J.Hefele, p. 154.
12. Justin, 2 Apol. 12.4, p. 192; Athenagoras, Legat. 35, p. 147, denied that slaves had been involved in the accusations of Thyestean feasts and Oedipodean intercourses (see also ibid., 3. p. 130); R.M.Grant (4), p. 91, thinks that Athenagoras was 'misinformed', though it is more probable that he was covering up the case. See Eusebius, HE 5.1.14, vol.1, p. 412; Irenaeus, fr. 13, part 2, p. 165. The case of the slave volunteer, afterwards executed is given in Eusebius, HE 5.21.2-3, vol.1, p. 500. For a slave public executioner during the persecutions, see The Martyrdom of Saints Agapē, Irenē, and Chionē at Saloniki, in H.Musurillo (1), p. 291.

Chapter 2

Section I

1. Tacitus, Ann. 13.27, p. 296. Also Seneca 47, p. 92.
2. Tacitus, Ann. 11.36f., pp. 250f.; 12.53f., p. 276; 15.72, p. 380; Pliny, 3.14, p. 100; Statius, Silvae 3.3, lines 85-108; S.H.A., 'Pertinax' 1.1, vol.1, p. 315.
3. W.L.Westermann (5), p. 18.
4. A.M.Duff, p. 12; M.I.Finley (1), p. 58; D.Whitehead, p. 114.
5. M.I.Finley (1), p. 66.
6. H.Kreissig (2).
7. I.Biezuńska-Makowist (1).
8. J.A Straus.
9. B.Nadel.
10. cf. K.Hopkins (6), pp. 168ff.
11. W.L.Westermann (5), p. 9, discussing Ed.Meyer's, Die Sklaverei im Alterum.
12. M.I.Finley (2), p. 72.
13. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (1), p. 56.
14. P.A.Brunt (4), p. 90.
15. M.I.Finley (2), p. 72.
16. eg. A.M.Duff, pp. 19, 103, 196-7. But see also the opposite view in A.Harnack (3), vol.1, p. 171.

17. Suetonius, Augustus 40, p. 73; W.L.Westermann (5), pp. 89-90; W.W.Buckland (I), pp. 537-5I; H.Last, pp. 449-50; M.L.Gordon (2), pp. 65-6; P.A.Brunt (I), p.164; T.Frank (2), p. 50.
18. Suetonius, Augustus 42, p. 74; Dion. Hal. Ant. 4.24.5; A.M.Duff, pp. 20, 2I n.I; L.R.Taylor, pp. I28-9; S.Treggiari (I), pp. IIff., I6; K.Hopkins (6), p. I28.
19. For restrictions see Suetonius, Augustus 40, p. 73; W.W.Buckland (I), pp. 544ff.
20. eg. Suetonius, Claudius 25, p. I97.
- 2I. W.L.Westermann (4), p. 9.
22. A.M.Duff, pp. 36-7, 44; P.A.Brunt (4), p. 89, comments that an operarius 'had to be maintained or left enough time to earn (his) own maintenance.'
23. A.M.Duff, pp. 2Iff.
24. M.I.Finley (3), pp. 233, 248; (5), p. 68; K.Hopkins (6), pp. I33ff.
25. For a more detailed 'typology', see M.I.Finley (3), pp. 240ff.
26. Manumission inscriptions often contained clauses such as:
'He is not to be retained or disturbed by any hair of mine, but to go wherever he wishes...', CIG 2II4bb, in C.K.Barrett, p. 53; W.L.Westermann (3), pp. I7-32.
27. W.W.Buckland (I), pp. I87ff.; K.Hopkins (6), pp. I25-6.
28. W.W.Buckland (I), pp. 76-9: 'Accordingly, infidelity between slaves could not be adultery...'; A.M.Duff, pp. 59-63; K.Hopkins (6), p. I63ff.
29. T.Frank (2); S.Treggiari (I), pp. 3Iff.
30. L.R.Taylor, pp. II7-23.
- 3I. M.L.Gordon (2), p. 70; M.I.Finley (5), p. 77.
32. These arguments are based on K.Hopkins (6), see conclusions pp. I3I-2.
33. P.R.C.Weaver (I), (2).
34. Suetonius, Augustus 40, p. 73.
35. Commerce was in the hands of slaves and freedmen. In the case of firms it is known that 'Even sale of the slave would not, in fact, end the firm: the new master would acquire the rights from the day of transfer'; W.W.Buckland (I), p. I3I. On the occupations of urban freedmen and partnership with their ex-owners, see T.Frank (I), p. 288. P.A.Brunt (I), p. I65, wrote that 'many (freedmen) must have been pursuing the same occupations as in slavery', and that this is strictly relevant to an economic assesement of Roman slavery'.
36. Livy, 39.9, p. 403.
37. S.Treggiari (I), pp. 87ff.

38. F.Cumont (2), p. 28; E.R.Dodds (2), p. 137.
 39. A.M.Duff, p. 132; also K.Hopkins (6), pp. 211ff.
 40. J.W.Duff, p. 758; Tacitus, Ann. 2.85, p. 118; Josephus, JA 18.65-8, 81-4; S.Treggiari (1), pp. 196f.; for νεωκέρως τῶν Σεβαστῶν: D.Magie, 1432-4 n.18.

