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**Reading Romans in Rome:
A Reception of Romans in the Roman Context of
Ethnicity and Faith**

Thesis Submission for a Doctor of Philosophy

To the University of Durham

Durham, United Kingdom

By

Benjamin Evans Holdsworth, Jr.

July 2009

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work included in this thesis is original. No part of this thesis has been submitted for a degree elsewhere in the United Kingdom, or in any other country or university. The copyright of this thesis and intellectual rights and original ideas are the sole property of the author.

Abstract

This thesis primarily addresses one question: “To what extent can Romans be heard and understood by a readership in Rome within its religio-economic, socio-political, and ethnic context, especially by non-Judeans?”

To address this question, certain presuppositions regarding the audience are re-examined. This first is how the epistle’s audience, as residents of Rome, may have understood their ethnic identity, and how they constructed and negotiated that identity as Greeks, Romans, and Judeans. Chapter 1 focuses on this question for Greek and Roman identity formation and negotiation, since both groups are integral to reading Romans in Rome. The chapter concludes that Hellenization and Romanization were simultaneously shaping life in Rome prior to and during the time the initial hearers interacted with the Roman epistle.

The second chapter concurrently tests two presuppositions. The first is whether Judean treatment in Rome was any different from the experience of any other ethnic minority – whether Rome was anti-Semitic. This is tested by developing a comparative review of Judean life in relation to contemporaneous Egyptian treatment in Rome, in conjunction with Appendices 2 and 3. The second presupposition tested in this chapter is a tangent of the first – that is whether Wiefel’s hypothesis is a valid foundation for assumptions regarding the audience experience in Rome, prior to and at the time of the epistle’s reception. The chapter concludes that Judean and Egyptian ethnicities were in competition in Rome, and based upon ongoing change in circumstances experienced a range of acceptance and rejection. It also concludes that Wiefel’s hypothesis – the eviction in 49 CE of all Judeans and Judean Christ-followers from Rome – does not reflect the reality of the Judean situation.

Chapter 3 tests the presupposition,–that the epistle received in Rome was interpreted by listeners primarily through an oft-assumed Judean lens – that of Judean tradition and the LXX. The chapter reexamines a sample of key ethnic semantics of the epistle – the interaction of honor, faith, piety, and righteousness in Rome’s way of life. It concludes that honor was a key driver in the Roman socio-cultural experience. Faith-making and faith-keeping were integral frameworks for human and divine relationships, and piety and

righteousness were enmeshed in faith and faithfulness in the Roman way of life as the foundation of right relationship between humanity and deity.

Chapter 4 integrates these ideas in reinterpretation of Romans as an audience recipient, by “sitting in the audience,” primarily as a non-Judean listener. It follows the flow of the discourse, noting the ethnic interplay, and the use of honor, faith, and righteousness as key Roman language to engage in ethnic reconstruction. This re-hearing of the sampled terms in Romans 1:1-17 is only an example of future work to examine extended readings of Romans in Rome, re-viewing the text through a Romanized lens.

Gratitude and Dedication

Many individuals over the last decade had a hand in bringing this work to fruition. The following are not named in order of importance, the debt of gratitude, or their impact on this research, but as they come to mind. Apologies to those who also deserve mention, but were unintentionally missed in this process.

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This work is dedicated in honor of Joanne Elmadjian, who faced the ultimate test, and awaits God’s coming kingdom after an untimely death from pancreatic cancer. Joanne taught me about perseverance and is sorely missed by all who knew her lovely cheer and love for God.

Professor J.M.G. Barclay deserves my most profound gratitude, as supervisor, critic, and a source of penetrating questions, direction, and support innumerable ways and especially in dark and difficult moments in bringing this work to fruition. His guidance, professionalism, and supervision have been exemplary, and in my future work, I hope to follow his example of grace.

Last and most importantly, this is doctoral work is dedicated to my precious wife, Ani, who believed in the dream, and came on the adventure as companion, friend, supporter, biggest critic, dearest advisor and my wife. This would not have possibly happened without you. This is especially dedicated to you, my *hokis*.

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Reading Romans in Rome

INTRODUCTION

1: Disquieting Presuppositions and Resulting Questions

This research was born out of unease with some assumptions shaping the interpretation of Romans. These emerged from unanswered questions primarily dealing with the first century listeners in Rome and how they heard Romans within their context. A few of those frustrations became fascinations which formed the foundation of this thesis.

2: The Neglected Audience – The “Invisible” Listeners

While the audience situation is discussed by many commentators on Romans, it is often presented from the perspective of Paul and his intended meanings, but not audience reception and their interpretation of Romans. The question is “What did the audience hear?” versus, “What did Paul say?” Heil’s brief, but significant commentary interpreting the hearing Romans from a reader-response viewpoint is a positive step. While it demonstrates a reader-response approach is viable, it does not immerse the implied audience in the environs and context of Rome.¹ Thus, a first question that underlies this research is, “How does the recipient audience hear Romans in Rome?”

2.1: Ethnic Segmentation and Negotiation in Romans

To begin an audience-focused interpretation, the question immediately arose, “Who was in the audience?” and in relation to Romans, “What was their ethnic mix?” A read-through reveals direct or implied ethnic debate between Judeans and Greeks, or “Gentiles,” that continued throughout the text.² Contributors to the Romans audience segmentation discussion and its implications include Wedderburn, Minear, Watson, Walters, and Das, among others.³ The result ranges widely, from Gathercole’s perception that Romans is

¹ John Paul Heil, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Reader-Response Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1987, repr. 2002).

² The term, “Judeans” will be used in this thesis, based upon agreement with Esler on its use. See Philip F. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul’s Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003), 43-44.

³ A.J.M. Wedderburn, *The Reasons for Romans*, ed. John Riches (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988); Paul S. Minear, *The Obedience of Faith: The Purposes of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans* (London: SCM, 1971); Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism and Gentiles A Sociological Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1986); James C. Walters, *Ethnic Issues in Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993); A. Andrew Das, *Solving the Romans Debate* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007).

primarily focused on a Judean audience, to Das's opposite interpretation that the recipients are an exclusively Gentile audience.⁴ Other than forays in Romans 1 and 15, the Romans of the epistle are often presumed ethnically invisible, non-existent, and perhaps unimportant to the purpose of the letter or its interpretation. However, the question arises, if the audience lives in Rome, would not their interpretive lens be shaped by the culture of which they are part – as residents of Rome? Thus, the epistle of Romans seems to be heard by Judeans and non-Judeans alike, encased in a matrix of ethnic identities, including being Romans.

2.2: Ethnic Negotiation: Who Decided Who Was What Ethnicity?

While it is often presumed that Judeans and non-Judeans were separate and distinct identities, that was not always the case within Rome's multi-ethnic environment. As Tschernokoshewa posits, through individual and collective behavior and discussion, ethnicity is constructed.⁵ Its construction relates to two questions: "Who does what with ethnicity and why?" and also, "Why is it so difficult to imagine that someone can cluster two or three ethnic identities in his or her world?"⁶ For each ethnicity in Rome, there was a constant dynamic reorganization of their "authentic" cultural identity, a negotiation of who had the right to define their ethnic identity, and who was "allowed" to be that ethnicity. This process of ethnic identity construction and negotiation has been somewhat neglected, especially within the context of Rome's simultaneous Romanization, Hellenization, Egyptianization and Judeanization of its population as described in this thesis. The audience of the epistle experienced this process of ethnic construction and negotiation in full contention in their daily world and consequently, impacting how they heard Romans read in Rome.

2.3: Ethnic Negotiation in Rome: Was Rome Anti-Semitic?

Another common assumption in the interpretation of Romans has been that Rome was anti-Semitic, that Judeans were derided, disenfranchised, and uniquely so. Often collections of negative stories, anecdotes, and statements in critique of Judeans are assembled to substantiate this conclusion. Stern's work creates a helpful compendium of positive and

⁴ Gathercole's emphasis, especially on Romans 1-5:12, is an almost exclusive interpretation of the text based on Judean thought, literature and audience. Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?: Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1-5* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 22-23; 33-34, 264-266; Das, *Solving the Romans Debate*, 54-58.

⁵ Elka Tschernokoshewa, 'Blending worlds: On ethnic identities in late modernity' in *Ethnologia Europaea*, Vol. 27, (1997), 139-152, (144).

⁶ Tschernokoshewa, 'Blending worlds,' 144, 146.

negative statements regarding Judeans.⁷ However, a dichotomy exists. Why would non-Judeans ever be attracted to Judeanism, or become Christ-followers if their society was so anti-Semitic? Clearly, some non-Judeans associated with, and thought positively of Judeans and became Christ-followers. However, there is a broader range of inter-ethnic relations, identity construction, and rivalry in negotiation in the epistle of Romans and in Rome.

2.4: Ethnic Negotiation in Rome: Wiefel's Hypothesis: Were All Judeans Thrown Out of Rome?

For many commentators on Romans, a portion of the ethnic debate includes events surrounding a potential Judean exile from Rome in 49, including Judean Christ-followers. The generally accepted prioritization and weighting of four literary sources lead to the generally accepted conclusion that “all” Judeans were exiled from Rome in 49 by Claudius, and did not return until 54 CE.⁸ The purpose of the epistle then becomes a facilitation of re-integrating Judean Christ-followers into what had become a predominantly non-Judean Christ-following community.

However, some commentators, such as Slingerland and Cappelletti have challenged the hypothesis, and conclude that not all Judeans were ejected from Rome.⁹ Cappelletti re-examines Judean life in Rome and appropriately challenges Wiefel on this issue. However, what has not been considered is a fuller examination of Judean treatment in interaction with ethnic Romans or another ethnic group in Rome to test the presumed unique negativity of the Judean experience. This raises another question:

2.5: How are Judeans Treated and Spoken of in Rome in Comparison to Their Contemporaries?

A way to discern whether Judeans were unique is to compare Judean treatment with other groups or as Barclay states it: “Were Jews a special case or did they fare much the same as other oriental non-Greeks?”¹⁰ Bohak goes further, arguing that ethnic stereotyping of Judeans

⁷ Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism: Edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974).

⁸ Suetonius, Luke, Cassius Dio, and Orosius.

⁹ H. Dixon Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking and the Early Imperial Repression of Judaism at Rome* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997); Silvia Cappelletti, *The Jewish Community of Rome, From the Second Century B.C. to the Third Century C.E.*, *SJSJ* 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

¹⁰ Barclay, John M.G., ‘Diaspora Judaism’ in *Religious Diversity in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. Dan Cohn-Sherbok and John M. Court (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 47-64, (59).

can only be more fully understood when placed in comparison with another group, such as Egyptians.¹¹ Noy provides a tantalizing step in consideration of the Egyptian experience in Rome that ranged across status, ethnic identity construction, and negotiation.¹² However, a gap remains in a historical comparison of the simultaneous interaction of Judeans and Egyptians in Rome's cultural context, with the Roman elite and one another as a setting of the epistle and reinterpretation of the events of 49.

3: Rome's Sociolect as Neglected Interpretive Lens

If one assumes a broader ethnic mix among those reading Romans, another question arises. That is: "Was the language of Romans predominantly heard and interpreted through Judean understandings, especially if one was non-Judean? The assumption is common that Romans was read and primarily interpreted through a Judean lens, focused on the Septuagint, Judean literature, and experience. However, not all the audience is Judean. A dichotomy develops between the presumed literacy of the audience, and their ability to recognize nuances of the LXX that would seemingly require a high level of memorization or expertise in Judean literature beyond realistic expectations for non-Judean listeners and perhaps many Judean listeners. Additionally, the sociolect of Rome has been generally ignored, or at best neglected as a primary source for an audience-derived interpretation of what was heard in the epistle's presentation.

4: Hearing Romans by "Sitting in the Audience"

Several other factors that arose from consideration of audience reception and participation influenced this research:

4.1: Reading Romans Without the Rest of the Pauline Corpus

It is apparent that the audience only received one letter. They did not read Romans through the lens of the other Pauline or Deutero-Pauline epistles. Schreiner's caution should be

¹¹ Gideon Bohak, 'Ethnic Stereotypes in the Greco-Roman World: Egyptians, Phoenicians and Jews' in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Division B* (Jerusalem), World Union of Jewish Studies, 2000), 7-16.

¹² Noy, David, 'Being an Egyptian in Rome: Strategies of Identity Formation', in J. Zangenberg & M. Labahn (eds.), *Christians as a Religious Minority in a Multicultural City* (JSNTSS 243, London, 2004), 47-54.

heeded, “We must be aware of the danger of reading other Pauline letters into Romans, a practice that can have the effect of muting the unique characteristics of Romans.”¹³

4.2: Reading Romans Consecutively

The audience read and interpreted the letter as a discourse flow, without leaping ahead for interpretation of the current or previous portions of the presentation. What the listening audience had to work with was the text heard up to and including any certain portion of Romans. The audience’s interpretative perspective seems most probably informed by what they had previously heard in Romans, and also the context in which they lived – that of Rome which impacted the entire ethnic spectrum.

5: The Core Question of this Thesis:

From these concerns and concepts the fundamental research question rises: “To what extent can Romans be heard and understood by a readership in Rome within its religio-economic, socio-political, and ethnic context, especially by non-Judeans?”

Addressing this question substantially reshapes the interpretive lens for reading Romans. The four chapters of this thesis “crack the open door” to hear Romans from this generally neglected perspective, of “sitting in the audience,” especially with non-Judeans within the context of Roman life.

6: Thesis Chapter 1: Reshaping the Lens of Ethnic Identity, Ethnic Negotiation and Rivalry: Hellenization and Romanization

Given the focus of the epistle, it seems important to lay a foundation for understanding the conventions of Greek and Roman ethnic identity and negotiation that primarily shape a non-Judean audience hearing Romans. Chapter 1 briefly addresses how these two ethnicities related inter-ethnically and intra-ethnically to construct their authenticity and debate superiority in relation to others, and one another. The chapter, in conjunction with Appendices 1 and 4, lays a foundation for perceiving Rome as the context for hearing Romans.

¹³ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 3.

7: Thesis Chapter 2: Ethnic Minority Negotiation in Rome, Judeans in Comparison to Egyptians

The chapter adds another perspective to the epistle's interpretive matrix, that explores how Judeans and Egyptians related to one another and Rome by examining their cultural and ethnic construction and interaction in Rome from approximately 63 BCE to 57 CE. The interaction of Judeans, Egyptians, and ethnic Romans provides an alternative to presumed anti-Semitism in Rome, and readdresses the events of 19, 41, and 49, within a broader spectrum of Judean and Egyptian historical treatment in Rome. The details of the Judean and Egyptian religions and presence in Rome are expanded upon in Appendices 2 and 3.

8: Thesis Chapter 3: Reshaping the Audience Reception Lens: The Filter of Roman Social Conventions

Chapter 3 addresses how Judean and non-Judean listeners of the epistle may have heard it through the filter of Roman understandings. The chapter examines only a sample of language utilized in Romans, including the social conventions of honor, faith, piety, and righteousness used in Rome's relationships, primarily focused on the conventions of faith. Understanding these conventions alters the reading of Romans 1:1-17 as demonstrated in thesis chapter 4.

9: Thesis Chapter 4: Reading Romans 1:1-17 in Rome by Sitting in the Audience

The final chapter integrates what is argued in chapters 1-3, that a multi-ethnic rivalry underlies the hearing of Romans by the audience, that Judeans were not evicted from Rome in 49, and their relationship with Rome was not based upon anti-Semitism. The chapter demonstrates that it was possible for non-Judeans of the epistle's audience to fully comprehend the primary points and language of Romans 1:1-17 in regard to faith, righteousness, and piety from within Rome's context which may provide new freshness to our present reading.

Reading Romans in Rome

CHAPTER 1:

Greek and Roman Ethnic Identity Formation and Ethnic Identity Negotiation

Introduction

This chapter explores two themes related to an audience reception of Romans. First, because Greeks are an integral ethnicity in the epistle, this chapter examines how Greek ethnic identity was defined and developed self-description as Hellenism, how Greeks defined barbarians, and how others became ethnically Greek through Hellenization.

Second, because the epistle was read by residents of Rome and within its cultural context, this chapter examines how Roman ethnicity formed, and what claims were made regarding Roman ethnic superiority. Because the city of Rome, its social language, and cultural behaviors influenced the audience's interpretation of the epistle, the chapter describes how the city of Rome was an inherent part of Roman ethnic identity and superiority claims, and the interactive context for reading Romans in Rome. Finally, the chapter considers how Romans defined barbarians, and how others became ethnically Roman through Romanization.

1.1 Hellenic Ethnic Identity Negotiation

Tschernokoshewa argues that “ethnicity could be conceived of as action,” that through individual and collective behavior and discussion, ethnicity is constructed.¹⁴ If this model is assumed, then ethnicity was formed by ongoing dynamic coalescence in the ancient world by Greeks, Romans, and by Rome's multi-ethnic populace, as well as among her Christ-following inhabitants.

Hellenic ethnic identity went through ongoing negotiation and transformation from the 8th century until after the reception of Romans. The process of dialogue, change, and recognition

¹⁴ Tschernokoshewa, ‘Blending worlds,’ 144.

of ethnic identity between and among groups who consider themselves related or in contention has been termed ethnic negotiation in this thesis. Perhaps ethnic negotiation is best considered as a question, “Who does what with ethnicity and why?”¹⁵ It is in relation to this question that the process of coalescence into being *Hellenes* from initial component groups and later Greeks, plus the determination of who and what Hellenes were by ethnic characterization that provides historical background to Greek and Judean identity negotiation in Romans.