Section 2

- I. Can. Gangra 3; in CCC, p. 5; also R.M.Grant (4), p. 93.
2. Chrysostom, NPNF 13, p. 533; also p. 546; for a discussion of the Pauline passage see NPNF 12, p. 108; also 13, p. 546: '...Now we are not ignorant that some say, the words "use it rather", are spoken with regard to liberty: interpreting it, "if thou canst become free, become free." But the expression would be very contrary to Paul's manner if he intended this.'
3. C.J.Cadoux, pp. 285-6, 608-9.
4. Ignatius, Polycarp 4; p. 128.
5. W.Bauer, p. 64.
6. Ibid., p. 69
7. A.Harnack (4), pp. 83ff.
8. Acts of Peter 28; in NTA 2 p. 312.
9. Acts of Philip 80; in M.R.James, p. 445.
10. Acts of Thomas 83; in NTA 2, p. 487.
11. C.J.Cadoux, p. 454; R.M.Grant (3), p. 301. The views of these scholars have been rejected by G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (3), p. 22. In a later work Grant does not insist on this point, see R.M.Grant (4), p. 93.
12. Cyprian, Demetrian, p. 460; written in AD 258.
13. Tertullian, Apol. 39.6, p. 177; Cyprian, Ep. 35, p. 314.
14. Mt 23:4; II:30; Lk 11:46; Acts 15:10; etc.
15. Seneca, Ep. 47, pp. 90ff.
16. Eusebius, HE 4.15.46, vol. I, p. 358; for the date see H.Musurillo(1), pp. xxviii-xxix; the text used in ibid., pp. 136ff.
17. R.M.Grant (4), p. 93.
18. H.Musurillo (1), p. 147.
19. C.J.Cadoux, p. 606.
20. H.Musurillo (1), p. 147.
21. Apost. Const. 4.2.12, p. 114.
22. H.Musurillo (1), pp. 151, 165.
23. W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 411.
24. Apost. Const. 4.1.9, p. 112.
25. For this reading see C.J.Cadoux, p. 609.

26. I Clement 55, p. 51.
27. Eusebius, HE 6.42, vol. 2, p. 110.
28. Cyprian, Ep. 59, pp. 355-6.
29. CIG 2114bb, in C.K.Barrett, p. 53.
30. P.Oxy. 47, AD 86; 49, AD 100.
31. W.W.Buckland (1), pp. 449-51; also W.L.Westermann (5), pp. 130, 154-5.
32. A.M.Duff, p. 197.
33. W.L.Westermann (5), pp. 154-5. The dates given by Westermann are incorrect.
34. Ibid., pp. 154-5.

Section 3

1. M.I.Finley (4), pp. 154ff.
2. C.J.Hefele, p. 171.
3. See opening lines of The Shepherd. For a discussion see W.J.Wilson.
4. See chapter 3 below.
5. W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 242; C.J.Cadoux, p. 180.
6. A.M.Duff, p. 205; C.H.Dodd, pp. xxi-xxiii, 237, 239; T.Frank (2); M.L.Gordon (1), pp. 176-7, 182, 185; L.R.Taylor, p. 125.

Chapter 3

Section I

- I. C.J.Cadoux, p. 392.
2. P.R.C.Weaver (2), p. 299.
3. G.Boulvert, p. 259; P.R.C.Weaver (1), p. 131; P.Garnsey (1), p. 258, also pp. 87ff.; L.R.Taylor, p. 122.
4. G.Boulvert, p. 200.
5. K.Hopkins (2), p. 113.
6. P.R.C.Weaver (1), p. 123; A.H.M.Jones (7), p. 166 and n.88.
7. Tacitus, Ann. 14.39, p. 331; P.R.C.Weaver (1), pp. 135-6.
8. G.Boulvert, p. 205.
9. I.Biezuńska-Makowist (2).
10. A.H.M.Jones (7), p. 404.
11. P.R.C.Weaver (1), pp. 128f.

Section 2

1. Paul, Romans and Philippians.
2. Acts of Paul II, in NTA 2, p. 383.
3. Acts of Peter I, in NTA 2 pp. 282f.

4. I Clement 63, 65, pp. 56-7 and n.24; A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 45; also Acta Pseudo-Lini, and discussion in A.Harnack (3), p. 43 n.4.
5. C.J.Cadoux, p. 180; also note on Clement of Rome in ECW, pp. 18f.
6. DCB, p. 176.
7. Acts of Justin, in H.Musurillo (I), pp. 51, 57. It must be noted that another companion of Justin's said that his earthly parents were dead and that he came to Rome because he was dragged from Iconium in Phrygia; were they both slave-captives?
8. Irenaeus, 4.30.1, p. 476.
9. Acts of Peter 4, in NTA 2, pp. 289-90.
10. Eusebius, HE 5.20.5, vol. I, p. 497.
11. Hippolytus, Ref. 7, pp. 129ff.
12. Tertullian, Apol. 37, p. 169; Ad Scapulam 4, p. 107.
13. Eusebius, HE 6.28, vol. 2, p. 81.
14. Ibid., 7.10.3, vol. 2, p. 151.
15. Cyprian, Ep. 80.1, in NE, p. 259.
16. Eusebius, HE 7.32.3, vol. 2, p. 229.
17. Ibid., 8.1.3, vol. 2, p. 251.
18. Lactantius, On the Death of the Persecutors II.3, in NE, p. 285
19. Eusebius, HE Appendix to 7, vol. 2, p. 323.
20. Acts of Maximilian, in H.Musurillo (I), 247.
21. Eusebius, HE 8.6.1-7, vol. 2, p. 265-9.
22. Ibid., 8.9.7, vol. 2, p. 279.
23. Ibid., 8.II.2, vol. 2, p. 287.
24. E.R.Barker, pp.185-6.
25. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 51 n.5.
26. The Epistle of Theonas, in ANF 6, pp. 158ff.