1.1.1 The Coalescence of Early Hellenic Ethnic Identity

The inhabitants of ancient Greece initiated Hellenic ethnic description. It was interaction between various groups based upon claims of either real or mythic ancestry, linguistic and cultural similarities and differences. Herodotus and Pausanias grouped Spartans, Athenians, Aeolians, and Achaeans based upon γένος (descent). Spartans were considered Dorian. Athenians were identified as Ionian.¹⁶ Achaeans populated the north central Peloponnese or Thessaly.¹⁷ Herodotus, Strabo, and Pausanias described a fourth γένος, the Aeolians, who originated in Thessaly, and settled the Aegean islands and portions of coastal Asia Minor.¹⁸ These γένη (ancestral descents) substantiated common kinship identity, somewhat based upon related language, between and among the four primary groups of Ἕλληνες (*Hellenes*).¹⁹ As Hall notes, Greek “.....ethnic identity is a cultural construct, perpetually renewed and renegotiated through discourse and social practice.”²⁰ See Appendix 1.1 for a depiction of Hellenic ethnic construction.

1.1.2 Becoming Hellenes: Borrowing Hellenic Ethnicity from Others

While espousing common heritage, Greek writers recognized that early *Hellenes* culturally borrowed and assimilated gods, language, and customs, from other ἔθνη, including

¹⁵ Tschernokoshewa, ‘Blending worlds’, 144.

¹⁶ Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4 Vols., A.D. Godley (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1926), 1.56.2, 8.47.1; Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 5 Vols., W.H.S. Smith and H.A. Ormerod (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1933), 7.1.1-7.1.9.

¹⁷ William K. Prentice, ‘The Achaeans,’ in *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 33.2 (April, 1929), 206-218.

¹⁸ Herodotus, 1.149; Strabo, *Geography*, 8 Vols., H.L. Jones (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1927), 8.2; Pausanias, 7.1.1-9.

¹⁹ See Appendix 1.1; Jonathan M. Hall, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2002), 56-57.

²⁰ Jonathan M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 19; See Appendix 1.

Egyptians and Persians.²¹ Thucydides recognized Hellenic ethnic origin interaction, claiming *Hellenes* evolved from being barbarian and that some *Hellenes* were less culturally developed than some barbarians.²² Herodotus portrayed Egypt as older and wiser than Greece, the source of numerous Greek customs, knowledge of the gods, and religious practice.²³

1.1.3 From Being Barbarian to Being Greek: Intra-Ethnic Negotiation of Hellenicity

Genealogical relationships raised and resolved claims of Hellenic status or authenticity between groups.²⁴ They established structures to express, promote, and negotiate ethnic relationships in a derived common lineage from Hellen, the mythical forefather of all Greeks. Becoming *Hellenes* was an ongoing ethnic interplay as new cities, elites or groups desired Hellenic status or Greek ethnic identity. City-states appealed to one another for alliance or action based on being συγγενείς (fellow kinsmen), or possessing συγγένεια (common kinship) implying common ancestry.²⁵

Ethnic identity negotiation enabled Alexander I to compete in the Olympic Games. Initially, considered a Macedonian barbarian, he was barred from competition until his Hellenic Argive genealogy and descent were proven.²⁶ Macedonian inclusion within *Hellenes* was strengthened by Hellanikos of Mytilene's genealogical production that linked Macedon's descent to Hellen and shared customs and descent with other Hellenic groups.²⁷ Yet Macedonian inclusion in Hellenic ethnicity continued to be contested.²⁸

²¹ Rosalind Thomas, 'Ethnicity, Genealogy, and Hellenism in Herodotus' in *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity*, Irad Malkin (ed), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2001), 213-233, (219-227); J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 194.

²² Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 4 Vols., C.F. Smith (trans.), LCL (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1919-21), 1.5-6; 3.94.4-5; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 195-196.

²³ Herodotus, 2.43-53, esp. 50-53; See Thomas, 'Ethnicity, Genealogy, and Hellenism', 213-233, (216, 220-221).

²⁴ Jonathan M. Hall, 'Ethnography and genealogy: an Argolic case-study' in *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 67-107, (77-89); J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 24-29.

²⁵ Pausanias 1.95.1; 3.86.3; 5.104, 8.100.3; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 57; Also Herodotus 7.176.4; Thucydides 3.102.5; 7.57.5; Strabo 8.1.2; Pausanias 3.2.1; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 71-73.

²⁶ Herodotus 5.22.1-2; Also Thomas, 'Ethnicity, Genealogy, and Hellenism,' 213-233, (219).

²⁷ Hellanikos of Mytilene, 4 *FGrH74*, in F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin and Leiden, 1923-); J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 165; A.D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1999), 136.

²⁸ Jonathan M. Hall, 'Contested Ethnicities: Perceptions of Macedonia within Evolving Definitions of Greek Identity' in *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity*, Irad Malkin (ed), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2001), 159-186, (159-160, 168-172).

By the early fifth century, Hellas geographically expanded to encompass most Greek-dialect-speaking areas, cities, and colonies.²⁹ Aristotle opined that since the γένος (descendants) of *Hellenes* are drawn from both Asia and Europe, they shared geographically determined superiority above peoples of both continents, gaining their best characteristics. For Aristotle, *Hellenes* were spirited, intelligent, free, well governed, and if its peoples were one state, could rule the world.³⁰

1.1.4 Being Semi-Barbarian: Assimilation of Hellenic Ethnicity by Other Peoples

Hellenization of ethnic groups across the Mediterranean world occurred by the assimilation, adaptation, or adoption of Greek culture. As Hellenic groups planted colonies, they encountered indigenous populations and commingled in a variety of relationships with those initially deemed barbarians.³¹ A fundamental differentiation between colonists and barbarians was Greek language.³² The earliest delineation of ethnic description of ‘barbarian’ emerges in Homer’s *Iliad* in which the Carians are termed βάρβαροφῶοι (of barbarian speech).³³

However, Greeks were familiar with bilingualism and linguistic and cultural borrowing from peoples they mingled and settled with.³⁴ Greek colonists and local populations adapted or adopted each other’s customs, but quite often Greek became the predominant language in colonies.³⁵ Greek custom and language spread throughout indigenous populations in Sicily, Southern Italy, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. Being *Hellenes* did not always supplant local language or custom, but in many circumstances blended with it, and often created duality or multiplicity in ethnic identification.³⁶ See Appendix 1.1 for a graphic depiction.

²⁹ As demonstrated by Hekataios of Miletos’ use in F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin and Leiden, 1923-), 1 *FGrH*119, Herodotus 5.36.2, 5.125, and Simonides *Epigram* 8, in *The Greek Anthology with an English Translation*, 6 Vols., W.R. Paton, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1916-1918); and by Xenophanes of Colophon fr. 6, fr. 8 West, in Xenophanes, J. H. Leshner, *Xenophanes of Colophon: Fragments*, J. H. Leshner, (trans.), (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2001), 67-71; See J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 128-129.

³⁰ Aristotle, *Politics*, H. Rackham (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1932), 7.6.1327b23-33.

³¹ Jonathan M. Hall, ‘The discursive dimension of ethnic identity’ in *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 34-66, (46-47).

³² Carla M. Antonaccio, ‘Ethnicity and colonization’ in *Ancient Perspectives of Greek Ethnicity*, Irad Malkin (ed), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2001), 113-157, (121-122).

³³ J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 111.

³⁴ For linguistic evidence in early Hellenism see Roger D. Woodward, ‘Linguistic Connections between Greeks and non-Greeks’ in *Greeks and Barbarians: Essays on the Interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in Antiquity and the Consequences for Eurocentrism*, John E. Coleman and Clark A. Walz (eds.), (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 1997), 29-60; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 111-115.

³⁵ J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 104-111.

³⁶ J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 220-224.

However to become Greek-speaking was termed by Xenophon and Thucydides as ἑλληνίζειν, and evolved into Plato's, "to act like a Greek."³⁷ Dubuisson argues that Hellenikos of Mytilene's use of μιχῆλληνας (*mixellenes*), and Polybius' later similar descriptions of other ἔθνη delineated those, who by adoption of Greek language and custom, *became Hellenes*.³⁸ Yet, the description covers a range of people who exhibited a range of mixed language or multi-ethnic identity characteristics, in comparison to others recognized as fully Hellenized, by other Greeks.

1.1.5 Internal Hellenic Ethnic Rivalry: Hellenic Purity Debates

The Persian invasion further solidified *Hellenes*, or Ἑλληνικός (*Hellenikos*) identity versus other ethnicities. Herodotus' Athenian *Hellenikos* rationale for not abandoning the Persian war was based upon kinships of blood, tongue, cult places, sacrifices, and similar customs.³⁹ His reference to common blood referred to established fictive and real genealogical kinship and descent shared between Greek groups opposing Persia. Athenian *Hellenikos* culture included similar religious practices, διατία (material culture), ἔθεα (cultural personality), and νόμοι (laws or norms) shared with other Greek groups.⁴⁰ This shared identity was not monolithic, but formed a basis for discussion and in this case, alliance between Hellenic groups. Pure Hellenicity remained in ongoing contention in the Greek world. Plato proclaimed Athenian Greek purity over Spartans, Corinthians and other Hellenic groups due to its refusal to hand over Ionia to the Persians, "So firmly-rooted and so sound is the noble and liberal character of our city, and endowed also with such a hatred of the barbarian, because we are pure-blooded Greeks, unadulterated by barbarian stock."⁴¹

³⁷ Xenophon, *Anabasis*, Carleton L. Brownson, (trans.), John Dillery, (rev.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1999), 7.3.25; Plato, *Laches, Protagoras, Meno, Euthdemus*, W. R. M. Lamb, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1977), *Meno* 82b.

³⁸ Hellenikos of Mytilene, 4 *FGrH* 71a; Polybius 1.67.7 uses the same term later for a mixed Greek and non-Greek force of troops in Polybius, *The Histories*, 6 Vols., W. R. Paton, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1922-27); Michel Dubuisson, 'Remarques sur le vocabulaire grec de l'acculturation', *Revue Belge de Philologie d'Histoire (RBPh)* 60: (Brussels, 1982) 5-32; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 196.

³⁹ Herodotus, 8.144.2; John E. Coleman, 'Ancient Greek Ethnocentrism' in *Greeks and Barbarians: Essays on the Interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in Antiquity and the Consequences for Eurocentrism*, John E. Coleman and Clark A. Walz (eds.), (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 1997), 175-220, (177).

⁴⁰ Herodotus compared and contrasted Lydians, Persians, Babylonians, Massagetai, Egyptians, Scythians, and Libyans with one another and Greek culture; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 192-193.

⁴¹ Plato, *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 9, W.R.M. Lamb (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, 1925), *Menexenus: Socrates*, 245c-d.

After the Persian defeat, Athens claimed its way of life was the epitome of Hellenism. Thucydides' funeral oration emphasized Athenian uniqueness and prominence as a *παίδευσις* for Hellas, perhaps meaning education, or culture.⁴² Comedy depicted Athenian cultural ascendancy by presenting Attic Greek as true Hellenic language.⁴³ Plato's Protagoras labeled Athens the *Prytaneion* of Hellas, and considered an Aeolic Greek speaker a barbarian for not speaking Attic, while Euripides' tomb inscription proclaimed Athens "the Hellas of Hellas."⁴⁴

Athenian Hellenism was not restricted by descent or geography, but included those who "understand our dialect and imitate our way of life *τρόποι (tropoi)*."⁴⁵ Isocrates claimed Athenian cultural superiority based upon its greater wisdom and cultural indoctrination of other Hellenic groups. Furthermore, Plato perceived divine support for Athenian ethnic supremacy. He argued Athena and Hephaistos divinely chose Attica, because its "blended climate" produced wise men with excellence (*ἀρετή*) and practical wisdom (*φρόνησις*).⁴⁶ Athenian *Hellenes* shared her education or culture (*παίδευσις*) more than nature or biology (*φύσις*).⁴⁷ Being *Hellenes* became a matter of disposition (*διάνοια*) based upon education or cultural adoption, or perhaps adaptation of Athenian culture by other Hellenic groups. Yet, various Greek cities, dialect groups, and regions still engaged in intra-ethnic rivalry based upon history, gods, and perceived superiority over other Greek communities, even after incorporation into the Roman Empire.

Hellenic ethnic and cultural superiority, even if not Athenian, was espoused by Greeks into the first century BCE. Dionysius of Halicarnassus defined Hellenism (*Ἑλληνικόν*) as those who spoke the Greek language, lived Greek ways of life, worshipped the same gods, and respected reasonable laws.⁴⁸

⁴² Thucydides, 2.41.1, also J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 201-202.

⁴³ Aristophanes, *Birds*, *Lysistrata*, *Women at the Thesmophoria*, Jeffery Henderson, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2000), *Birds*, 1694-1705; Plato, *Protagoras*, 341c.

⁴⁴ Plato, *Protagoras*, 337d; 341c; Paton, *The Greek Anthology*, Vol. 2, 7.45 (*Palatine Anthology*, 7.45).

⁴⁵ Thucydides, 7.63.3; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 205.

⁴⁶ J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 212-213.

⁴⁷ Isocrates, *Volume I: To Demonicus. To Nicocles. Nicocles or the Cyprians, Panegyricus. To Philip. Archidamus*, 3 Vols., George Norlin, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1928), *Panegyricus*, 50; Coleman, 'Ancient Greek Ethnocentrism,' 189-190.

⁴⁸ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 7 Vols., Earnest Cary (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1937-50), 1.89.4.

1.1.6 Dichotomous Hellenic Purity Claims: Simultaneously Being Greek and Barbarian

While Athenians claimed superior Hellenic purity, positioning the city as the focal point of Greek ethnic cultural definition was not universally accepted. Other cults, cities, and ethnic subgroups of Hellenism challenged that role. In addition, other ethnic identities influenced and were assimilated into being Hellenic from elsewhere in the Mediterranean world before and after its conquest by Rome in the second century BCE.

An example of being Greek and becoming “barbarian” is the Hellenic adoption of the Isis cult. Given extensive Greek and Egyptian trade, Isis was well known to Greeks. Herodotus described Isis as equivalent to Greek Demeter.⁴⁹ In the mid-4th century, a temple of Isis was constructed in Piraeus, likely on land purchased by Egyptians, who would have supplied the priesthood and ethnic aspects of Isis worship for interested Greeks.⁵⁰ By the mid-4th century, Isis dedications were in Athens and other parts of Greece, including Halicarnassus.⁵¹ By 200 BCE, Isis and her consort Serapis were further Hellenized to suit Egypt’s Greek pharaohs. This adaptation influenced Greek adoption of the Egyptian cult throughout the Hellenic world. Temples, priests, and priestesses of Isis and Serapis appear throughout Greece, including Athens by 215 BCE, although the cult was not officially recognized until after 200.⁵² Aretologies, or hymns praising Isis were transcribed or reformatted from Egyptian into Greek, not always as translations, but rephrased to relate to Greek culture and adjusted to attract new Greek adherents.⁵³

Just after 200 BCE, a temple for Isis was constructed on Delos, a center of Greek religious and ethnic identity for over 500 years, utilized by Greeks, Romans and others alike. By 180, Isis worship was firmly entrenched on Delos along with other non-Hellenic cults.⁵⁴ Athens was given responsibility for the island by Rome in 166, and by 158/157, an Athenian Greek

⁴⁹ Herodotus, 5.29.

⁵⁰ Jon D. Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion* (Malden: Blackwell Publications, 2005), 201.

⁵¹ Antonia Tripolitis, *Religions of the Hellenistic Roman Age* (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 2002), 27; Sharon Kelly Heyob, *The cult of Isis among women in the Graeco-Roman world*, *Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain*, 51, (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 85.

⁵² Jon D. Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens* (Berkeley: University of California, 1998), 138-139; A Greek priestess of Serapis is listed in an Athens inscription in 215/214 BCE. See Heyob, *The cult of Isis among women*, 7, 87.

⁵³ Heyob, *The cult of Isis among women*, 45-48, (47).

⁵⁴ M.M. Austin, “The Introduction of the cult of Serapis to Delos (c.200)” in *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2006), 277; Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens*, 198.

was chief priest of Isis and Serapis on Delos.⁵⁵ In this ministerial change, we find Hellenism Egyptianized by a Greek who fully adopted an Egyptian cultural and religious life, on a sacred Greek island, administered by Athens but ruled by Rome. Mikalson argues Athenian administration of the Delian Isis cult accelerated the Egyptianization of Greece. Hellenic adoption of the cult is obvious from Athenian dedications to Isis on Delos.⁵⁶ Further support for Hellenic Egyptianization is obvious in the Isean temple renovation by Athens in 135 BCE. After the destruction of Delos in mid-1st century BCE, the Isis cult became more significant in Athens, with portraits, Isieion, statues, and fine grave reliefs from the Sacred Way, Agora, and Akropolis evident through the mid-60s CE.⁵⁷ Mikalson summarizes, “By the end of the Hellenistic period, Isis, usually with Serapis, had sanctuaries and devotees in virtually all Greek cities...”⁵⁸ The spread of the cult of Isis into Greek cities is similar to the establishment of Judean communities throughout the Hellenistic world, and that of early Christianity, including the community that receives the epistle of Romans. See Appendix 1.1 for a representation of ethnic identity assimilation of other groups into Hellenism.

1.1.7 Hellenic Description of Other Ethnicities as Barbarians

Other ethnic groups interacted with Hellenism in the classical period. These interactions led to comparison and contrast of ethnic and cultural practices. In many cases, adaptation or assimilation of ethnic characteristics between groups took place, such as Egyptians or Sicilians taking on aspects of Hellenic identity. However, an ethnic group could strive to maintain its own uniqueness or “purity” compared to another. For example, an ethnic group could resist absorption of Hellenic ways and characteristics, to preserve its own ethnicity based upon pride, or to preserve its way of life. This resistance shaped Greek categorization of others as barbarian. Barbarian description by Greeks generally fall into two processes: description by use of Greek characteristics or by non-Hellenic characteristics.

⁵⁵ Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens*, 202; Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion*, 201.

⁵⁶ Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion*, 201; Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens*, 210-212.

⁵⁷ Elizabeth J. Walters, *Attic Grave Reliefs That Represent Women in the Dress of Isis*, *Hisperia: Supplement XXII* (Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1988), 39-40, 61-63, 67-71, 91-94.

⁵⁸ Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion*, 201.

1.1.7.1 Barbarian Description by Hellenic Characterization

Greeks described barbarians in Hellenic terms, to admire or disparage their ethnicity. Xenophon applied Greek values to explain Persian prowess, that Cyrus' lineage (γένεα), nature (φύσις) and culture/education (παιδεία) granted his ascent, based upon his practice of Greek-perceived virtues, justice (δικαιοσύνη), moderation (σωφρόσυνη), and self-restraint, (ἐγκρατεία).⁵⁹ Thus, Greek characterization of some non-Hellenic peoples made them admirably Hellenic, when it suited an author to positively portray a barbarian.

Similarly, barbarians gave Hellenic speeches-in-character to denote their superiority over Greeks. Herodotus provided a barbarian's self-perception of ethnic superiority in Mardonius' description of Greek military tactics: "the *Hellenes* are accustomed to wage war in the most ill-advised way out of ignorance and ineptitude," pointing to the Greece's high losses to symbolize their ethnic inferiority and Persian military superiority, using antonyms of Greek values.⁶⁰

1.1.7.2 Barbarian Description by Non-Hellenic Characterization

On the other hand, Aristotle conceptualized barbarians with natural servitude, "since by nature (φύσις) the slave and the barbarian are of the same order."⁶¹ *Barbaroi* were often slaves, from non-Greek speaking lands, cementing ideas of inferiority in a culture less inclined to free slaves.⁶² Utilizing geographic determinism, Aristotle considered barbarians from Asia more servile than those from Europe.⁶³

Barbarian characterization in Greek post-Persian war tragedies often portrayed comparative roles.⁶⁴ Persians were often the ethnic antithesis of Greek values and norms. The βαρβάρως

⁵⁹ Xenophon, *Cyropaideia*, Vol. 5, Walter Miller, (trans.), *LCL* (New York: Harvard University, 1914), 1.1.6, 1.2.6-8.

⁶⁰ Herodotus, 7.9β.2.

⁶¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.1.1252b5-9.

⁶² Coleman, 'Ancient Greek Ethnocentrism,' 180-181.

⁶³ Aristotle, *Politics*, 3.9.1285a18-23.

⁶⁴ Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1989), 117-121; See also J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 175-176.

Persians engaged in disordered clamor versus the ordered Greek paian.⁶⁵ Persian negativity or emotional outbursts were deemed effeminate, non-Hellenic, and ethnically inferior. Greek suitability for freedom and democracy was contrasted to Persian servility to superiors or becoming slaves.⁶⁶ Persian values, including ἀκράτης (immoderation), ἀμῶθια (foolishness), δειλία (cowardice), ἀκολασία (abandonment), and ἀδίκια (injustice or lawlessness) were contrasted to Hellenic σωφροσύνη (moderation), σοφία (wisdom), ἀνδρεία (courage) and δίκαιοσύνη (justice).⁶⁷

Hellenic authors voiced similar stereotypical depictions of other barbarians in Greek comedy and art. Egyptians were described as deceitful, villainous and malicious, Phrygians as cowards, Thracians as stupid, rash, and savage, and Pontic barbarians as bestial and cannibalistic.⁶⁸ However, Herodotus was more balanced in ethnic comparison to Greek practice, acknowledging some barbarians as praiseworthy, while deriding others.⁶⁹ Ethiopians, for example, were praised by Greek writers from Herodotus to Heliodorus for their religiosity, military prowess, love of freedom, wisdom, justice, and righteousness, all Greek characteristics attributed to Ethiopian ethnicity.⁷⁰

In summary, who was barbarian was an ethnic negotiation applied to groups within Hellenic culture and non-Hellenic peoples who did not practice Greek ways, or resisted Hellenization. Determination of Hellenic superiority over non-Greek speakers, and those who did not embrace Hellenicity was upended, renegotiated, and reordered by the “barbarian” Roman conquest of Hellas.

1.1.8 Negotiation of Being Hellenes in the Roman World and Making Romans Greeks

⁶⁵ Aeschylus and Edith Hall, *Persians/Aeschylus*, Edith Hall (trans.), (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1996), *Persians*, 402-406.

⁶⁶ Euripides, VI, *Bacchae*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Rhesus*, David Kovacs (ed.), David Kovacs, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2002), *Iphigenia in Aulis*, 1400-1402.

⁶⁷ E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 121-122; Also, J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 176-178.

⁶⁸ E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 122-126.

⁶⁹ Herodotus compared and contrasted Lydians, Persians, Babylonians, Massagetai, Egyptians, Scythians, and Libyans with one another and Greek culture, see Coleman, ‘Ancient Greek Ethnocentrism,’ 196; J. Hall, *Hellenicity*, 181-182, 192-193.

⁷⁰ Herodotus 2.29; 3.17-26; 3.21; 7.69; Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, W.R.M. Lamb, (trans.) J.R. Morgan (ed.), *Ethiopian Story*, Everyman Library (London: J.M. Dent, 1997), 9.18, 9.20-21; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica* in *Diodorus of Sicily in Twelve Volumes*, C.H. Oldfather, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1968), 3.2.2-3.3.1; Frank M. Snowden, Jr., “Greeks and Ethiopians” in *Greeks and Barbarians: Essays on the Interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in Antiquity and the Consequences for Eurocentrism*, John E. Coleman and Clark A. Walz (eds.), (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 1997), 103-126, (109-111).

After the Roman conquest, Polybius' *Histories* began to educate the Greek world about Roman ethnicity by translation and interpretation of its ideals, values, and culture. This ethnic negotiation recognized not only Rome's military superiority, but also some cultural aspects, including faith-making. While Polybius had affirmed Roman military supremacy, he united the two ethnicities through "entwinement," or cultural assimilation that supported Hellenism's superiority.⁷¹ By the late Roman Republic and eve of empire, being *Hellenes* did not primarily focus on geography or descent for defining Hellenism, but gave priority to the cultural and educational adoption of Greek customs, thought and ideas by peoples throughout the Mediterranean world.

1.1.8.1 Diodorus Siculus: An Example of First Century BCE Greek Multi-Ethnic Negotiation

Diodorus Siculus is an example of this inter-ethnic debate in the late Republican and early imperial world. He attributed Greek greatness to borrowing from the Egyptians.⁷² He argued the truly ancient, and by implication, superior ethnicity was Egyptian, her civilization, culture and deities, albeit renamed and generally adopted, retranslated or appropriated from Egyptian into Greek cultural experience.⁷³ For Diodorus, Egyptians colonized from Babylon to Greece, including Athens, bringing civilization to the Greek world, including its gods.⁷⁴ These included Zeus, Heracles, and Demeter, among others. Diodorus noted, "In general, there is great disagreement over these gods," highlighting competitive ethnic claims of tradition, origination, powers, place, and supremacy that associated deities with certain cities or groups.⁷⁵

However, Diodorus adroitly turned Egyptian ethnic superiority claims aside by accusations of their attempts to usurp the greatness of Athens and Hellenism, by assertion of ethnic glory over Athens' fame. He decried Egyptian efforts to add other great cities or peoples to Egypt's colonization list, denying they had proof.⁷⁶ Furthermore, Diodorus categorized Egyptians as barbarians, so as not to deny Greek superiority in the confrontation of Egyptian and Greek

⁷¹ John Henderson, 'From Megalopolis to Cosmopolis: Polybius, or there and back again' in Simon Goldhill, (ed.), *Being Greek Under Roman Rule: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2001), 29-49, (30-31).

⁷² Diodorus Siculus, 1.9.2-6.

⁷³ "In general, they say, the Greeks appropriate to themselves the most renowned of both Egyptian heroes and gods, and so also the colonies sent out by them." Diodorus Siculus, 1.23.8.

⁷⁴ Diodorus Siculus, 1.28-29.7.

⁷⁵ Diodorus Siculus, 1.11-29, (1.25.1).

⁷⁶ Diodorus Siculus, 1.29.5-6.

counterclaims over earliest origins, culture, and civilization. He positioned Greeks as superior to barbarians, including Egyptians, because of Hellenic history, paired with being educated Greeks vs. uneducated peoples. For Diodorus, Greeks were ethnically ascendant due to their record of knowledge of the world and other peoples, no doubt, including his historiography.⁷⁷ Yet despite Diodorus' and other Hellenic writers' claims, Egyptian ways were entrenched in Greek culture. As argued in 1.1.6, the Isis cult and Egyptian ways had become part of Greek culture, undermining Greek superiority claims against Egyptian ethnicity given how they were intertwined.

Diodorus did not neglect Rome's ethnic claims to greatness. He noted Roman supremacy, yet remarked their greatness was only known after he learned Latin. It is a snide aside, which indirectly placed Rome, despite its greatness, in a barbarian hue, since Latin, their primary language, was not Greek, and despite their history being known from Greek sources such as Polybius and Latin authors whom Diodorus read to create his work.⁷⁸ It is clear Diodorus did not care for Romans in his history.

In relation to the epistle of Romans, Diodorus provides insight into how a Greek author shaped multi-ethnic debate for his audience over status, rivalry, and supremacy in the Roman world. He utilized deities, origins, forefathers, history, culture, tradition, and ethnic labeling to generate a preferred outcome. Diodorus desired to sustain Hellenic cultural greatness in a Roman world, and Greek supremacy over Roman and other ethnic practice and identities.

Similarly, the epistle to the Romans presents an argument about deity, negotiated by the author in relation to Judean, Greek, and Roman listeners, especially to support the concept that Jesus is universal Savior, and Son of God. Romans 4 presents arguments in regard to origins of all listeners and their ethnic or adopted forefather, Abraham, in relation to God and Christ. Ethnic construction in the epistle also encompasses history, and the theme of divine promise fulfillment in Romans 1, 4 and 9-11. It contains numerous discussions on ethnic tradition, physical characteristics, and way of life, in relation to Judean law or individual or collective ways of life in Romans 2-3, and 14-15. Ethnic labeling and generalization occur throughout the epistle. Finally, constructed ethnic superiority claims are refuted in Romans 2-4, and 9-11. It seems the writer of Romans draws upon the conventions of ethnic rivalry

⁷⁷ Diodorus Siculus, 1.2.4-6.

⁷⁸ Diodorus Siculus, 1.4.2-5.

refutation to integrate his audience into a shared communal relationship in regard to Christ, without negating the ethnic characteristics of the listeners.

1.1.8.2 Dionysius of Halicarnassus: A Greek Making Romans Greeks

Dionysius constructed Roman identity differently from Diodorus. Dionysius of Halicarnassus was Augustus' Greek contemporary in Rome. He had been Romanized himself, having dwelt in Rome for 22 years prior to writing his work, and had learned Latin to read Latin historians, adopting aspects of Roman life.

He, like Diodorus, claimed Romans were originally Greeks, as were the Trojans and not barbarians, as often rumored.⁷⁹ His purpose was to demonstrate the inferiority of normative claims of Greek greatness to construct Rome's greatness as Greek-rooted.⁸⁰ For example, Dionysius detailed a Greek characterization of Rome's right to ethnic supremacy in a speech-in-character attributed to Tullius, who argued Latins ought to have command over adjacent states and give laws to "barbarians," because the Romans were "Greeks."⁸¹ Dionysius further noted the bronze pillar of Tullius' laws was inscribed in Greek characters in the Aventine temple of Diana, arguing their use showed that Rome's founders were not barbarians, for they used Greek.⁸²

Thus for Dionysius, Rome was not barbarian, but a "Greek city," and Latin was at worst, semi-barbarian or at best semi-Greek. Furthermore, Dionysius thought Romans ought to have preeminence among the Latins, because of city size, great achievements, and because they had enjoyed divine providence. He argued Rome adopted Greek education, and constructed Hellenic lineage, and most importantly, they lived a Greek way of life. Dionysius summarized this argument of Romans originating from Greek and their way of life more than once in his history.⁸³ For Dionysius, since Rome was partly, or originally *Hellenes*, she preserved Hellenic ethnic superiority, despite Rome's conquest of Greece.⁸⁴ However, Dionysius' construction of Rome being Greek was contested by early imperial Romans who

⁷⁹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.60.3-61.1; 1.4.2.

⁸⁰ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.7.2; 1.2-5.

⁸¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.26.2.

⁸² Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.26.2-5.

⁸³ For example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 7.72.18.

⁸⁴ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.89.3-90.2.

claimed Trojan descent as discussed by Erskine and in section 1.2.1.1 in opposition to being Greek, and as conquerors gaining vengeance for Trojan ancestors.⁸⁵

1.1.9 Summary: Hellenicity and Hellenization or Being Greek and Becoming Greek

In summary, Greek ethnicity was a negotiation among various peoples to create a common identity in which, through time, Athenians often claimed dominance. It is an ethnicity constructed by dialogue and change of people, behaviors, and ways of living through time. Hellenicity was malleable and reshaped itself often, including in the late Republic and early empire.

For example, Greek language was not a singular dialect, but Attic Greek may have been perceived as dominant over others. Hellenic cultures and traditions were viewed as common when convenient to those who shared Hellenic culture or in interaction with it, yet differentiated practice when in conflict in intra-ethnic negotiation. Thus, Hellenicity coalesced from a number of related but culturally distinct ethnic groups that adapted, adopted, and assimilated various aspects of one another to form an identity of being Greek.

Hellenes generally identified themselves as socially superior to those they characterized as barbarians and ideally did not practise immoral or unlawful characteristics of the βαρβάρου. Other people who underwent Hellenization embraced some subset of Greek characteristics, such as adoption of Greek language, education, and way of life, the gymnasia, theater, games, clothing, architecture, deities, calendar, and laws, or perhaps specific laws of a particular territory, deity, or *polis*.

Dionysius and Diodorus make it apparent that Greek cultural influence continued to culturally shape the eastern Roman empire after conquest. However, it competed with *Romanitas* for influence, especially by the first centuries BCE and CE. Strabo even bemoaned the barbarization/Romanization of Magna Graecia in the Augustan era.⁸⁶ Additionally,

⁸⁵ See Andrew Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2003).

⁸⁶ Strabo, 6.1.3; Ronald Mellor, 'Graecia Capta: The Confrontation between Greek and Roman Identity' in *Hellenisms: Culture, Identity and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, Katarina Zacharia (ed.), (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 79-126, (89).

Hellenism competed with other Eastern ethnic groups including Egyptians, Syrians, and Judeans in molding community identity and ways of life.

These debates of being or becoming Greek, or resisting its influence, are similar in expression and claims to the ethnic critique, deconstruction, and renegotiation in the Roman epistle. Direct competition and ethnic negotiation between Greek and Judean is apparent, for example, in Romans 1:13-14, 16-17, 2:9-10, 3:9, 9:24, 30-31 and 10:12-13. The epistle's ethnic debate in Romans 1 will be explored more fully in chapter 4.

With this brief exploration of Greek ethnic development in mind, we turn to examination of Roman ethnic identity and being a resident of Rome.

1.2 Roman Ethnic Identity Formation and Negotiation

While some may consider that Roman life and ethnicity were not relevant to the Roman epistle and had no effect on audience interpretation, this dissertation challenges that assumption. The audience that heard Romans read was immersed within Rome's culture, behaviors, values, and sociolect as depicted in Appendix 1, Figure 3. The following sections unfold this contextually shaped perspective.

1.2.1 The Coalescence of Early Roman Ethnicity

In recent years, there has been considerable debate regarding Roman ethnic identity. Some question whether Roman ethnicity actually existed and conclude that what Rome offered was citizenship. Alternatively, Roman ethnicity has often been defined by social science categorizations, similarly to Greek ethnicity; “a collective name, a myth of common descent, a shared history, a distinctive shared culture, an association with a specific territory, and a sense of communal solidarity.”⁸⁷

Yet these criteria fall short of recognizing the complex richness of Roman ethnic identity development and its ongoing negotiation. Farney ably argues that Rome offered more than

⁸⁷ Timothy Cornell, ‘Ethnicity as a factor in early Roman history’ in Timothy. J. Cornell, and K. Lomas, (eds.), *Gender and Ethnicity in Ancient Italy* (London: University of London, 1997), 9-21, (9); An example of use by NT scholars, see Philip F. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003), 40-76 (40-53).

citizenship, and inherent in Roman ethnic identification were “nested” or commingled multi-ethnic relationships of citizenships and ethnicity that create, “intra-Roman” social constructs, early and continuously in Rome’s ethnic history.⁸⁸ This becomes apparent in the negotiation of Roman ethnic identity as portrayed by Greek writers such as Dionysius (see 1.1.8.2), and by Latin authors in following sections.