Part II

1. Pliny 10.96, pp. 294-5.
2. Eusebius, HE 5.16.16, vol. 1, p. 478-80.
3. Acts of Thomas 19, in NTA 2, p. 452.
4. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 327; A.H.M.Jones (5), vol. 2, pp. 94If.
5. G.E.M. de Ste.Croix (3), p. 8.
6. W.H.C.Frend (7), I, p. 32.
7. W.M.Ramsay (I), pp. 56-7.
8. Ibid., p. 57.
9. M.Weber (2), p. 469.
10. See W.H.C.Frend, especially (I), and the articles collected in (7).

Chapter 4

Section I

1. I Cor. 1:26.
2. M.Hengel, p. 36.
3. A.H.M.Jones (4).
4. P.Brown (2), p. 149.
5. Ibid., p. 181.
6. Ibid., p. 164.
7. Clement's fragments from Cassidorus, in ANF 2, p. 573. The Epistle of James 2:2; E.A.Judge (1), p. 53, thinks that the man mentioned in the Epistle 'is clearly of Roman equestrian status, as the gold ring must imply'.
8. Acts of Peter 2, 4, in NTA 2, pp. 282, 289ff.
9. This is said by C.J.Cadoux, p. 266, for the Acts of Paul, while A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 43 n.4 says something similar for the Acts of Peter.
10. Eusebius, HE 5.21, vol. 1; Martyrdom of Apollonius in H.Musurillo (1), pp. 90-105; see also A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 36; W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 315; G.La Piana, p. 258 n.64; P.Keresztes, p. 306 and notes. For trials of senators and equestrians see P.Garnsey (1), pp. 99ff. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 36 n.3 argued that 'the Acta Petri cum Simone, prove the spread of Christianity among the Roman Knights since the age of Commodus'.
11. Tertullian, Apol. 37.4, in NE, p. 173.
12. See A.Harnack (3), p. 38; the rescript in NE, p. 259.
13. Eusebius, HE 7.16, vol. 2, pp. 173-5.
14. Origen, Cels. 3.30, p. 148.
15. Eusebius, HE 8.1, vol. 2, p. 251.
16. Hippolytus, Canons, part 2: 16, 18, p. 26.
17. Can. Elvira 56, in C.J.Hefele, p. 161.
18. Hippolytus, Comm. on Daniel 4.18.1-3, pp. 296-8. The text was written in AD 202-4 and referred to a story which occurred during the reign of Commodus or Septimius Severus.
19. cf. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, pp. 33ff; C.J.Cadoux, pp. 265-6, 389ff.; E.A.Judge, pp. 49-61.
20. Eusebius, HE 8.9.6, vol. 2, pp. 277-9.
21. Ibid., 7.32.25, vol. 2, p. 241; Eusebius, Mart. vol. 1, pp. 345, 380-2; H.Musurillo (1), pp. 329-53.
22. Eusebius, HE 5.1.14ff., vol. 1, pp. 413ff.; W.H.C.Frend (7), 13, p. 127.
23. Introductory note to Clement of Alexandria, in ANF 2, p. 167.

24. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 37 n.4.
25. F.C.Burkitt, p. 480. One of the few scholars to have noticed that the Paedagogus 'was certainly written for the well-to-do' was E.R.Dodds (2), p. 134 n.3, even though at the end of a long footnote. Dodds, nevertheless, believed that 'In the second century and even in the third the Church was still largely (though with many exceptions) an army of the disinherited', ibid., p. 134. M.Hengel wrote that Clement 'was seeking a hearing among educated and well-to-do', p. 76, my emphasis.
26. I shall be considering only the second and the third books, which dealt with the Rules. The first book, described the character and the aims of the Instructor ie, Jesus.
27. Clement, Paed. 2.1, p. 237.
28. Ibid., 2.1, p. 237.
29. Ibid., 2.1, p. 238.
30. Ibid., 2.1, p. 240.
31. Ibid., 2.13, p. 268.
32. Ibid., 3.5, p. 279.
33. Ibid., 3.9, p. 283.
34. Translator's note to Quis Dives, p. 265. For discussion see M.Hengel, pp. 74ff.; C.J.Cadoux, pp. 450-1; J.Gager, pp. 113-4.
35. Translator's note to Quis Dives, p. 266; my emphasis.
36. Clement, Quis Dives 26, p. 325.
37. Clement of Rome, 38, pp. 42-3.
38. Clement, Paed. 2.13, p. 270.
39. Clement, Quis Dives 12, p. 295; an intermediary position can be found in Hermas -early second century- who wrote in Rome; see W.H.C.Frend (2) p. 196.
40. R.Browning (1), p. 50.
41. E.L.Bowie.
42. A.H.M.Jones (5), vol. 2, p. 1006.
43. R.Browning (1), p. 55.
44. Ibid., p. 54.
45. Clement, Strom.2.1, p. 347; H.Chadwick (1), p. 35.
46. Jerome, De Viris Illustribus, 34; G.La Piana, p. 231 and n.33.
47. P.Brown (2), p. 178.
48. P.D.Scott-Moncrieff, pp. 99-132; also K.Hopkins (8).
49. The word syncretism is used here and below in a loose sense; very little is known to allow further elaboration; for a discussion of the problem of syncretism see J.D.Y.Peel (2).