1.2.1.1 Roman Ethnic Development: Multi-ethnic Romans Living Negotiated Ethnic Identities

Being Roman was more than just citizenship. Comprehension of Roman ethnic self-identity calls for adherence to its own descriptions. Despite Dionysius’ weaving Roman ethnic origins into Greek identity, his contemporary elite Romans countered this argument with two intertwined understandings of ancestral and ethnic origins.

While still perceiving Roman ethnic identity as superior, a Roman might simultaneously claim more than one ancient cultural or ethnic identity, even among Rome’s elite, as did Greeks as demonstrated previously. Romans proudly recognized their ancestral foundation incorporated many peoples to form its origins, early history, traditions, self-perceptions, common ancestral practice, and way of life. Early Roman ethnic self-identification was drawn from Latins, Sabines, Etruscans, Tuscans, and other Italians.⁸⁹ Quintus Cicero made this clear, “This is Rome, a state formed by a gathering of nations.”⁹⁰ Appendix 1.2 graphically depicts ethnic elements that shaped Roman identity from Republic to Empire.

This variety of ethnic roots was often preserved, or adopted in Roman names, lineages, characteristics, and geography. Many Romans listed real, adopted, or mythic genealogies or ancient ethnicities to cement their origins in Rome’s collective history.⁹¹ Early Roman ethnic origins and moral characterizations were alluded to and shaped Rome’s ethnic identity into the mid-first century CE, including imperial ancestry. Its Julian elite traced origins to Aeneas, Trojans, Latium, Alba, and Romulus. Other great Roman families claimed similar ancient

⁸⁸ Gary D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republican Rome* (New York: Cambridge, 2007), 28-29.

⁸⁹ Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 1-11.

⁹⁰ Quintus Cicero, *Commentariolum Petitionis* 54 in George Lincoln Hendrickson, *The Commentariolum petitionis attributed to Quintus Cicero* (Chicago, University of Chicago, 1903), as translated in Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 10-11.

⁹¹ Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 22-34.

pedigrees.⁹² The Claudii claimed Sabine descent, as did the Paullii, perhaps the Roman lineage of the Christian apostle who wrote Romans.⁹³ Each ancient ethnic group's descendants negotiated identity, honor, status, and rulership claims nested within Rome's ethnic identity.

An example of Roman multi-ethnicity is Quintus Ennius, a Roman contemporary of Polybius, who acquired citizenship in 184 BCE. His ethnic identity had three hearts, one Greek, one Oscan, and one Latin.⁹⁴ Ennius considered each origin equally valid and heartfelt, and ways of life he embodied within his own actions.

Later Cicero, usually perceived as defender and proponent of Roman ethnic superiority, considered his original city and territory, and that of Cato's, as equally important as their Roman ethnic identity. "Have you then two fatherlands? Or is our common fatherland only one? Perhaps you think that the wise Cato's fatherland was not Rome but Tusculum? Surely I think he and all natives of Italian towns have two fatherlands, one by nature and the other by citizenship....so we consider both the place where we were born our fatherland, and also the city into which we have been adopted....But that fatherland must stand first in our affection in which the name of republic signifies the common citizenship of all of us....But the fatherland which was our parent is not much less dear to us than the one who adopted us."⁹⁵

Neither Cicero nor Cato were unique, since Cicero placed the same question of dual ethnicity as a framework of their mutual backgrounds in Rome's Senate in 44 BCE, "How many of us are not of such an origin?" was his rhetorical question in one oration.⁹⁶

For Cicero, citizenship in Rome was perceived as adoption, a creation of familial kinship. Roman adoption meant the adoptee gained the honor, privilege, and lineage of the one who adopted, and the familial obligations of adoption were honored, in this case, personalized as

⁹² Regarding the *Iulii*, see Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 26; For other Roman elites, Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 53-59.

⁹³ Regarding the *Claudii*, see Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 78-88, (87).

⁹⁴ Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 7-8; 8, n. 18.

⁹⁵ Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.5 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Re Publica, De Legibus*, C.W. Keyes, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1928).

⁹⁶ "...quotus enim quisque nostrum non est?" Cicero, *Philippics* 3.15, as translated in Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 10; Ronald Syme, Anthony Birley, *The Provincial at Rome and Rome and the Balkans 80BC – AD14*, (Quebec: Presses Université Laval, 1999), 39.

Rome's way of life. Some of Romans 8's imagery on adoption into God's *familia* would resonate with Romans of multi-ethnic origin adopted into Rome's ethnic citizenship.

Contra Dionysius, Latin authors asserted they were not Greeks, but descendants of non-Hellenized Troy.⁹⁷ In addition to familial ethnic lineage, late republican and early imperial Roman historians considered Homer's Trojans Rome's ancestral founding forefathers.⁹⁸ Virgil, Strabo, and Cicero co-opted Homer in their efforts to demarcate Roman origins, not from Greece, but from Troy -- its epic enemy.

Similarly, the Roman historian Livy was from Latin Patavium. His history linked Rome's ancient origins, and Patavium's, to Troy claiming Trojan – not Greek origins. Livy extolled Roman ascendance, and intentionally promoted the mythic pure Trojan lineage of the Roman elite and populace.⁹⁹ Livy exemplified a Roman with citizenship and ethnic identity in Rome and Patavium, speaking Rome's Latin with a Patavian accent. He reconciled his dual origins by claim of ancient patrilineage, using similar tactics as Cicero and Dionysius. Thus, Livy and Cicero were contemporary Romans, with different ethnic origin, yet both claimed ethnic patrilineage and dual fatherlands to link their initial cities and culture to Rome's, supporting its ethnic dominance, without the Greek lineage espoused by Dionysius (see 1.1.8.2).

From this diversity, Rome established a malleable ethnic core of its own *mos maiorum*, or way of life. In this process, Rome incorporated peoples who adopted its ancestry and way of life, in similarity to early Hellenic ethnic construction. The formation of ethnic origins of Rome's elite and populace provides insight into the negotiation of other ethnicities that arrived in the late Republic and early empire who became Roman citizens, or adopted Roman ways, who similarly shared and debated inter-ethnic identity. While individuals or groups assimilated Roman characteristics to varying degrees, each ethnic group added something to *being* Roman, including Egyptian and Judean immigrants, as examined in more detail in chapter 2. A stylized visualization of Rome's ethnic mix is located in Appendix 1.2.

⁹⁷ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.89.3-90.2.

⁹⁸ Froma I. Zeitlin, "Vision and revisions of Homer" in Simon Goldhill, (ed.), *Being Greek Under Roman Rule: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2001), 195-266, (235-236).

⁹⁹ Titus Livy, *History of Rome*, 14 Vols., B.O. Foster, et al., (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge: Harvard University; London: Heinemann, 1919-59), 1.1-2.

1.2.2 *The Roman Elite – Role models for idealized ethnic purity*

Rome's elite shaped the ethnic rivalry that demonstrated Roman superiority over Greek and other ethnicities' practices and identities. The late Republic Roman elite were its senators and *equites*. Later it expanded to include others who advised the emperor, governed the provinces, and commanded legions. For example, Tiberius's *concilium* consisted of "old friends (*amici*) and household members, plus twenty men who were "foremost in the city (Rome)." ¹⁰⁰

Seneca provides a later example of commingled origin. Born in Hispania, member of Rome's elite by adoption, contemporary with the epistle to Rome, he modeled and shaped Roman ethnic identity as one of its widely read elite. ¹⁰¹ What the elite of Rome wrote, said, and lived, shaped Roman thought, values, and ethnic development and defined Rome's ethnic identity and way of life – what it was to be Roman and how its superior ethnic identity was lived across the empire.

1.2.3 *Mos Maiorum – The Emergent Roman Way of Life as Ethnic Superiority Claim*

Republican and early imperial Rome's way of life resulted from an ongoing process of cultural and ethnic identity development and interpretation of Rome's past and ever-shifting present to create a realized and idealized common identity. Being Roman was based upon claims of superior ethnic traditions and practices that underlay Rome's way of life. Wallace-Hadrill summarizes this transformation and negotiation as the basis for defining ethnic superiority in the late Republic, and early empire. ¹⁰² He suggests this preservation occurred through redefinition and relocation of political, moral, social, religious, and cultural authority, voiced by the Roman elite and emulated to varying extents by Rome's populace. ¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Suetonius, in *Suetonius: Lives of the Twelve Caesars with an English translation*, J.C. Rolfe (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1913-14), *Tiberius*, 55.

¹⁰¹ Tacitus, *The Annals*, John Jackson (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1986), 13.6; Also, Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1999), 6-7.

¹⁰² Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Mutatio morum: the idea of a cultural revolution' in Thomas Habinek and Alessandro Schiesaro (eds), *The Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 3-22; Also Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2008).

¹⁰³ Wallace-Hadrill, 'Mutatio morum,' 6-7.

Determination of *mos maiorum* was a negotiation of ancestral practice and resolution of competing ethnic and superiority claims, in a state of constant renovation, given changes in Rome's elite and emperors. The Roman way of life and claims of superiority covered the full spectrum of existence; clothing, education, language, religion, morals, values, art, urbanization, and entertainment. While Roman ethnic negotiation occurred in relation to many others, for this thesis we will assess Roman ethnic negotiation in relation to Hellenicity in this chapter and in relation to Judeans and Egyptians in chapter 2, since the resolution of competing ethnic identity claims are a motif underlying the message of the epistle of Romans. What follows are examples of Roman pride and superiority claims. These are similar in type and tone to ethnic superiority claims stated and refuted in Romans 2-3.

1.2.4 Mos Maiorum as Ethnic Superiority Claim Over Hellenicity

The following sections detail Roman ethnic ideals, often in conjunction with comparison to Hellenicity. Among the Roman decision-making elite in the late Republic and early empire, Hellenism as way of life – Greek language, education, ideas of government, and elements of religion – were in full interaction with, but more importantly, were subsumed into Roman values, way of life, and language.¹⁰⁴ Hellenistic and Roman cultural interchange and ethnic predominance vary by city and region. Examination of this interplay provides insight into the ethnic dynamics of life in Rome when the letter from Paul was received.

In many circumstances, Hellenism's way of life was practised, not only by Greeks, but also by Romans living outside of Rome, at times with imperial encouragement and patronage.¹⁰⁵ Rome's elite, when on holiday, or in Greek environments, could adopt Greek custom and dress in Greek communities. One example is Claudius' wearing Greek clothing when in Neapolis in southern Italy.¹⁰⁶ However, this did not undermine Roman perception of being superior to Greeks. In Roman places and contexts, Rome's ideals, clothes, manners, language, identity, and way of life were dominant, and honored by non-Romans, especially

¹⁰⁴ Kathryn Lomas, 'Urban Elites and Cultural Definition: Romanization in Southern Italy' in *Urban Society in Roman Italy*, T.J. Cornell and Kathryn Lomas (eds), (London: UCL, 1995), 107-120.

¹⁰⁵ On Greek and Roman bilingualism, Frédérique Biville, 'The Graeco-Romans and Graeco-Latin: A Terminological Framework for Cases of Bilingualism' in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*, J. N. Adams, Mark Janse and Simon Swain, (eds), (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 77-102.

¹⁰⁶ "And, for the matter, in Neapolis he lived altogether like an ordinary citizen; for both he and his associates adopted the Greek manner of life in all respects, wearing a cloak and high boots, for example, at the musical exhibitions, and a purple mantle and golden crown at the gymnastic contests." Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 9 Vols., Earnest Cary and H.B. Foster (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1914-27), 60.6.2.

in Rome, where Augustus legislated that freeborn Roman were legally bound to wear the toga.¹⁰⁷ For Romans, Greek identity was a competitive cultural group over whom Rome deemed itself superior.

An early example of Roman and Hellenic ethnic rivalry is evident in Plautus' plays. Gruen suggests that Plautus' plays belittled Greek cities, values, and culture. This criticism was at times performed by characters depicting Greek slaves, which in Gruen's view permitted Plautus to disparage Roman bias and claims to ethnic superiority.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, Greeks in Plautus' plays derided "barbarians," including their food, products, foolishness, laws, and cities.¹⁰⁹ He humorously commented on his own work, the rework of Greek plays into a "barbaric tongue" – a facetious reference to Latin.¹¹⁰ He arguably was inferring that Romans are barbarians, and specifically portrayed them as disgustingly odorous oarsmen in one passage.¹¹¹ However, for Gruen, the point of Plautus' plays was to create a farce of known and recognized claims by Romans or Greeks to social superiority, their existing ethnic rivalries, and the ongoing process of Hellenization and Romanization of both groups as humor.¹¹²

Later Juvenal similarly bemoaned Roman ethnicity becoming "polluted" with influences from the East; Greek, Syrian, Judean, etc.¹¹³ He mocked Hellenistic influence, lampooned Greek intellectualism and habitual ingratiation, terming his arrogantly exemplar Greek "who knows everything," *Graeculus*, a little Greek, a snide aside to mark superior Roman learning and character.¹¹⁴ What powered Roman assumptions of ethnic dominance was its sense of place in history and its tradition that shaped its ethnic identity.

¹⁰⁷ Susan Walker, 'The Moral Museum: Augustus and the City of Rome' in *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City*, Jon Coulston and Hazel Dodge, (eds.), Oxford University School of Archaeology Monograph 54 (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2005), 61-75 (69); Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Alan Shapiro, (trans.), (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1990, c1988), 162-166.

¹⁰⁸ Erich S. Gruen, 'Plautus and the Public Stage' in *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Society* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 124-157, (152-155).

¹⁰⁹ Gruen, 'Plautus and the Public Stage,' 155. Titus Maccius Plautus, *The Comedies*, 5 Vols., Paul Nixon, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1916-1924), *Casina*, 748; *Mostellaria*, 828; *Bacchides*, 121-124; *Captivi*, 492, 884; *Poenulus*, 598.

¹¹⁰ Gruen, 'Plautus and the Public Stage,' 155. Plautus, *Asinaria*, 11; *Trinummus*, 19.

¹¹¹ Plautus, *Poen.* 1313-1314.

¹¹² Gruen, 'Plautus and the Public Stage,' 155-157.

¹¹³ Simon Goldhill, 'Introduction: Setting an Agenda' in Simon Goldhill, (ed.), *Being Greek Under Roman Rule: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2001), 1-25, (10-11).

¹¹⁴ Juvenal, *Satires* 3.62-78 in Juvenal and Persius, *Juvenal and Persius* (Satires), G.G. Ramsey, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1918).

1.2.4.1 *Mos Maiorum*: Roman History and Tradition Were Presented as Superior to Hellenicity

For Romans, their historiography and traditions were superior to the Greeks. Latin authors, Cicero, Varro and others, asserted their place in time and history was superior to preceding kingdoms. Cicero praised Varro's initial work on preserving past tradition that stabilized Roman ethnicity during the late Republic: "When we were like strangers abroad and lost in our own city, your books led us back home, so to speak, so that at last we were able to recognize who and where we were. You revealed the age of our homeland, its divisions of time, the laws of sacrifice, rites, and priesthoods; discipline at home and at war; the location of regions and places; and the names, types, functions and causes of all matters divine and human."¹¹⁵

Cicero asserted the cultural and ethnic history and tradition of Rome's elite was superior to that presented by Greek historiography.¹¹⁶ The Augustan historian Pompeius Trogus similarly structured his world history as that of Diodorus of Sicily, and Nicolaus of Damascus to denote Rome's superiority.¹¹⁷ Even Dionysius marked Rome's superior place in history over four previous empires.¹¹⁸ Velleius Paterculus' history of Rome noted that Aemilius Sura, in his chronology of the Roman people in the second century BCE stated that, "the Assyrians were the first of all races to hold world power, then the Medes, and then the Persians, then the Macedonians, then... the world power passed to the Roman people."¹¹⁹

Livy argued Roman military superiority over Macedonian's greatest world conqueror. For him, Alexander was not a superior general. Livy listed the great Roman generals, contemporaries of Alexander, who would have defeated him if he had ever invaded Italy. He noted Greek claims of Hellenic greatness of Alexander, but insulted Greeks by speculation that Alexander's army was less Greek than Persian by the time he would have invaded Italy, playing on Rome's angst and perceived superiority over Persian ethnicity and military in

¹¹⁵ Cicero, *Academica Posteriora* 1.3.9 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Academica*, H. Rackham (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1933).

¹¹⁶ Cicero, *De Legibus* 1.5-6.

¹¹⁷ J.M. Alonso-Núñez, 'An Augustan World History: The *Historiae Philippicae* of Pompeius Trogus' in *Greece & Rome*, Second Series, 34, No. 1 (April, 1987), 56-72; David Potter, *Prophets and Emperors: Human and Divine Authority from Augustus to Theodosius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1994), 187.

¹¹⁸ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.2.2-4.

¹¹⁹ A marginal gloss, Velleius Paterculus, *History of Rome* 1.6.6 in Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History / Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, F.W. Shipley (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1924).

imperial Rome.¹²⁰ The historical past as lived tradition laid the foundation of Rome's way of life preserved and espoused as superior to competing ethnicities in the early empire.

1.2.4.2 *Mos Maiorum: Latin Language Argued as Superior to Greek*

The standardization of Latin confirmed it as the language of Rome's ethnic and cultural identity. Latin experienced similar pressures to add loan words and non-standard use as had Greek in the process of Hellenization. Latin grammar was substantially codified in Rome during the late republic and early empire. Roman grammarians noted the problems and debates of proper Greek, and applied similar rationalization to "purify" Latin. Cicero represented the Roman elite who recognized the necessity and challenge to preserve Latin.

"Hitherto pure Latin was not a matter of reason and science, but of good usage (*bonae consuetudinis*). I pass over Laelius and Scipio; in that period men were praised for their pure Latin as for their innocence, (though there were those who spoke badly). But virtually everyone in those days who neither lived outside this city, nor was tainted by domestic barbarity, used to speak correctly. But this has been corrupted in Rome as in Greece. Both Athens and this city have received a flood of people from a diversity of origins whose language is polluted (*inquinata loquentes*). This is why our talk needs purging, and some sort of rationality needs to be applied like a touchstone, which cannot be changed, nor are we to go by a perverted rule of usage."¹²¹

Varro's *De lingua latina*, and Caesar's *De analogia* were key works for ordering Latin and to enable its transformation from the language of municipal Rome to a linguistic system for empire-wide use.¹²² Yet Latin in Rome, Italy, and Empire had dialects and accents.¹²³

Learning Latin became a symbol of status and honor in Rome and empire.¹²⁴ In daily life, Latin was used cursively and in many cases imperfectly, by different socio-economic and

¹²⁰ Livy, 9.17-9.20.

¹²¹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Brutus, Orator, Volume 5, Rhetorical Treatises*, G.L. Hendrickson and H.M. Hubbell (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1939, 1952), *Brutus* 258.

¹²² Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, 64-70.

¹²³ Marcus Terentius Varro, *De Lingua Latina Libri XXV*, Roland G. Kent, (trans.) 2 Vols., *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1934-38); James Noel Adams, *The Regional Diversification of Latin* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2008), 114-187, (118-119).

¹²⁴ Joe Sheppard, M.A. Thesis, *Self-education and late-learners in the Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius*, (Victoria University of Wellington, 2008), 2-5, 11-15.

ethnic groups, as evident in the Vindolanda tablets.¹²⁵ While the expectation in Rome and elsewhere might have been for elite Romans to know Greek as an aspect of education, local languages were bilingually used and mixed with Greek or Latin. An aspiring member of the Roman or provincial elite learned good Latin, including Greeks who learned Latin proficiently enough to critique Latin speakers who had Hispanic accents.¹²⁶ Yet, Cicero claimed that Latin language and literature had progressed to the point that “even in richness of vocabulary the Greeks do not surpass us.”¹²⁷

The promotion of Latin led to the vigorous development of poetry, narrative, and plays that promoted Rome and the Augustan heritage. Latin use helped reshape Rome’s past to glorify its dominance and power in the imperial era. Horace, Virgil, Livy, Propertius, and others contributed to Latin’s reshaping the early empire, to propagate and glorify Augustan cultural and moral values.¹²⁸ In fact, the Roman elite included those individuals responsible for the majority of Greek and Latin literature from the early empire extant today.¹²⁹ This linguistic mix, along with self-education and bilingualism, provided a sociolect and cultural construct for the audience of the epistle to Rome, including those who likely knew a mix of Greek and Latin and able to receive a Greek text containing Roman social language, as detailed in chapters 3 and 4.

1.2.4.3 *Mos Maiorum: Roman Law Presented as Superior to Greek Law*

Roman law was codified in the late republic by Servius, who published 180 volumes on Roman civil law and transformed it into a science that supported Roman superiority.¹³⁰ Cicero, writing about Servius proclaimed: “Among the many excellent practices of our ancestors was the high respect they always accorded to knowledge and interpretation of the

¹²⁵ Alan Bowman and David Thomas, *Vindolanda: the Latin writing tablets* (London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1983); Alan Bowman and David Thomas, *The Vindolanda Writing Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses II)*, (London: British Museum, 1994).

¹²⁶ Wallace-Hadrill, ‘*Mutatio morum*,’ 18-19; James Noel Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003), 15-17; Adams, *Regional Diversification of Latin*, 231-240.

¹²⁷ ... *ut a Graecis ne verborum quidem copia vinceremur*. Marcus Tullius Cicero, *de Natura Deorum* 1.3.7-8 in Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, H. Rackman, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1933), 10-11.

¹²⁸ See Elaine Fantham, ‘Images of the city: Propertius’ new-old Rome’ in Thomas Habinek and Alessandro Schiesaro (eds), *The Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 122-135. Also Andrew Feldherr, ‘Livy’s revolution: civic identity and the creation of the *res publica*’ in Thomas Habinek and Alessandro Schiesaro (eds), *The Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), 136-157.

¹²⁹ Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 2.

¹³⁰ Wallace-Hadrill, ‘*Mutatio morum*,’ 16.

corpus of civil law... but now with the collapse of every other grade of social distinction, the prestige of this science has been destroyed – and that in the lifetime of one (Servius) who equals any of his predecessors in social standing, and excels them all in science (of civil law).”¹³¹ Wallace-Hadrill proposes that Servius, Mucius Scaevola, other *pontifices* and the rest of the Roman elite utilized Hellenistic learning to transform and codify Roman law.¹³² Yet Cicero and Crassus claimed that Roman law was superior to other philosophies and other law codes, labeling non-Roman law as absurd and primitive.¹³³

Varro linked together Roman religion, law and time, commenting on how judgment was pronounced on *dies fasti* or ‘righteous days’ only, otherwise the praetors would commit sin. Roman ‘unrighteous days,’ the *dies nefasti*, were days of judicial inaction, since making legal decisions on those days was sinful. The praetor who unintentionally pronounced legal decisions on an ‘unrighteous day’ had to offer an atonement offering to be freed of his sin and restore his relationship with Jupiter.¹³⁴ Those who intentionally made legal pronouncements on the ‘unrighteous days, according to Varro, could not atone for his sin, “as one who failed in his duty to God and country.”¹³⁵

Augustus capitalized on previous legal codification, and used his authority to plant himself and his imperial successors as the ultimate source of Roman law including religious law, its order, categorization, promulgation, and preservation.¹³⁶ He proclaimed his appointment as “supervisor of laws and morals without colleague,” yet notes that he asked the Senate for others to share that power.¹³⁷ Roman law and language were integral to governance of its *mos maiorum* and a key element of education.

¹³¹ Cicero, *De officiis* 2.19.65 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, Volume XXI. *De Officiis (On Duties)*, W. Miller (trans.), LCL (London: Heinemann, 1913).

¹³² Wallace-Hadrill, ‘*Mutatio morum*,’ 16.

¹³³ Cicero, *De Oratore* 1.193-195 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On the Orator Books I-II*, E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham (trans.), LCL (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, rev. 1948); Elaine Fantham, *The Roman World of Cicero’s De Oratore* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2004), 108.

¹³⁴ Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 6.29, 6.30, 6.53.

¹³⁵ Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 6.30.

¹³⁶ Richard Gordon, ‘From Republic to Principate: Priesthood, Religion and Ideology’ in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 62-83, (69-75).

¹³⁷ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 6, See P.A. Brunt and J.M. Moore (eds.) *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus* (Oxford, Oxford University, 1967), 21.

1.2.4.4 *Mos Maiorum: Roman Education Asserted as Superior to Hellenic Paideia*

Roman education not only included her law and tradition, but also formal Greek learning deemed important in Roman elite leadership preparation. However, it was Greek learning on Roman terms – not to become Hellenized, but to Romanize Greek education. For Greeks, the center of Hellenic education was often the *gymnasia*. However, Plutarch depicted Roman rejection of *gymnasia* and wrestling schools as places which caused indolence, corrupted the youth, were responsible for the enslavement and effeminacy of Greeks, and their inability to be great warriors.¹³⁸ Goldhill further notes *gymnasia* were perceived by Romans as part and symbol of Greek corruption and weakness.¹³⁹ Roman rejection of the *gymnasia* as ethnic symbol and Hellenic education venue was so strong that there were no *gymnasia* in Rome until first incorporated into Nero's new baths in 61, appropriately destroyed, from the traditional Roman perspective, by Jupiter's divine lightning in 62.¹⁴⁰

That said, pursuit of intellectualism incorporating Greek learning became intrinsic in second century BCE Rome. Polybius, writing as a Greek about Romans to a non-Roman audience, argued that Hellenistic παιδεία, education should include the study of astronomy, geography, geometry, history, literature, and rhetoric, perhaps as Greek education to be emulated by Romans.¹⁴¹ P. Crassus is one extreme example of the early Roman study of Greek. He mastered all five major dialects. However, his purpose was not to be Hellenized, but to boost affection and thus friendship of Rome's allies, a political advantage for Rome in maintaining dominance.¹⁴²

In comparison to Greek παιδεία, Cicero espoused similar subjects for Roman education, but to mark its ethnic superiority, with training in Latin rhetoric, astronomy, geometry, and

¹³⁸ Plutarch, *Moralia Vol. 4, Roman Questions, Greek Questions, Greek and Roman Parallel Stories, On the Fortune of the Romans, On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander. Were the Athenians More Famous in War or in Wisdom?*, F.C. Babbitt (trans.), LCL (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1936), *Roman Questions* 273.

¹³⁹ Goldhill, 'Introduction: Setting an Agenda,' 1-25, (2).

¹⁴⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 14.47; Cassius Dio, 61.21.2; Tacitus, *Annals* 15.22.3; Miriam T. Griffin, *Nero: The End of a Dynasty* (London: Batsford, 1984, repr. 2001), 44-45.

¹⁴¹ Polybius, 9.12-20.

¹⁴² "When P. Crassus came to Asia to put down king Aristonicus, he was so careful to master the Greek language that divided as it was into five branches he learned each of them thoroughly in all its parts and aspects. That won him great affection among the allies. In whatever dialect one of them applied at his tribunal, he gave his ruling in the same." Valerius Maximus 8.7.6, as translated in Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings, 2 Vols.*, D. R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), D. R. Shackleton Bailey (trans.), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2000), 227.

music. Additionally, Cicero emphasized Roman moral philosophy as an essential element of elite Roman education, as a hallmark of ethnic superiority. Late republican and early imperial Roman incorporation of Greek education, such as language and literature, was not perceived as an aspect of the Hellenization of Rome, despite education often being provided by Greeks. It occurred for the creation and demonstration of Roman superiority over Greek expertise, without Roman self-perception that through its study, they became *Hellenes*.

Wallace-Hadrill suggests that Roman concepts of *mores* were different from the Hellenistic embodiment of *paideia*, which was “the core value of Greek culture which defines Hellenism in contrast to barbarism.”¹⁴³ He refines Roman morality into two concepts, that of *disciplina* as literary education and *humanitas*, the connection of education and humane, civilized behavior. *Humanitas* becomes the ground for the “core Roman concept of *mores*,” in opposition to, and superior to Hellenistic *paideia*.¹⁴⁴ Thus, Greek education became a Roman domain, conquered similarly as Greek territory. Roman morals were viewed as superior to Hellenism’s moral values, unless Hellenes acted like Romans. Yet who and what people did was not the only avenue of Roman ethnic identity. The city itself was a visual statement of Rome’s espoused ethnic superiority.

1.2.4.5 *The City of Rome as Mos Mairorum: Architectural Superiority Claimed Over Greek Cities*

The purpose of Augustan and Julio-Claudian construction was to build an imperial Rome capable of supporting an expanding population and express Rome’s declared superiority as a world city, depicting Roman ethnic superiority.¹⁴⁵ As Favro argues, “Rome had to convey her importance as both the seat of a great State, and the home of a great man. Simply, her image had to outshine those of other cities in the Mediterranean.”¹⁴⁶ Roman architectural style and urban development were accelerated, including restoration and construction of temples, and new public space and structures that represented Rome’s greatness.

¹⁴³ Wallace-Hadrill, ‘*Mutatio morum*,’ 8.

¹⁴⁴ Wallace-Hadrill, ‘*Mutatio morum*,’ 8.

¹⁴⁵ There were 178 major Julio-Claudian construction projects in Rome from 29 BCE-68 CE, see Thornton, M.K. and R.L. Thornton, *Julio-Claudian Building Programs: A Quantitative Study in Political Management* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1989), 24-25, and Appendix 2, 135-139.

¹⁴⁶ Diane Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996), 3-4.

Lomas convincingly argues that early imperial urban construction in Rome and Italy was socio-political ideology transformation, to establish Augustan Rome as a model of the ideal city, to be emulated by other cities of Italy and across the Mediterranean.¹⁴⁷ Vitruvius in *De Architectura* succinctly noted Roman superiority evident in her Augustan architecture: “I observed that you cared... also about the provision of suitable new public buildings so that the state was made greater by you (Augustus) not only through new provinces, but also because the majesty of the empire had the eminent authority of its public buildings.”¹⁴⁸

A key element of Rome’s architectural superiority were the temples and locales honoring its gods, origins, core values and way of life, many pertinent to Paul’s Romans, and revisited in Chapter 3. Augustus rebuilt 82 temples in Rome by 28 BCE, as part of the religious architectural renewal to demonstrate Roman dedication to the gods.¹⁴⁹ Of greatest significance was restoration of temples of Rome’s earliest and primary deities, including the temples of *Iupiter Capitolinus* and *Quirinius* on the Quirinal.¹⁵⁰ Both temples were focal points of Rome’s key human-divine relationships. Livy described the Jupiter Capitolinus edifice as “so magnificent that it should be worthy of the king of gods and men, the Roman Empire, and the majesty of the site itself.”¹⁵¹

Additionally, Augustus constructed new temples in Rome: the temple of the Divine Julius; others for Jupiter, for Minerva, Juno, and Jupiter Liberator on the Aventine; for the *Lares* and the *Penates* on the Velia; and the temple to the Great Mother on the Palatine.¹⁵² The *Lares* and the *Genius*, or *Numen* of Augustus were given renewed veneration as Augustus re-divided Rome’s regions and restored or built new neighborhood shrines, to the *vicus’* deities, with whom the divine spirit of the emperor was intertwined. Ovid and Horace mention altars founded for oaths to be taken by Augustus’ *numen*, or to worship the *Numen Augusti*.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ Kathryn Lomas, ‘The idea of a city: elite ideology and the evolution of urban form in Italy, 200 BC-AD 100’ in Helen M. Parker (ed.), *Roman Urbanism* (London: Routledge, 1989), 21-41, (21-22).

¹⁴⁸ Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, 2 Vols., Frank Granger (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1931), Praef. 1.2.

¹⁴⁹ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 20.

¹⁵⁰ John W. Stamper, *The Architecture of Roman Temples: The Republic to the Middle Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2005), 6; Inez Scott Ryberg, ‘Was the Capitoline Triad Etruscan or Italic?’ *The American Journal of Philology*, 52.2 (1931), 145-156.

¹⁵¹ Livy, 1.53.3.

¹⁵² Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (ed.) Elisha Ann Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002); Also Ryberg, ‘Capitoline Triad’, 145-156.

¹⁵³ Horace, *II, Satires, (Sermones), Epistles, The Art of Poetry (Ars Poetica)*, H. Rushton Fairclough (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, rev. ed. 1929), *Epistles* 2.1.15; Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso),

Of special importance to Augustus was the construction of Apollo's Palatine temple that housed the re-authenticated prophetic Sibylline Books and construction of the temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augustum.¹⁵⁴ Both of these last deities were intrinsically linked to Augustus' mythic ancestry. Thus in a symbolic yet powerful reality, Augustus was related to and dwelt with the gods, not only on the Palatine, but also in Rome's neighborhoods and with her peoples.¹⁵⁵ Their characteristics were linked to his persona in statuary, proximity, prose, and purpose.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, Apollo and Mars, as deities related to the emperor who granted Augustan victory, and the other deities whose temples were built by Julio-Claudian emperors represented physical, visible, and psychological proof of the power and superiority of Rome in marble.¹⁵⁷

Non-religious construction was a major segment of Augustus' massive urbanization. The Campus Martius became Rome's new urban center and represented its transformation into imperial capital. Its construction demonstrated Augustan care for Rome's burgeoning population and embraced a mixture of public, monumental, religious, entertainment, and private areas.¹⁵⁸ The buildings included a new set of amenities, including temples, baths, *fora*, and theaters. The northern Campus Martius held the Pantheon, built to honor the gods and possibly the divine Julius and later divinized Augustus.¹⁵⁹ It contained the Altar of Augustan Peace (*Ara Pax Augusta*), a special edifice for proclamation of Roman piety with annual sacrifices honoring Augustus by celebrating his victories and deified Peace.¹⁶⁰

Egyptian influence was included in Rome's expansion. The use of an Egyptian obelisk as the sundial point of Augustus' *Horologium*, adjacent to the Altar of Peace, marked the greatest

Tristia, Ex Ponto, G.P. Goold, A.L. Wheeler, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1924), *Tristia* 3.8.13; R.M. Ogilvie, *The Romans and Their Gods in the Age of Augustus* (London: W.W. Norton, 1969), 122-123.

¹⁵⁴ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 19, 21; Propertius, *Elegies*, G.P. Goold (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1990), 2.31; Walker, 'The Moral Museum: Augustus and the City of Rome', 65-66.