Section 2

1. M.Rostovtzeff (2), p. 266.
2. P.Anderson (1), p. 83 n.43.
3. A.H.M.Jones (6), pp. 10-27.
4. A.H.M.Jones (7), p. 177.
5. K.Hopkins (7), p. 122; also (5).
6. A.H.M.Jones (7), p. 197.
7. K.Hopkins (7), p. 113 and fig. 4. For the decline in economic activities and the suggestion that Callistus may have been broken because of the falling interest rate of the age of Commodus, see P.Petit, pp. 315-8.
8. A.H.M.Jones (6), p. 21.
9. K.Hopkins (7), pp. 112-6.
10. P.Garnsey (2), p. 241; also H.I.Bell (2), pp. 652ff.
11. R.MacMullen (1), pp. 188-90.
12. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (4), p. 33.
13. A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 408-9.
14. P.Garnsey (2), p. 230.
15. K.Hopkins (1), (2).
16. I do not think, however, that the emperor-worship was of prime importance in the persecutions; see G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (2), pp. 216f.
17. P.Brown (5), pp. 31ff., 47.

Section 3

1. Eusebius, HE 7.30.6f., vol 2, p. 217.
2. Ibid., 7.30.12, vol. 2, p. 221.
3. Ibid., 7.30.16, vol. 2, p. 223; thus Valens of the church of Philippi, see ep. of Polycarp II, p. 148.
4. 2 Thess. 3.10-11.
5. I Clement 38, p. 43.
6. Hermas, Sim. 8.9, p. 211.
7. Didachē 15, p. 234; ep. of Polycarp II, p. 148.
8. cf. Tatian 32, p. 78: 'Not only do the rich among us pursue our philosophy, but the poor enjoy instruction gratuitously.'
9. See W.J.Wilson.
10. Irenaeus, 4.30.1, p. 476.
11. Cyprian, De Lapsis, 5.6, in NE, pp. 229-30. The period of peace had lasted from c. AD 215 to the Decian persecutions.
12. Origen, Cels. 3.55, p. 165. P.Brown (4), p. 58 is, however, right that the pagan 'stereotype of uneducated artisans and silly women' did not correspond to the socially complex Christian churches of the age.

13. Quoted in R.MacMullen (1), p. 184 and F.Millar, pp. 191-2.
14. G.Vermes (2), pp. 21-2.
15. Josephus, JW appendix 4, p. 400.
16. Didache 12, pp. 233-4 (Loeb, p. 328).
17. Hippolytus, Canons II; also Tertullian, Idol. 8, pp. 64-5.
18. Eusebius, HE 5.28.9, vol. I, p. 519.
19. M.Weber (2), p. 481.
20. A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 408-II.
21. I.F.Fikhman's work, as far as I know has not been translated; my notes are based on E.Wipszycka's extensive review; see E.Wipszycka (1).
22. P.Antin. I.38, pp. 90-2: Αὐρήλιος Σεραπάρμων ἀργυροχόος τῆς Ἀντινόου βουλευτῆς ; AD 301.
23. Bankers has been used as the equivalent of the Greek τραπεζίται ; it includes, money-changers, usurers, and savings bankers.
24. Eusebius, HE 5.18.4, vol. I, pp. 489f.
25. Ibid., 5.18.11, vol. I, p. 491.
26. Lucian, Peregrinus 12-3, pp. 13-5; for interesting discussion see F.Engels (5), pp. 283ff.; W.H.C.Frend (2), pp. 273ff.
27. Tatian, 25, p. 75: 'Though they say that they want nothing, yet like Proteus, they need a carrier for their wallet, and a weaver for their mantle, and a wood-cutter for their staff, and the rich, and a cook also for their gluttony.'
28. Hippolytus, Ref. 9.12.1, in NE, p. 160.
29. Eusebius, HE 5.28.9, vol. I, p. 519.
30. Ibid., 7.7.3, vol. 2, p. 145.
31. Cyprian, De Lapsis 6, in NE, p. 230.
32. Can. Elvira 19, 20, in NE, p. 307.
33. Origen, Cels. 3.9, p. 134.
34. C.J.Cadoux, p. 601 n.5; E.R.Hardy (2), pp.33-4.
35. M.L.Gordon (2), p. 70.
36. M.I.Finley (5), p. 77.
37. Ibid., pp. 77f. For a recent discussion and corrections of Marcus Aurelius' letter to the Athenians, see S.Follet.
38. M.L.Gordon (2), pp. 66-7.
39. Ibid., pp. 70-I.
40. A.H.M.Jones (1), p. 298; also (4), p. 22.
41. Eusebius, HE 6.41.11, vol. 2, pp. 102-5.
42. K.Hopkins (2), p. 113; P.R.C.Weaver (1), p. 123.
43. Suetonius, Otho 5, p. 257; Vespasian 23, p. 285.
44. Tacitus, Ann. 11.38.5; 12.53.2-5, pp. 251, 276.