¹⁵⁵ Walker, 'The Moral Museum: Augustus and the City of Rome', 60-61.

¹⁵⁶ An example of his proximity and relatedness to Apollo in prose is Propertius, *Elegies*, 2.31. See also Fantham, 'Images of the City: Propertius' new-old Rome', 126-127.

¹⁵⁷ Thornton and Thornton, *Julio-Claudian Building Programs*, 3.

¹⁵⁸ Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 74-77.

¹⁵⁹ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 188-189. Cassius Dio, 53.27.3-4, 54.1.1.

¹⁶⁰ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 12. Also Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 189; Walker, 'The Moral Museum: Augustus and the City of Rome', 69-71.

of Roman victories, indirectly lauding Actium as re-conquest of Egypt.¹⁶¹ Yet this is not the only trace of Egyptian influence in the Augustan urban expansion on the Campus Martius. To the east of the *Saepta Iulia*, Augustus condoned construction of the *Isis Campensis*, the most important temples in Rome for worship of Egyptian deities including Isis and Serapis.¹⁶²

Strabo lauded the Campus Martius's blend of public use, for honoring gods, peoples, and events, its prominence and fundamental sacred character, as a portrayal of the Greek sense of beauty and adornment, yet architecturally capturing Roman virtue, concluding his observations with "believing this place to be a most sanctified one."¹⁶³

Rome's massive architectural transformation contributed to Rome being divinized and worshipped across the Greek world in temples often dedicated to Augustus and Roma. The urban renewal of Rome was emulated in construction, architecture, and building styles throughout the empire as an aspect of Romanization. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, and Appendices 1 and 2, the *Transtiber* and Judean, Egyptian and Christ-following inhabitants benefited from Rome's economic development and urban expansion.

1.2.4.6 Mos Maiorum: Rome's Security and Stability Asserted Roman Ethnic Superiority

The closing years of the late Republic were fraught with intertwined political, economic, and religious unrest in Rome. Much of Augustus's municipal restoration work enabled improvement of the city's economic, religious, and political stability. Preservation of public order was inherent to its role and image as world cosmopolis.

Augustus' stabilization efforts included creation of military and municipal forces to enforce Rome's public order and preserve stability. The forces were sizable and generally effective. Augustus formed the Praetorian Guard in 27/26 BCE, an elite military force of nine cohorts, or approximately 4,500 men whose commander reported to the emperor. It served as the

¹⁶¹ The obelisk was inscribed as a victory stele, "Egypt brought back to the power of the Roman people." (*CIL* VI 702), Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 76.

¹⁶² Cassius Dio 47.15.4. The sanctuary covered an area approximately 600 by 150 feet. See Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 152.

¹⁶³ Strabo, 5.3.8. Also Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 76-77.

imperial guard initially based inside the city.¹⁶⁴ While on duty, they were plain-clothed, their togas concealing armor and weapons.¹⁶⁵ They were effective in undercover work, locating potential sedition or treasonous discussion.¹⁶⁶ In addition to imperial protection, they policed large public gatherings such as the theater or races, to perform crowd control and intimidate potential riotors.¹⁶⁷ Until Tiberius, only freeborn Romans from core Italian provinces and established Roman colonies served in the Praetorian Guard. Claudius added Narbonese and Cisalpine Gaul to expand their recruitment area.¹⁶⁸

In 13 BCE, Augustus complemented the Praetorian Guard by creation of three urban cohorts, *cohortes urbanae*, a force of about 1,500-4,500 men, deemed part of the regular army.¹⁶⁹ Suetonius termed them the city guard, who most likely reported to the city prefect, a Roman tribune or senator.¹⁷⁰ In 6 BCE, the urban cohort's length of service was set at 20 years. Most personnel were recruited from Rome, with some from Italy, but all were freeborn Roman citizens at enlistment.¹⁷¹ The urban cohorts protected key buildings, prevented or curbed popular unrest, and deterred Rome's slave population from revolt.¹⁷²

In response to later unrest and fires in Rome, Augustus created seven cohorts of *Vigiles* in 6 CE, to assist with public order, night patrol, and firefighting.¹⁷³ The 7,000 strong force was based in seven barracks and smaller regional facilities dispersed throughout the city. Initially, they were not fully militarized, but they likely became so under Tiberius as early as 24 CE.¹⁷⁴ The *Vigiles* were recruited from freedmen who dwelt in Rome at enrollment. In 23-24 CE, Tiberius enacted legislation to grant them full Roman citizenship after 6 years service.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁴ Yann Le Bohec, *The Roman Imperial Army* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1994), 20-21.

¹⁶⁵ Michael Grant, *The Army of the Caesars* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), 89.

¹⁶⁶ Epictetus, *I, Discourses, Books 1-2*, W.A. Oldfather (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1925), 4.13.

¹⁶⁷ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 89; J.C.N. Coulston, "Armed and Belted Men": the Soldiery in Imperial Rome' in *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City*, Jon Coulston and Hazel Dodge, (eds.), Oxford University School of Archaeology Monograph 54 (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2005), 76-118, (90).

¹⁶⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 4.5.5; Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 99.

¹⁶⁹ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 95-96; O.F. Robinson, *Ancient Rome: City Planning and Administration* (New York: Routledge, 1922, 1990), 158-159.

¹⁷⁰ Suetonius, *Augustus*, 49; Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 21-22.

¹⁷¹ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 100.

¹⁷² Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 95-96.

¹⁷³ Cassius Dio, 55.26.4; P.K. Baillie Reynolds, *The Vigiles of Imperial Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1926).

¹⁷⁴ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 22; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 98-99.

¹⁷⁵ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 98; Reynolds, *Vigiles*, 64.

Additionally, an elite cavalry unit of 100-500 men, the *corporis custodes* cohort of Batavians or Germans were recruited by Augustus as his private bodyguard.¹⁷⁶ Personnel remained in service for as long as 29 years, and received Roman citizenship on discharge.¹⁷⁷

The Ravenna-based Roman fleet was headquartered in the *Transtiber* near Augustus' *naumachia*.¹⁷⁸ The Misenum fleet headquarters and barracks occupied the Esquiline. Roman fleet personnel were a mix of freed slaves, *peregrine*, and Roman citizens recruited primarily from the East, including Egypt, Syria, and Asia. The fleet headquarters staff reflected this ethnic diversity. Most gained Latin status at the end of their service, if not full Roman citizenship when enlisted.¹⁷⁹

Rome's military intelligence services included 300-500 "*speculatores* of Caesar," who served as the mounted couriers, imperial security detail, scouts, plain-clothed guards, spies, executioners, and potential intelligence operatives in Rome and elsewhere, based with the Praetorian Guard.¹⁸⁰ Additionally, the *Peregrini*, a special forces unit which carried out secret imperial orders, were barracked on the Caelian Hill possibly with the *frumentari* who performed similar functions.¹⁸¹ Conservatively, well over 10-15,000 troops and guards were based in Rome at any given time, especially during Claudius' reign, stationed in various areas of the city either directly tasked or available to carry out operations to maintain public security and stability, perhaps a ratio of 1:96.¹⁸² Yet even more important to Rome's safety and stability were her relations with the gods evident in her *mores*, virtues, and piety.

¹⁷⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 1.24.2; Suetonius, *Augustus* 49.1; Michael Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 105; Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 23.

¹⁷⁷ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 64, 100.

¹⁷⁸ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 160, plate 3; Coulston, 'Armed and Belted Men', 78, 89.

¹⁷⁹ Chester G. Starr, *The Imperial Roman Navy* (Westport, CT: Cornell, 1941), 66ff; Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 101.

¹⁸⁰ Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.31.1; A. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae (ILS)* (Berlin: 1892-1916), *ILS* 2014; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 91-92, 95; Rose Mary Sheldon, *Intelligence Activities in Ancient Rome: trust in the gods, but verify* (New York: Routledge, 2005, Taylor & Francis, 2007), 164-167.

¹⁸¹ P.K. Baillie Reynolds, 'The troops quartered in the *castra peregrinorum*', *JRS* 13, (1923), 168-187; O.F. Robinson, *Ancient Rome: City Planning and Administration* (New York: Routledge, 1922, 1990), 159-165; Lawrence Richardson, 'Castra Peregrina' in *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 2nd ed., (Baltimore, MD: JHU (Johns Hopkins University), 1992), 78; Sheldon, *Intelligence Activities in Ancient Rome*, 250-251.

¹⁸² Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 34; Coulston, 'Armed and Belted Men', 81.

1.2.4.7 *Mos Maiorum: Roman Mores Were Alleged as Superior to Hellenic Morality*

Cicero proclaimed a natural Roman moral superiority over Hellenism in his *Tusculan Disputations*. For him, ancestral *mores* such as *gravitas*, *constantia*, *magnitudo animi* were part of the *natura* passed on to Roman descendants. The only reason Greeks excelled in *doctrina* was that it had not yet become part of Roman honor.¹⁸³ Roman cultural and ethnic change occurred when *doctrina* became part of Rome's honor, when the Roman elite, the *principes*, began to model Hellenic *doctrina* as inherent in Roman elite honor and way of life. Cicero wrote: "the state always had the character of its leading men, and that whatever transformation of manners (*mutatio morum*) emerged among its leaders, the same followed in the people."¹⁸⁴

Rome's proclaimed dominance in moral education and morality was affirmed by Dionysius's *On Ancient Orators*, "The cause and beginning of this great change lies in Rome. The mistress of the world makes all the other cities look to her. Her own men of power, who govern their country on the highest moral principles, are men of education and fine judgment. The discipline they impose has strengthened the wiser elements of the community..."¹⁸⁵

1.2.4.8 *Mos Maiorum: Roman Religion and Divinized Virtues Were Asserted as Superior Expressions of Piety to Hellenic Religion*

For Rome, the core of ethnic identity, key to preservation of superiority and dominance, was its practice of religion and divinized virtues. As Ando notes, definition and identification of classical and early imperial Roman *religio* is broader and more nebulous than our definition of the term "religion." The Roman semantic range encompassed rites, auspices, prophetic interpretation, *haruspices* in response to portents and omens, and it was imperative that these

¹⁸³ This inferiority is noted in Cicero's *Ad Herennium* 4.43: "Italy cannot be beaten in arms, nor Greece in learning;" Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, Harry Caplan (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1954).

¹⁸⁴ Cicero, *De Legibus* 3.31.

¹⁸⁵ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays*, 2 Vols., *Ancient Orators*, Stephen Usher (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1974), preface.

should not be neglected to preserve Rome's greatness through the good will of the immortal gods.¹⁸⁶

This classical conception of Roman religion was a community of citizens that included both humanity and gods in the same space and time.¹⁸⁷ Religion, as espoused by Varro and Cicero, was a network of social obligations and actions of gods and humans, of having regard for one another, driven by *pietas*, devotion, or piety. The ethnic elevation of piety was plain to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, "To understand the success of the Romans, you must understand their piety."¹⁸⁸ Conversation regarding a god's *munera* utilized Roman political and legal concepts of obligation, action, and relationships within communities and states between hierarchical social groups, based upon reciprocal benefaction.¹⁸⁹

In its early history, Rome's gods were not represented by images, but they were worshipped in temples not containing images. "And in like manner Numa forbade the Romans to revere an image of God which had the form of man or beast. Nor was there among them in this earlier time any painted or graven likeness of Deity, but while for the first hundred and seventy years they were continually building temples and establishing sacred shrines, they made no statues in bodily form for them, convinced that it was impious to liken higher things to lower, and that it was impossible to apprehend Deity except by the intellect."¹⁹⁰

Those among recipients of the letter from Paul familiar with Rome's earliest traditions of religious piety would have recognized the apparent similarities with its critique of worship of deity with "images of mortal humans" or "four-footed creatures."¹⁹¹

As Cicero expounded, "For devotion (*pietas*) is justice towards the gods, but what system of justice can there be for us with them, if there is no community of human with god? *Sanctitas*, piety, virtue, honor, or holiness is the knowledge of giving the gods their due...."¹⁹² The soul

¹⁸⁶ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 3.5; Clifford Ando, 'Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge in Classical Rome' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 1-15, (2-3).

¹⁸⁷ Ando, 'Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge', 3.

¹⁸⁸ Ogilvie, *The Romans and Their Gods*, 8.

¹⁸⁹ Clifford Ando, 'Introduction to Part IV: Theology' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 141-146, (144; 144, n. 15).

¹⁹⁰ Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives, Numa* 8.7-8 in Plutarch, *Lives, Vol. 1, Theseus and Romulus. Lycurgus and Numa. Solon and Publicola*, Bernadotte Perrin (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1914).

¹⁹¹ Romans 1:22-23.

¹⁹² Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.115-116.

of Roman religious practice of worship was piety, *pietas*. Livy summarized this Roman ethnic characteristic in early traditional practice, “[The Romans] constant preoccupation with the gods ... had so imbued all their hearts with piety that it was regarded for promises and oaths by which the state was governed in place of fear of the laws and punishment.”¹⁹³

The idea of giving gods their due was more than ceremonial worship, for the core practice for relationships between gods and men was characterized and descriptively defined as *ius*, justice. Dyck points out that citing Cicero and Epicurus that *sanctitas* or *pietas* was the science of what made a person faithful and observant of what was just or righteous in relationship to deity.¹⁹⁴ Justice was systemically governed by law which was often termed “natural law” (*ius naturale*) or “the law of the nations” (*ius gentium*).¹⁹⁵ Romans practised rites and behaviors by law and ritual that rendered to the gods proper piety, *pietas* and the gods, in justice *ius*, returned the highest expression of their *fides*, faith, loyalty, and goodwill within the communal relationship with humanity.¹⁹⁶

In turn, human *fides*, faith seemed to underlie Cicero’s *Republic*, when at its conclusion in the *Somnium Scipionis*, the ancestor, Scipio Africanus appears in a dream to Scipio Aemilianus and advised him to practise *iustitia*, justice and *pietas*, piety with a promise of immortality and eternal life in the celestial realms.¹⁹⁷ Thus, we may conclude that Roman “theology” was expressed in social constructs describing the relationships in the community of gods and humanity.

Cicero’s comparative argument in regard to ethnic practice of religion was straightforward. “If we care to compare our national characteristics with those of foreign peoples, we shall find that, while in all other respects we are only the equals or even the inferiors of others, yet in the sense of religion, that is, in reverence for the gods, we are far superior.”¹⁹⁸ Later he

¹⁹³ Livy, 1.21.1; Gordon, ‘From Republic to Principate’, 67.

¹⁹⁴ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Natura Deorum Book 1*, Andrew Roy Dyck (ed.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003), 196.

¹⁹⁵ Gaius, *Institutes* 1.1 in Gaius and W.M. Gordon, *The Institutes of Gaius*, W.M. Gordon and O.F. Robinson (trans.), (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1988); A. Berger, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1953), s.v. ‘ius gentium’ and ‘ius naturale’; Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge’, 5.

¹⁹⁶ Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge’, 11.

¹⁹⁷ Arnaldo Momigliano, ‘The Theological Efforts of the Roman Upper Classes in the First Century BC’ in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 147-163, (155-156).

¹⁹⁸ *Et si conferre volumus nostra cum externis, ceteris rebus aut pares aut etiam inferiores reperiuntur, religione id est cultu deorum multo superiores.* Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.3.8.

was more blunt. “We Romans are far superior in *religio*, by which I mean the worship of the gods (*cultus deorum*).”¹⁹⁹

The fear of Cicero and other elite Romans was that *pietas* would be neglected.²⁰⁰ Lack of pious worship threatened Roman ethnic and moral ascendancy, and her survival. Cicero mourned the neglected practice of auguries, auspices, and loss of respect for the gods by the Roman elite. “But by the negligence of the nobility the discipline of augury has been dropped, and the true practice of auspices is spurned, and only its appearance retained. And so most functions of the state, including warfare on which its safety depends, are administered without auspices....By contrast, religion had such force for our ancestors, that some of them ritually veiled their heads and vowed their lives to the immortal gods for the republic.”²⁰¹

In relation to this decline in Roman religious practice, Cicero praised Varro for reinforcing piety in relation to the gods and ancestors. “He feared the gods should perish, not by enemy invasion, but by the negligence of citizens, and he claimed that this was the doom from which he was rescuing them, and that it was a more useful service that things should be stored away and preserved in the memory of good men through books of this type, than when Metellus is said to have rescued the sacred objects of the Vestals from burning, or Aeneas to have saved the *penates* from the sack of Troy.”²⁰²

During the foundation of empire, Augustus continued the restoration of Roman religion, and was perceived as the model for lived Roman piety. He became an augur between 42 and 40 BCE, a member of the Fifteen Men in perhaps 37. He collected the Sibylline oracles, the most important prophecies of Rome, and housed them in the Palatine temple of Apollo incorporated into his home in 28.²⁰³ In turn, he burned 2,000 books in the Forum considered spurious, to preserve true prophecies.²⁰⁴ As Potter notes, “Prophecy provided a crucial medium for the description of power in the Roman world. Prophecy of all sorts enabled people to understand their relationship with the immanent powers of the

¹⁹⁹ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.8; Valerie M. Warrior, *Roman Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2006), 2.

²⁰⁰ Ogilvie, *The Romans and Their Gods*, 112-114.

²⁰¹ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.9-10.

²⁰² Cicero, fr 2A= Augustine, *City of God*, 6.2.48, in Augustine, *City of God*, 6 Vols., E.M. Stafford and W.M. Green (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1965).