45. P.R.C.Weaver (I), pp. I26-7.
46. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 49; C.J.Cadoux, p. 392; the inscription has also been classified as Christian by O.Marucchi, p. 225.
47. E.Wipszycka (3), p. 205.
48. G.W.Clarke. This inscription is also classified as Christian by O.Marucchi, p. 224.
49. G.W.Clarke, p. I22 and nn.8,9.
50. P.R.C.Weaver (2), p. I2I; G.W.Clarke, p. I22.
51. I.Kajanto, pp. 27f.
52. K.Hopkins (3), pp. 70, 72.
53. 2 Cor. 6:I4; 2 J. IO-II.
54. I Cor. 7:I2-4.
55. I P. 3:I-2; for a discussion of mixed marriages see A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, pp. 8I-4; C.J.Cadoux, pp. I26, 444.
56. Acts I7:4, I7:I2.
57. A.Cameron(2),p. 63; for the evidence on Christian women see A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, pp. 64-84.
58. I Clement 30, p. 38; Tertullian, De Corona I3, p. IOI; Cyprian, Adv. Iudaeos 3.62, pp. 550-I; De Lapsis 6, p. 438; Can. Elvira, I5, I6, I7, in C.J.Hefele, p. I44.
59. Justin, 2 Apol. 2.
60. Pomponia Graecina is thought to have been a Christian. The status of the couple is inferred from Tacitus' account in the Ann. I3, pp. 298-9; see n.I, in p. 299.
61. For a brief discussion see M.I.Finley (8), pp. II4-5.
62. P.E.Corbett, pp. 24-34; W.W. Buckland (2), pp. II4-5.
63. Tertullian Ad Uxorem 2.8; see A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 83.
64. Hippolytus, Ref. 9.I2.24, in NE, p. I66.
65. Can. Elvira I5, I6, I7, 8I, in C.J.Hefele, pp. I44, I7I-2; Can. Arles II; also A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, pp. 82-4; bibliography in J.Vogt (I), p. 42 n.4.
66. A household would include the family, the slaves and the dependant freedmen.
67. Acts II:I4.
68. Acts I6:I5.
69. Acts I6:30-33
70. Acts I8:8; also mentioned in I Cor. I:I4.
71. I Cor. I:I6; I6:I5.
72. See E.A.Judge (I), pp. 35ff.
73. Clement, Strom. 6.I8, p. 520.

74. A.Harnack (4), pp. 105f.
75. For the structure of Roman families and the rights of the Paterfamilias, H.F.Jolowicz, pp. 114ff., 238ff.
76. Hermas, Sim. 5.3.9, p. 161; for all the references in Hermas, see C.J.Cadoux, p 283 n.1.
77. Apost. Const. 5.1, p. 115.
78. The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas, in H.Musurillo (1), pp. 107ff.
79. Eusebius, Mart., p. 356.
80. Mt 19:29.
81. Apost. Const. 5.6, p. 119.
82. It seems reasonable to assume that in the year AD 312, 'Constantine was in some sense converted to Christianity', A.H.M.Jones (2), p. 73.
83. A.H.M.Jones (2), pp. 169ff.; (4); also J.Vogt (1).
84. Optatus, De Schismate Donatistarum 3.3, in CCC, p. 27. See discussion in A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 308-29; W.H.C.Frend (2), pp. 536-68.
85. A.H.M.Jones (2), p. 85.
86. Lactantius, On the Death of the Persecutors, (written before AD 318) 44.5, in NE, p. 299.
87. Eusebius, Vita Constantini 1.28.1, in NE, p. 299.
88. P.Petit is certainly right that Constantine's conversion, unlike Paul's, lasted for years before it was completed; P.Petit, pp. 572-5; see the parallel in Mt 16:17.
89. Acts 9:3ff.; 22:5ff.; 26:12ff; I Cor. 9:1; 15:3ff. The Acts give the story of the conversion three times; the first two are short, the third is expanded; in I Cor. Paul referred to his conversion twice.
90. Eusebius, HE 1.13, vol.1, pp. 84-96; for an introduction and discussion, see W.Bauer, and chapter in NTA 1, pp. 437-41. According to Bauer the legend was composed during Eusebius' lifetime.
91. Acts of Thomas, in NTA 2, pp. 454-6.
92. Eusebius, HE 2.2, vol. 1, p. 112; 6.34, vol. 2, p. 89.
93. Origen, Cels. 8.68ff., pp. 505ff.

Section 4

1. eg. Didachē, 11-5, pp. 232-5.
2. M.Weber (2), pp. 444-6.
3. Eusebius, HE 5.10.1-2, vol. 1, p. 463. The original sense of ἀναδειχθῆναι was, being elected, achieving a distinction, not being appointed. No one seems to have been around to appoint Pantaenus.
4. E.Pagels (1), p. 314; the basic argument is that 'theological convictions serve as the conceptual basis for ecclesiastical