²⁰³ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 81-83.

²⁰⁴ Suetonius, *Augustus* 31; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 95.

universe...Prophecy was intimately involved in the history of communities; it helped spell out their relationship with the gods. It provided a means for expressing community identity; people kept, read, interpreted, and reinterpreted prophetic books as a way of finding out who they were, and what events beyond their control really meant to them.²⁰⁵

Augustus was the living representative who was the publicly proclaimed modeler of Rome's virtues and prophetic fulfillment, memorialized by the golden shield dedicated to him in the Curia Julia in 27 BCE, set up because of his *virtus*, virtue, *clementia*, mercy, *iustitia*, righteousness, and *pietas*. These values were to be emulated by Rome's populace.²⁰⁶ That Judeans adapted this practice of honor and virtues is apparent. Similar shields, perhaps honoring Augustus, Tiberius, and Gaius, are mentioned by Philo, hung in Judean synagogues.²⁰⁷

Rome's Augustan religious reordering included establishing a set calendar for observance across the empire by renaming months, adding new holy days and celebrations to standardize religious practice.²⁰⁸ The annual cycle of festivals, sacrifices, commemorations and purifications reminded all in Rome of its ancientness, history, and relationship with the gods, that embedded *Romanitas* inextricably with ethnic superiority claims.²⁰⁹ Augustan pontifical and social authority cemented the changes and universalized them for imperial comparison, celebration, and local interaction with other peoples.²¹⁰

The height of Augustan restoration of right relationship with the gods and unification of these universal values, deities, and piety in relation to Roman superiority was the *Ludi Saeculares* in 17 BCE.²¹¹ During three nights of private, isolated sacrifice to the Fates, the *Ilthyae* and the Great Mother, Augustus officiated over archaic Roman *religio* to renew

²⁰⁵ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 213.

²⁰⁶ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 34, Lily Ross Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (Middletown, CT: Scholars, repr 1931), 161.

²⁰⁷ Philo, *Volume X, Legatio ad Gaium, On the Embassy to Gaius*, F.H. Colson (trans.), Rev. J.W. Earp, (contrib.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1962), 133.

²⁰⁸ An example is the calendar at Ostia, including newly renamed months and festival days for Augustus. See Henry Thomas Rowell, *Rome in the Augustan Age* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1962), 154; Gordon, 'From Republic to Principate', 68-69.

²⁰⁹ For a compelling example of the Roman cycle of time see Mary Beard, 'A Complex of Time: No More Sheep on Romulus' Birthday' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 273-288, (287-288).

²¹⁰ Wallace-Hadrill, 'Mutatio morum', 17-18.

²¹¹ Denis Feeney, 'The Ludi Saeculares and the Carmen Saeculare' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 106-116, (107-108).

Rome's divinely ordained safety, prosperity and victory, through personal prayer and expiation of Rome's past wrongs, to mark the arrival of a new age. On consecutive days, he sacrificed and prayed to Jupiter and Juno in public ceremony, and on the final day to Apollo and Diana, in the Palatine Temple of Apollo.²¹²

Horace memorialized these events of religious reform, renewed piety, and deification of virtues integral to religious reform. Faith, peace, modesty, and honor were the restated core of relationship with deity and humanity in this moment of Rome's rededication: "There is Trust (Faith) now, and Peace, Honor, and Chastity; ancient Virtue, long neglected, dares to return, and rich Abundance is amongst us with full horn."²¹³

By 13 BCE, Augustus was a member of the college of Seven Men, of the college of Pontiffs, and in 12 became *pontifex maximus*. Augustus also renewed the archaic priesthoods and rites, becoming an Arval brother, a member of the Titus Tatius sodality, and a fetial priest.²¹⁴ He encouraged other leading Roman nobility to fill other priesthoods and offices, including the high priesthood of Jupiter in 11 BCE. Just as importantly, he restored and preserved the sanctity and respect for the Vestal Virgins. These Augustan attentions re-established Rome's self-perceived historical, religious, and moral superiority. They were supported and continued by his successors, especially Claudius.

In summary, Roman religion was not separated from virtues and values. Piety in relation to the gods, and proper practice of religion were intrinsic to moral virtue depicted as passionate and living religious experience.²¹⁵ Rome's virtues embodied the path to right relations with the gods, and for humanity to achieve the most intimate relations with deity. Cicero, like other Roman authors, upheld the worship of virtues as divine characteristics, embedded within Roman culture and ethnic identity, as personal religious experience, with an invocation to worship not only "those who have always lived in heaven" but also "those qualities through which an ascent to heaven is granted to man: Intellect, Virtue, Piety,

²¹² Rowell, *Rome in the Augustan Age*, 156-159. Also Augustus, *Res Gestae* 19.

²¹³ Horace, *Secular Hymn* 57-60 in Quintus Horatius Flaccus (Horace), and David West, *The Complete Odes and Epodes*, David West (trans.), (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000); Ogilvie, *The Romans and Their Gods*, 118.

²¹⁴ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 7, 8; Also Rowell, *Rome in the Augustan Age*, 180-181; Gordon, 'From Republic to Principate', 66-67.

²¹⁵ Hans-Friedrich Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus* (London: Routledge, 2002), 17-19.

Faith.”²¹⁶ These virtues were deified in Rome, so that good men “may believe that the gods are established within their own souls”; with addition of “things which we should desire, such as Health, Honor, Wealth, and Victory.”²¹⁷

The pursuit of *pax deorum*, piety, morals, and virtues did not end with Augustus. Valerius Maximus provides clear evidence that Romans continued to practise religious piety, virtues and values core to perceived moral superiority in comparison to Greeks and other ethnicities into the 30-50s CE.

One aspect of Roman religious superiority was that Rome legislated their place and actions. Traditional Romans resisted foreign cults and worked to preserve Roman religion, yet simultaneously intertwined Roman religious deities with other ‘foreign’ cults.²¹⁸ However, in a push for ethnic purity, Valerius Maximus described “superstitions” as beliefs in foreign “impious” religions, or practices that did not match Roman tradition. “Superstitions” included Dionysius’ Bacchic rites, “foreign auspices,” astrology (*Chaldaei*), Judean worship, or worship of Jupiter Sabazius and that of “Egyptian” Isis and Serapis.²¹⁹ Valerius’ categorizations were not new inventions, but a traditional restatement of religious and moral examples that illuminated Rome’s values. Non-Roman religion and values were “pretend” religious observation, which may appear ethnically Roman but were not. More suspicious than the “pretend” religions were those considered “superstitions.” The “superstitions,” foreign gods, and rites fell under management and oversight of the Roman Senate and the pontiffs, including the emperors.²²⁰

Additionally, the Senate and pontiffs oversaw inclusion or legalization of new gods worshipped in Rome. They regulated how worship of foreign gods and superstitions were practised in provincial cities and over cults that spread between and throughout cities and provinces.²²¹ One example of Senatorial regulation of lands, offerings, and denial or

²¹⁶ Cicero, *Laws* 2.19.9; Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 20-21.

²¹⁷ Cicero, *Laws* 2.28.13; Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 20-21.

²¹⁸ Simon Price, ‘Religions of Rome’ in *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City*, Jon Coulston and Hazel Dodge, (eds.), Oxford University School of Archaeology Monograph 54 (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2005), 290-305, (290-298).

²¹⁹ Valerius Maximus, 1.3; D. Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Memorable Deeds and Sayings Book 1* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 39.

²²⁰ Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 149.

²²¹ This would include a range of cults and sites of religious importance from the Artemision, the Jerusalem Temple, and Delphi. Gregory Woolf, “Polis-Religion and its Alternatives in the Roman Provinces” in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 39-57.

recognition of claimed deities is that of Amphiaraus in Achaëa, whose deification was denied, thus leaving his sacred lands open to Roman taxation.²²² The suppression of the Bacchic cult by the Senate in 186 BCE, as “a Greek rite,” provides a second example of a “foreign” cult that presumably caused secret conspiracies, drunkenness, immorality, and criminality, as unapproved foreign rites.²²³ The suppression was enacted by Senatorial law and decree, regulating the cult, its rites and practice – but only those aspects that impacted private and public activity that effected society, and not the worship practice or rites themselves.²²⁴ Roman religion was superior due to legislating other religious practice.

1.2.4.9 *Mos Maiorum*: Valerius Maximus: Assertions of Roman Ethnic Purity Superior to Hellenicity

Literature continued to reshape Roman values and negotiate “Romanness” as ethnic identity and superiority under the Julio-Claudian emperors. An author deeply involved in the ongoing cultural redefinition during Tiberius’ reign was Valerius Maximus. His *Factorum Et Dictorum Memorabilium* was completed no later than 31 CE.²²⁵ The nine-book collection compiled historical anecdotes for use in Roman rhetoric and education as *exempla* of Rome’s *mos maiorum*. They are an example of a composite moral genre that contain Roman tradition, culture, behavior, ethics, values and religion as codified moral instruction, similar to his predecessor Cicero, and later expanded and expounded by Seneca, Lucan, Quintilian and Plutarch.²²⁶

Valerius provided ethnic insight into the Tiberian world and strengthened contemporary culture by illustrations drawn from historical figures, organized by topics and values core to Roman identity.²²⁷ For Valerius and other Romans in the Tiberian era, any attempt to innovate the elements of Roman ethnicity needed to be thoroughly justified by reuse of

²²² Clifford Ando, “Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge”, 1-15, (6-7).

²²³ Livy, 39.8.3-7; 39.15-16; 39.18.7-9; John North, “Religious Toleration in Republican Rome” in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 199-219, (201-208).

²²⁴ Clifford Ando, “Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge”, 1-15, (9-10).

²²⁵ For argument of completion during the reign of Tiberius, post 31 CE, see Martin Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and the Rhetoric of the New Nobility* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, 1992), 1, n. 1. Also Clive Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen: The Work of Valerius Maximus* (Exeter, Devon, UK: Exeter University, 1996), xv. Also Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 1-6.

²²⁶ For Seneca the Elder’s parallel uses of Valerius’ *exempla* see Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 13-14. Regarding Seneca the Younger, Quintilian, and Plutarch see Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 13-27, (16, 23, 26). In regards to Cicero as source of moral examples for Valerius, see Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 190-204, 230-259.

²²⁷ Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 1-5.

ancient custom and history to establish revised social, moral, and religious legitimacy.²²⁸ Valerius expounded on moral propriety, and detailed the proper interpretation and application of each account as Roman virtue.²²⁹ The books were part of the Tiberian imperial and Roman elite process of espousment and promotion of Roman values, imitating Augustus' personal practice of collecting and distributing examples of moral teaching and admonition to the public, members of his household, and others in imperial leadership. "In reading the writers of both tongues (Greek and Latin) there was nothing for which he looked so carefully as precepts and examples instructive to the public or to individuals; these he would often copy word for word, and send to members of his household, or to his generals and provincial governors, whenever any of them required admonition."²³⁰

Bloomer proposes Valerius' work formed a common cultural repository not only for elite reading, but also for immigrating provincials, Italians, and other non-Romans keen on imitation of their patrons' and benefactors' "Romanness" – as Rome's potential new elite.²³¹ Skidmore challenges Bloomer, asserting the books focus on matters pertinent to Roman elite families and Valerius' works were for private recitation at a dinner party or within the realm of the *paterfamilias* and his immediate family, read to elite audiences by a trained orator.²³²

However, recollection that many who came to Rome seeking patrons or clients became friends that surrounded dinner tables may mix both views. Their purpose emerges in their grouped sections that portray the proper aspects of Roman elite culture in relation to religion, values, behavior, and ethics for all those – elite, Roman or otherwise – who desired to live Roman ideals.

Book one contains anecdotes of the highest moral and religious value; reverence for the gods, insincere reverence or contempt, divine acts to reveal the will of the gods, and men's actions to honor the gods through proper ceremony and morality. Book two builds on the supremacy of Roman reverence, and the value of following ancestral custom. Books three to six detail public, private, and familial moral behaviors and values. Books seven and eight consist of

²²⁸ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 7.

²²⁹ Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 8-9, 11. Also Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 53-82, (53-55, 80-82).

²³⁰ Suetonius, *Augustus*, 89.2, translated by J.C. Rolfe, in Clive Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen: The Work of Valerius Maximus* (Exeter, Devon, UK: Exeter University, 1996), 20.

²³¹ Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 12-13. Also Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 12-13.

²³² Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 103-112, (105, 108-109).

adages and circumstances regarding public policy, oratory and legal circumstances of wills, and errata which did not fit Valerius' other groupings. He ended book eight by returning to the greatest pursuit of Roman elite life, achieving glory, and the rewards of virtuous, moral living. Book nine provided a final moral comparison, depicting the vices of immoral life and their tragic results.²³³

Valerius' use and application of *exempla* provide insight into idealized views of pure Roman ethnicity. While drawn from a number of sources, it is clear for Valerius, as for Livy who preceded him, that Roman examples are superior and preferable to others.²³⁴ He encouraged all, no matter ethnicity, rank, or status, to pursue and live Roman morals and virtue to achieve resultant honor and glory.

“These examples originated from lofty and educated minds; the next example however, no less praiseworthy, a slave's mind conceived. A barbarian slave.... So virtue, once aroused, is not disdainful in admitting men, and allows vigorous characters to approach. Nor does it offer a generous or grudging taste of itself according to distinction of personal status, but it is accessible to all on an equal basis, and values you rather by how much you desire for virtue than by how much status you possess.”²³⁵

Valerius despised Greek ethnicity, morals, and ethnic identity. In *Factorum*, Roman examples of moral virtue were superior to Greek morals or philosophy.²³⁶ Like Seneca the Elder, Valerius condemned Greek language use in Roman public life, going so far as to avoid Greek words in his work, and apologized for use of a Greek term in a section heading.

“How carefully the magistrates of old regulated their conduct to keep intact the majesty of the Roman people and their own.... to preserve dignity they steadfastly kept to the rule never to make replies to Greeks except in Latin. Not that they were deficient in attention to

²³³ For a brief outline of Valerius's works see Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, xii-xiv. For a detailed description, see Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 17-28.

²³⁴ “For in history you have record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all to see; and in that record you can find for yourself and your country (Rome) both examples and warnings; fine things to take as models, base things, rotten through and through, to avoid No country has ever been greater or purer than ours or richer in good citizens and noble deeds.” Livy, 1.10, translated by A. de Selincourt, in Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 14-15. Also, see Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 28.

²³⁵ Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings*, LCL, 3.3.ext.7; Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 88.

²³⁶ Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 24.

polite studies, but they held that in all matters whatsoever the Greek cloak should be subordinate to the Roman gown, thinking it unmeet that the weight and authority of empire be sacrificed to the seductive charm of letters.”²³⁷

In 1.1.12, he noted a collection of Greek philosophy and Latin priestly law books were discovered, the Latin books were preserved, and the Greek burned to avoid “the destruction of religion.” After noting a “pointless” myth of Greek friendship, Valerius proclaimed: “These are the genuine proofs of Roman friendship, to look upon the blood of friends mingled together, wounds embracing wounds, death united with death. Those Greek tales are but the fairy stories, which are like something against nature, of a race of habitual liars.”²³⁸

Valerius’ further proclamation of Roman ethnic, social and moral superiority over Greek ethnicity and learning appear in 2.1.10 and 2.10.3 “The elders used to declaim at banquets the recorded achievements of their ancestors in song to the sound of the flute, to make young men more eager to imitate them. What could be more fine or more useful than this competition? Youth bestowed due honor on the greybeards, the generation whose strength was spent by age gave the support of their goodwill to those entering the prime of their active lives. What Greek learning, what philosophical school, what foreign courses of study could I prefer to this Roman method of instruction?”²³⁹ Valerius was not just anti-Hellenic, but deemed all foreigners as ethnically inferior. “Foreign examples” were included in his work for entertainment. “So I shall mention foreign examples which have been included in Latin literature; although they possess less authority, they can offer some welcome variety.”²⁴⁰

Furthermore, Valerius condemned individual Greek claims of descent from the gods. He disparaged Alexander as an example of foreign arrogance (*superbia*) and impropriety, who fraudulently claimed descent from a “false” Jupiter Hammon. This spurious claim of divine attributes was contrasted with Valerius’ true divine-men – the divine Augustus and Tiberius.²⁴¹ Alexander was further criticized for his rejection of ethnic Macedonian customs

²³⁷ Valerius Maximus 2.2.2. Also Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 40-43, 238, 27. Seneca the Elder wrote “All that Roman eloquence has to rival or excel impudent Greece flourished about Cicero...” *Controversiae*. 1.pr.6-7 in Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 196.

²³⁸ Valerius Maximus 4.7.4, translated in Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 95-96.

²³⁹ Translated in Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 60.

²⁴⁰ Valerius Maximus, 1.6.ext.1. Also in 2.10.ext.1, ‘Some space must also be given to foreign examples, so that, sprinkled among the Roman anecdotes, they may entertain by their very variety.’ as translated in Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen*, 89-90.

²⁴¹ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 95.

and cults and adopting foreign Persian customs, a moral *exemplum* to ethnic Romans to not abandon their own customs and way of life in multi-ethnic Rome.