- organization', *ibid.*, p. 328. For the Gnostic radical dualism, see H. Jonas, pp. 42ff.
5. Clement, *Strom.* 6.13, p. 505.
 6. *Ibid.*, 6.13, p. 504; also *Paed.* 3.12, p. 294; *Strom.* 7.1, pp. 523-4; *Quis Dives.* 42, pp. 357ff.
 7. Clement, *Strom.* 2.II, p. 359.
 8. Jerome, *ep.* 146.I.1,6, in *NE*, p. 378; also Epiphanius, *Panarion* 69.2, in *S.G.* 42 220B. For a discussion see W. Telfer.
 9. Eusebius, *HE* 5.9.I, vol. I, p. 461; see also vol. I, p. 500; vol. 2, p. 10; the singular form is also used occasionally, vol. 2, pp. 28, 62, 78.
 10. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 84, 88, 144, 148, 244.
 11. W.H.C. Frend (6); (7) article 9.
 12. Eusebius, *HE* 6.4, vol. 2, p. 23.
 13. H. Chadwick (2), p. 100.
 14. *DCB*, p. 1900.
 15. Eusebius, *HE* 6.2, vol. 2, p. 15.
 16. *Ibid.*, 7.32, vol. 2, p. 243; see also J. Quasten, vol. 2, pp. 101ff., 109f., 111f., 113f.
 17. Translator's Biographical Notices in *ANF* 6, pp. 155-7. Eusebius, *HE* 7.32, vol. 2, p. 243.
 18. *Ibid.*, 7.32, vol. 2, pp. 229ff.
 19. 'Cyprian', in *DCB*; P. Brown (5), pp. 79-80.

Chapter 5

Section I

1. M. Weber (1), p. 336; (2), p. 471; A.H.M. Jones (1), p. 298; K. Hopkins (5), p. 39.
2. A.H.M. Jones (5), vol. 2, pp. 941ff.; (6), p. 322; A. Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 327.
3. M. Weber (1), p. 400; (2), p. 469.
4. But see P. Brown (3), and W.H.C. Frend (1), (5), (7).
5. Discussion in W.H.C. Frend (1), (3), (4); P. Brown (2), pp. 237ff.; also E.L. Woodward and A.H.M. Jones (7), pp. 308ff.
6. R. Browning (2), p. 273.
7. P. Brown (2), pp. 119-46; (3); (4); pp. 56-104; for the Devil and Evil Spirits in the early Christian Church, see F.X. Cokey.

Section 2

1. F. Braudel, pp. 373f.

2. M.I.Finley (7); K.Hopkins (5).
3. M.Rostovtzeff (I), vol. I, pp. 297-8.
4. H.I.Bell (2), p. 650.
5. M.I.Finley (5), p. 139, considers the contribution of manufacture as negligible.
6. K.Hopkins (5), p. 59.
7. P.Brown (3), p. 217.

Section 3

- I. Eusebius, HE 8.9-10, 13, vol. I, pp. 279-85, 297; Codex Veronensis 60, reprinted in NE, pp. 290-2; Acts of Phileas and Letter of Phileas, in H.Musurillo (I), pp. 320-53; Jerome, De Viris Illustribus ch. 78; see also Translator's Biographical Notice, in ANF 6, pp. 161f.
2. From the Latin version of the Acts of Phileas, in H.Musurillo (I), pp. 350-1; the Greek version gave a similar reading: '...you possess such abundant resources that you can nourish and sustain not only yourself but an entire city', ibid., p. 343.
3. Irenaeus, I.24.6, p. 93.
4. B.M.Metzger, pp. 101f.
5. Acts 2:10.
6. Josephus, JW 2.498, p. 162; JA 14.110-8, in C.K.Barrett, pp. 136-8; also H.I.Bell (I), pp. 10-1.
7. Irenaeus, 3.21.2, p. 352; Eusebius, HE 5.8.10-5, vol. I, pp. 459f.
8. H.Chadwick in the opening paragraph of his chapter on Philo, in (3), p. 137, wrote that 'The history of Christian philosophy begins not with a Christian but with a Jew, Philo of Alexandria, elder contemporary of St. Paul'.
9. E.Schürer, pp. 591ff.; Eusebius, HE 2.16-7, vol. I, pp. 145ff.
10. Acts 6:9.
11. Acts 18:24-5; cf. I Cor. 1:12; B.M.Metzger, p. 99; also A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 159 n.4; W.Bauer, p. 46; C.H.Roberts (4), p. 45 n.3.
12. J.Daniélou, pp. 45-6.
13. C.H.Roberts (4), pp. 56 n.3 and 57f.; also E.R.Hardy (2), p. 13; W.Bauer, p. 48 n.6, who is more sceptical; A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 159 n.2.
14. B.M.Metzger, p.102.
15. C.H.Roberts (4), 58.
16. R.M.Grant (I), p. 14.
17. Clement, Strom. 2.1, p. 347.
18. C.H.Roberts (3), pp. 60f.; (4), p. 47; E.Mioni, pp. 115-6.

19. C.H.Roberts (3), p. 57; (4), pp. 47, 75-6; E.Mioni, pp. 45-8.
20. T.C.Skeat, pp. 72-3.
21. W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 179.
22. This theory was originally put forward by W.Bauer, who was followed by R.M.Grant (1), p. 13; (2), p. 298; et al.
23. B.M.Metzger, p. 101.
24. C.H.Roberts (4), pp. 51-2; also (2).
25. Eusebius, HE 4.7.7, vol. I, p. 317.
26. Irenaeus, I.24.6, p. 93.
27. J.Daniélou, p. 9.
28. H.Jonas, p. 33.
29. 'Hadrian' in S.H.A., vol. 3, pp. 399f. A.Harnack (3), vol.2, p. 159 n.4 believed that the document should be attributed to the third century. Quotation from P.D.Scott-Moncricieff, p. 127, and ch. 5.
30. Irenaeus, I.24.5, p. 92; Eusebius, HE 4.7.7., vol. I, p. 317.
31. Ibid., 2.16.1, vol. I, p. 145.
32. C.H.Roberts (4), p. 59 n.5.
33. W.Bauer, p. 60; H.Chadwick (1), p. 33; (2), p. 64; C.H.Roberts (4), p. 54; H.Lietzmann, p. 543.
34. J.Daniélou, p. 45.
35. E.R.Hardy (2), p. 11.
36. C.H.Roberts (3), p. 62; (4), p. 59.
37. H.Chadwick (2), p. 64.
38. Eusebius, HE 6.14.10, vol. 2, pp. 49-51.
39. Ibid., 4.30.3, vol. I, p. 399; also E.R.Hardy (2), pp. 12-3.
40. Irenaeus, I.25.6, p. 96.
41. Plotinus, pp. 243, 247.
42. H.Chadwick (3), p. 167.
43. Ibid., p. 167; for a similar view see J.Gager, p. 114; and W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 247.

Section 4

1. K.Hopkins (8).
2. D.Konstan, p. 160.
3. R.MacMullen (4), p. 22.
4. For this period see: M.Weber (1), p. 131; M.Rostovtzeff (1), vol. I, pp. 282, 285; W.L.Westermann (1); S.Wallace, pp. 1ff.; C.E.Stevens, p. 117; A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 156ff.
5. G.Parassoglou, p. 4.
6. K.Hopkins (8), p. 331.

7. G.Parassoglou, p. 6.
8. For this period see: Suetonius, Augustus 18, p. 60; S.Wallace, pp. 4, 20ff.; 238-9; T.Frank (3), p. 146 n.7; H.I.Bell (2), pp. 654f.; C.E.Stevens, p. 117; W.L.Westermann (5), pp 87, 120-1; E.R.Hardy (2), pp. 21, 22 n.18; A.H.M.Jones (5), vol. 2, p. 930; P.A.Brunt (2), pp. 79, 90-1; G.Parassoglou, pp. 4-7, 54; K.Hopkins (8).
9. For this period see: M.Rostovtzeff (1), vol. I, pp. 293ff.; H.I.Bell (2), p. 655; (3); M.Bloch, p. 252; E.R.Hardy (2), p. 36; A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 299, 405f.; P.Brown (1), p. 98; (5), pp. 85ff; K.Hopkins (8).
10. S.Wallace, pp. 239 n.3, 254.
11. For this period see: M.Rostovtzeff (1), vol. I, p. 367; S.Wallace, pp. 5, 16; H.I.Bell (2), pp. 650-1, 653, 656; A.H.M.Jones (1), p. 77; (7), pp. 244-55; W.Weber, pp. 337, 354.
12. E.R.Hardy (1), pp. 44-6.
13. In Jn. 12:6, Judas was the treasurer of the twelve; in Acts 5 it Peter; in Acts 2:44-5 the faithful sold their land and collected the money; cf. Didachē I.
14. In Acts 1:18-9, Judas bought land with 'the price of his villainy'; in Mt 27:3-10, the same money was used to buy a burial place. For the financial organization of the primitive church, see M.Coguel, pp. 247ff.
15. Didachē 13, 15; Polycarp, the Epistle 4; Hippolytus, Canons pp. 53-4; for the continuation of the practice Apost. Const. 8.30-1, p. 243 and 8.47.5, p. 258; on the administration see Hippolytus, Canons, p. 6 and Apost. Const. 8.47.39, p. 262.
16. Eusebius, HE 5.18, 5.28, vol. I, pp. 487, 521; Cyprian, Ep. 27, p. 306.
17. P.Garnsey (3).
18. Eusebius, HE 7.13.1, 7.15.4, 8.1, 8.2.1, vol. 2, pp. 169-71, 173, 253-5, 257; A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, pp. 85-8 (eg. the church building in Edessa destroyed by a flood in AD 201); A.H.M.Jones (5), vol. 2, p. 895. For the legal appeal, see Eusebius, HE 7.30.19, vol. 2, pp. 223-5; G.La Piana, 254ff.
19. P.Oxy. 33.2673.
20. Eusebius, HE 7.11.10, vol. 2, p 159.
21. E.Wipszycka (2), pp. 34-7; A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 339-49; (5), vol. 2, pp. 894-910; W.H.C.Frend (7), 10, pp. 277f.
22. Eusebius, HE 7.10.4-9, vol. 2, pp. 151-5.

Section 5

1. Epiphanius, Panarion 24.1, 31.2, 31.7; A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 161.
2. Clement, Strom. 6.18.167, p. 520.
3. E.R.Hardy (2), p. 22 and n.18.
4. Eusebius, HE 6.11.3, vol. 2, p. 37.
5. Ibid., 6.1.1, vol. 2, p. 8; also E.R.Hardy (2), p. 23.
6. Eusebius, HE 6.40.4ff, 7.11.4ff, 7.24.6, vol. 2, pp. 97ff, 157ff, 195.
7. Acts of Peter (of Alexandria), in ANF 6, p. 261; Athanasius, Apology Against the Arians 71, in NE, p. 380.
8. P.Giess. 40, quoted in R.MacMullen (4), p. 46.
9. R.MacMullen (1), p. 188. The two villages considered contained no Roman names.
10. eg. I Tim. 4:6-16.
11. A.Harnack (5), p. 33.
12. E.R.Hardy (2), pp. 34-5.
13. Acts 2:4-13; 10:46; I Cor. 14:21ff
14. Eusebius, HE 3.39.15, vol. 1, p. 297; Clement, Strom. 7.17, p. 555.
15. Augustine, De Doct. Christ. 211.16, quoted in C.S.C.Williams, p. 38.
16. Papias, p.441.
17. Irenaeus, 3.1.1, p. 258; Eusebius, HE 3.39ff. vol. 1, pp. 292ff.
18. Hermas, 1.3.3, p. 15.
19. Hippolytus, Canons 35.2, p. 61; A.Harnack (5), pp. 39, 58-65.
20. Irenaeus, 3.4.2, p. 264.
21. Ibid., 1.10.2, p. 43.
22. P.A.Brunt (3), p. 172.
23. E.R.Dodds (1), pp. 148-9.
24. B.J.Roberts.
25. B.M.Metzger, pp. 3ff., 99ff.; C.S.C.Williams.
26. Latin could have been introduced to Rome to counteract the Marcionite missionary activity among the Latin section of the Christian community in Rome, which was until then only a minority. G.La Piana, p. 223; C.S.C.Williams; B.M.Metzger, pp. 285ff.
27. Theodoret, Graec. Affect. Cur. 5, quoted in A.Harnack (5), p. 91; also A.H.M.Jones (1), p. 288.
28. A.Harnack (5), p. 46.
29. For the parting of ways between East and West in the light of later developments, see P.Brown (4).
30. D.L.O'Leary, pp. 6ff; B.M.Metzger, pp. 105ff.; also A.H.M.Jones (5), vol. 2, p. 992 and n.14; R.MacMullen (3), pp. 235-6.
31. R.MacMullen (1), p. 194; and C.H.Roberts (4), p. 66 who dates it in

the late third century.

32. Eusebius, HE 4.7.7, vol. I, 317.
33. cf. Eusebius, vol. I, pp. 297, 389, 431, 447 for expressions implying various languages. I have no idea how Frend came to the conclusion that the 'first great intellectual movement within Christianity, namely gnosticism, could not have been more city-based', W.H.C.Frend (8), I, p. 34. For late second century evidence see R.MacMullen (2), p. 7.
34. Antony must have heard a lesson from a Coptic translation of the Bible, at about AD 270; see Athanasius, pp. 31f.; also G.Bardy; A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, pp. 176ff.; B.M.Metzger, pp. 104ff.
35. J.D.N.Kelly, St. Jerome, London 1975, 'On Paul', mentioned in C.H.Roberts (4), p. 65 n.6.
36. P.Oxy. 33.2673.
37. K.Hopkins (8), p. 351.
38. Eusebius, HE 6.41, vol. 2, pp. 99-III; G.Bardy, p. 38; D.L.O'Leary, pp. 14-5; E.R.Hardy (2), pp. 24, 34ff.
39. G.Bardy, pp. 43-5.
40. See discussion in A.H.M.Jones (7), pp. 308ff.; E.L.Woodward; R.MacMullen (1) and (2); W.H.C.Frend (4).
41. P.Brown (1), p. 94.
42. H.Musurillo (2), pp. 337-8.
43. A.Harnack (3), vol. 2, p. 160; W.Bauer, pp. 50-3; W.Schneemelcher, NTA I, p. 177; also P.D.Scott-Moncrieff, p. 57.
44. Epiphanius, Panarion 69.7; see G.Bardy, p. 43.
45. R.MacMullen (2), p. 10; E.R.Hardy (1), p. 21.
46. P.D. Scott-Moncrieff, p. 98.
47. Ibid., pp. 99-132.
48. C.H.Roberts (4), pp. 66ff.
49. P.D.Scott-Moncrieff, pp. 82-98.
50. C.H.Roberts (1), p. 167.
51. P.Oxy. 3035.
52. W.H.C.Frend (2), p. 541.
53. Clement, Quis Dives. 5, II, pp. 280, 291.
54. Eusebius, HE 7.24.4, vol. 2, p. 193.
55. Ibid., 7.24.6, p. 195.
56. Ibid., 7.24.1, p. 191.
57. Ibid., 7.24.5, p. 193.
58. Ibid., 7.24.1f. p. 191.
59. Origen, Cels. 6.16, 7.24, pp. 330, 413.

60. Athanasius, 2, p.31.
61. W.H.C.Frend (2), p.540.

Conclusions

1. R.M. Grant (5), p. 24.
2. A.H.M. Jones (1), pp.336-7, n.57: "I cannot here enter into the question of the rise of Christianity. The general outline is fairly clear but a detailed study of the classes from which converts came would be interesting and profitable; See also A. Harnack (3).
3. See above p.213; the expression about Jesus belongs to Vermes (2), p.49.
- 3a. Eusebius, Mart. , p.380.
4. M. Weber (2), p.634.
5. E.Durkheim, p.47.
6. cf above pp.215 ff; M.Weber etc.
7. Irenaeus 1.13.3,6.
8. Tertullian, Apology, 47.3, p.207.
9. Tertullian PAH, 15, ANCL, vol. 15, p.19.
10. Apostolic Constitutions, 1.6; part 2, p.20.
11. Tertullian, Apology, 31; p.153.

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Quotations in English of ancient texts have been often slightly altered.

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