He argued that the roles and responsibilities of priests and priestesses – members of the four primary colleges and priesthoods – were central to right relationship with the gods, the core of Rome’s well-being.²⁴² He reaffirmed Roman religious beliefs, morals, roles, and actions performed by its priests and political leadership. His work preserved present piety in practice and laid a foundation for future religious and moral behavior, to preserve and strengthen Rome and its *mos maiorum*.²⁴³

Valerius criticized religiously inferior or improprietary foreigners who figure in pretended Roman worship. Marius used a Syrian woman, “a sacrificing priestess” who carried out augury on his behalf. That she is Syrian, female, and filling a role of a Roman priest added to the implied vice and highlights the issue of ethnic inferiority. Additionally, Roman Marius was impious for not following Roman tradition.²⁴⁴

Roman moral and social superiority by not practising vices was characterized in Valerius’ works. And he was concerned about sin. In 6.9.6, Valerius chided Sulla who had “led a life of debauchery, stained with lust, drink, and the theater” who was considered by the consul C. Marius as “effeminate.”²⁴⁵ Again, we find echoes of moral critique similar to that in Romans 1:26-32, and values which are comparable to Romans 13:13.

Romans may abuse other Romans, but are not cruel to provincials or foreigners. “Foreign” *exempla* illustrate horrible cruelty inflicted on Romans, or a combination of foreigners and Romans.²⁴⁶ Hannibal and the Carthaginians, Mithridates, Greeks, Etruscans and barbarians are among those inflicting “foreign” cruelty.²⁴⁷ Valerius contrasted “foreign” cruelty with an example of Roman justice from the war with Pyrrhus, in which the Roman Senate was given opportunity to poison Pyrrhus, yet honorably refused an “unjust” act.²⁴⁸ Roman cleverness

²⁴² Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 117-118.

²⁴³ Clifford Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge’, 1-2.

²⁴⁴ Valerius Maximus, 1.2.3a, in Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 38.

²⁴⁵ Translation from Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 170-171.

²⁴⁶ Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 48-49.

²⁴⁷ Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 49-50.

²⁴⁸ “When this was reported to the senate, envoys were sent to warn the king to be more cautious for plots of this kind, for the senate bore in mind that a city founded by the son of Mars ought to wage war by arms, not poison. Moreover the senate suppressed the name of Timochares, pursuing a policy of justice to both parties

was depicted as a divinely inspired virtue, but when practised by Carthaginians, was labeled cunning, and infamous vice.²⁴⁹ Finally, “the monstrosity of wild barbarism” was Valerius’ assessment of Sejanus’ suspected treason against Tiberius, which taught how horrible it was to scheme against the emperor, descended from the gods.²⁵⁰

Valerius’ Roman moral values, wrapped within religion and tradition, provide insight into Tiberian action regarding the Judeans, and are pertinent to interpreting Paul’s Romans. Valerius espoused Roman morals which included chastity, faithfulness in marriage, and purity toward youth, all apparently highly valued by their being consecrated by Vesta and Juno, violated in 19 CE.²⁵¹ Of particular interest to understanding Roman ideals of severity in upholding virtue is the execution of women by their own families as severe retribution for the shame of impurity and misconduct in the Bacchanalian rites, the superstition previously derided in 1.3.²⁵² This severe response demonstrates the value placed on sobriety in 6.2.*ext.* 1, and 6.3.9, as an essential moral value both in public judgment and in the family.²⁵³ Romans 7:1-4 and the married woman’s *exemplum* may have been heard by its audience in Rome against this backdrop of conservative Roman moral and legal tradition.

In summary, Valerius presents us with claims of Roman ethnic superiority through examples of religious, moral, social, and ethnic virtues. Valerian moral *exempla* were intended to be read and taught in Rome, at home, or for group discussion.²⁵⁴ The exemplary morals and great men were to be imitated by Romans, not only, as Cicero pointed out, the characteristics of Rome’s traditional gods or deified morals, but also the Caesars, who “were not gods only in theory, but were living, present, and powerful deities.”²⁵⁵ That the Caesars were religiously and emotionally received as gods to be emulated is clear in Valerius’ description

because it did not wish an evil precedent either in destroying an enemy or in betraying one who had been prepared to serve Rome well.” Valerius Maximus 6.5.1, translation from Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 129.

²⁴⁹ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 89-90.

²⁵⁰ Valerius 9.11.*ext.* 4 in Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 3; Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 13-17

²⁵¹ Valerius 6.1, in Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Vol II*, 3.

²⁵² Valerius 6.3.7, in Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Vol II*, 39.

²⁵³ Valerius writes: “Their severity was aroused to exact punishment by a heinous crime, that of Egnatius Mecennius, by a much slighter cause. He cudgelled his wife to death because she had drunk wine. His action found none to prosecute or even to reprehend it. All agreed that the penalty she paid to injured Sobriety was an excellent precedent. And true it is that any female who seeks the use of wine past moderation closes the door to every virtue and opens it to every sin.” Valerius Maximus, in Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Vol II*, 39.

²⁵⁴ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 6-8.

²⁵⁵ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 17.

of their veneration with “gladness, joy, even ecstasy (and widespread at that) among a celebrating populace.”²⁵⁶

Valerius portrayed Greeks and other foreigners as ethnically inferior to Romans except when they embodied Roman values and way of life, more than their own culture. Thus, Valerius Maximus’ examples of moral virtues are pertinent to reading the epistle of Romans as literature espousing Roman values, and as literature that demonstrated ethnic construction and negotiation from a Roman perspective, to promote Rome’s ethnic purity. Valerius presented ethnic self-definition, which highlighted religion, honor, faith, piety, and righteousness while loathing pride, boasting, arrogance, and sin in relation to worship of the gods, as further detailed in chapter 3.

1.2.4.10 Conclusions Regarding Roman Ethnic Superiority Assertions

This section has discussed Roman ethnicity definition and idealization. It has argued that, primarily, the Roman elite engaged in *mos maiorum* creation. What the Roman elite said, were, and did, became the ethnic identity of Rome, of being Roman, and part of Romanization.

In descriptions of “being Roman,” we have used categories, anecdotes, or examples of how Romans defined their culture. Rome drew upon its ancient past and peoples by adoption and adaptation of ancestral ideals and practices to create Roman ethnicity. It was a composite of characteristics and traditions of founders, ethnic origins, and population groups that coalesced through time. A Roman interacted with the foundation story of Rome, its gods, ancestors, and emperors honored as those who had granted Rome greatness. Roman ethnic identity included adoption of some aspects of the Roman calendar, its cycle of festivals, worship, and historical enactments, even as it evolved with the inclusion of new holy days and months for celebrating its divine emperors, in addition to one’s own communal and ethnically focused calendar. Being Roman was a malleable ethnicity molded and continuously reshaped in the late Republic and early empire.

²⁵⁶ Valerius 8.13.*init*; 8.15.*init*; Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 17-19.

Being Roman was accepting Rome as the greatest city of the greatest world empire. It included recognition that the architecture, structures, temples, and functions of municipal operations in Rome were superior in size or capability to others. Being Roman meant acceptance of her laws as enforceable, even while respecting local law in parts of the empire. Being Roman was often related to using Latin as the language of preferred choice.

We have noted that Hellenism and Roman culture were in daily interaction, cooperation, and competition. Additionally, Rome appropriated Greek culture in recognition of its ancient value. Nevertheless, it ‘Romanized’ Greek education as part of being a Roman. It subsumed Greek ideas, thought, philosophy, and incorporated it into Roman education and values. Roman practice of Hellenism was an element of cultural conquest, altering it into an aspect of being Roman. Rome did not acculturate to being Greek, but adapted components that served their purposes. Romans engaged in an ongoing process of adaptation, assimilation, adoption, and resistance of Hellenism and other ethnicities’ characteristics. It did so in relation to a host of dynamic forces of change, as depicted in Appendix 1, Figure 3.

Finally, being Roman was living values espoused as the essentials of character, thought, emotion, and behavior in Rome. These cultural ideals were summarized by Augustus as *virtus* (excellence), *clementia* (mercy), *iustitia* (justice/righteousness), and *pietas* (piety/faithfulness), which brought the greatest honor to oneself, family, city, and the Roman people. The pursuit of Roman honor brought the highest personal glory, and gained for emperors and others, a place in the heavens. Yet these idealizations of Roman values and virtues did not end with Valerius. Roman values and *mos maiorum* were still paramount in Rome when the epistle of Romans was received by its initial readers.

1.3 The Roman Definition of Barbarians

Being “barbarian” (*barbaros*) in Roman thought was a nebulous idea that used similar stereotypes as earlier Greeks. Barbarians were often labeled with variable degrees of foreignness or alien-ness, in both ethnicity and religion. Barbarian influence on and in Rome was considered as ethnically and religiously inferior.

Some barbarian peoples were well known and characterized in Rome. In waging war with Rome, the Parthians were described as having divided the world with Rome in contention for

its power and glory.²⁵⁷ During Tiberius' reign, ethnography portrayed the Parthian king as boasting with "arrogant language and threats" to invade the Roman Empire.²⁵⁸ Stereotypes of Parthians portrayed them as having no standing army, invincible within their territory but not outside it, and when assembled consisted mostly of slaves, and descendants of barbarian Scythians.²⁵⁹ Trogus added that Parthians wore loose, flowing robes, criticized by Lucan in his epic poem and seen as effeminate and a symbol of soft living.²⁶⁰ Drunkenness was a Parthian attribute.²⁶¹ Parthians were barbarian polygamists, and Trogus went on to proclaim, "The character of the race is arrogant, seditious, untrustworthy, and shameless."²⁶² Parthians were asserted to be inferior in comparison to Roman military might, virtues, and certainly, her way of life.

This litany of treachery, rebellion, and lying is a typical description of barbarians on the edges of empire. Drunkenness was deemed common practice among the Scythians, Gauls, and Germans. In religion, these "barbarians" do not worship the gods or make images of them, lack laws, and most importantly do not possess Roman civilization and virtues.²⁶³ Seneca echoed these external barbarian stereotypes in comparative moral values. One characteristic that shattered the barbarians in campaigns against Rome was "anger, the most inimical quality of themselves." He portrayed them lacking the Roman virtues of reason and discipline, rushing into war "disorganized, unafraid, and reckless."²⁶⁴

²⁵⁷ See Strabo 11.9.2: "and now they (Parthia) rule over so much land and so many peoples, that in a way they have become rivals of the Romans in the size of their empire."; Cassius Dio 40.14.3: "they finally advanced so much in glory and power that they then made war even on the Romans, and ever since have always considered them their rivals."

²⁵⁸ Tacitus, *Annals*, 6.31.

²⁵⁹ For standing army see Herodian, *History of the Empire, Vol. 1, Books 1-4*, C.R. Whittaker (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1969), 3.1.2; Trogus 41.2 in Marcus Junianus Justinus (Justin), *Epitome of the 'Philippic History' of Pompeius Trogus*, Rev. John Selby Watson (trans.), (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853); Tacitus, *Annals*, 1.11.4. Slaves: Trogus 41.2.5-6; Plutarch, *Lives, Vol. 3, Pericles and Fabius Maximus. Nicias and Crassus*, Bernadotte Perrin (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1914), *Crassus*, 21.6; Scythians: Horace, *Carmen*, 4.14.41-43 in Horace, West, *Complete Odes and Epodes*; Strabo 11.9.2, Mela 3.33 in Pomponius Mela, Frank E. Romer, *Mela's Description of the World (De Chorographia)*, F.E. Romer (trans.), (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1998); Trogus 41.1, Lucan 8.295-302 in M. Anneus Lucan, *The Civil War*, J.D. Duff (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1928).

²⁶⁰ Trogus 41.2.4; Lucan 8.397-401, 8.363-368.

²⁶¹ Pliny, *Natural History*, H. Rackham, W.H.S. Jones, A.C. Andrews, and D.E. Eichholz (trans.) 10 Vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1938-62), 14.144, 148.

²⁶² Polygamous: Trogus 40.3.1; Lucan 8.397-401. Character: Trogus 41.3.

²⁶³ Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 66-77.

²⁶⁴ Seneca, *On Anger*, in Seneca, *Moral Essays I: De Providentia, De Constantia, De Ira, De Clementia*, John W. Basore (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1928), 1.11.1-4, 3.2.6; Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 79-80, 203-204.

Within the empire, barbarians carried similar ethnographic stigma as external barbarians, depending on the speaker and the relationship to the ethnic group being stereotyped. Strabo, for example, used the traditional Greek-barbarian typology, in which the Romans and empire were the civilizing influence of society.²⁶⁵

Van Der Vliet asserts that Strabo considered peoples, now within the empire, as previously *barbaroi*, including former non-Greek inhabitants of Italy and Sicily. Strabo characterized the *barbaroi* as being non-Greek, poor, robbers, uncivilized, lacking self-control, or moderation.²⁶⁶ This contrasted with the characteristics of being civilized (previously Greek and now Roman), which call for a civilized way of life (*bioi*), customs (*ethe*), language, appearance and communal or political organization, focused on the strength and longevity of rule, constitution or laws.²⁶⁷ However, Greeks could call Romans, “barbarians.” Cato commented on Greeks in Rome, “[The Greeks] have sworn a sacred oath amongst themselves to kill all barbarians (*barbari*) with their “medicine”; and what is more they do it for a fee.”²⁶⁸

Dionysius of Halicarnassus succinctly summarized a Greek perspective of this ethnic negotiation, “Notwithstanding the influx into Rome of foreigners who are under great obligation to worship their ancestral gods in accordance with the customs of their own countries, the city has never officially emulated any foreign practices. But even though Rome has imported certain rites on the recommendation of oracles, she celebrates them in accordance with her own traditions, banishing all mythical mumbo-jumbo.”²⁶⁹

The quote exemplifies the competitive negotiation of religion, and ethnicity by Romans, foreigners, such as Greeks, Egyptians, and Judeans, and barbarians. Dionysius depicted Rome resistant to direct assimilation or acculturation of “foreign” religion or other ethnic practice into the recognized Roman way of life. Some aspects of Roman ethnicity were considered fundamental and deemed unchangeable, but foreigners resident in Rome may have equally held seemingly non-negotiable ethnic practices, even when deemed barbaric.

²⁶⁵ Edward Ch.L. Van Der Vliet, ‘The Romans and Us: Strabo’s Geography and the Construction of Ethnicity’ in *Mnemosyne*, 56/3, (2003), 261-263.

²⁶⁶ Van der Vliet, ‘The Romans and Us: Strabo’s Geography’, 262-263.

²⁶⁷ Van der Vliet, ‘The Romans and Us: Strabo’s Geography’, 264-265.

²⁶⁸ Cato the Elder, quoted by Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, 29.14

²⁶⁹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 2.19; Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 80.

On the other hand, Dionysius clarified Roman ethnic resistance to assimilation and acculturation of other ethnicities, by stating that Rome adapted her way of life, or adopted foreign practices by incorporating them into being “Roman.” In this adaptation to fit Roman ethnicity, or way of life, some religious elements considered too foreign or barbarian to become part of “Roman ways,” were derisively excluded as what may be termed, resistance to adaptation. If we reverse the perspective, it is apparent that other ethnicities resident in Rome adapted or acculturated Roman ways which shaped their ethnic identities.

In summary, in Rome’s culture terming others barbarous was a way of denigrating others or supporting one’s own ethnic claims. Some barbarian characterizations by Roman writers focused on purported vices of other ethnicities as a negative comparison to Rome’s virtues or ethnicity.²⁷⁰ Proclamation of Roman ethnic conquest superiority over barbarian was prolific – not only in literature, but art, coinage, inscriptions, statues, arches, triumphal marches, public funerals, and for some – by deification.²⁷¹ Rome’s ethnic dominance of barbarians was visualized by statues on porticos representing nations conquered by Rome, to express and impress its superiority on the people of Rome and the world.²⁷²

Encouraging the diverse ethnicities of the empire to become Roman, or be Romanized by imitating her ways, or honoring her place in the world, was an essential element of granting or acquiring honor and glory in the Roman order. This leads us to consider what Romanization, or becoming Roman, might have entailed.

1.4 What Rome Did Was to be Emulated – Romanization or “Becoming Roman”

What *Romanitas* represented has been intensely debated by scholarship. Jones argues that Romanization is a complex process of ethnic identification with the characteristics of Rome, a process of “competitive emulation,” with significant variation occurring in local populations.²⁷³ MacMullen tentatively argues that Romanization is the appearance of

²⁷⁰ Christopher Francese, *Ancient Rome in So Many Words*, (New York: Hippocrene Books, 2007), 130-131.

²⁷¹ Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 168-172.

²⁷² A couple of examples include the *Porticus ad Nationes*, decorated with statues representing conquered nations and possibly included statues of Augustus and other family members. See Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 200-201. Another example honors Pompey’s conquests of fourteen nations, created by Coponius for the Pompeian theater on the Campus Martius. See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, 36.41.

²⁷³ Sian Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing identities in the past and present* (London: Routledge, 1997), 134-135.

evidence one could “find of things newly appearing in the provinces, which are matched by their like, then or earlier, in Italy.”²⁷⁴

However, from my perspective, Romanization is more diffuse given the variety of characteristics of ethnicity in Italy, and how these were adapted or assimilated by various ethnic groups in association with Rome through time. I propose that Romanization is the adoption of the culture and structures of Rome and the Roman people – those characteristics, behaviors, and activities encouraged or modeled by its elite, and emulated, adapted or assimilated by foreigners living in the city, its provinces, and even outside the empire. It is the export of what is the custom in Rome, or encouraged by Rome. I suggest the characteristics of “becoming Roman” or Romanization, fall broadly into the categories of settlement, language, learning, urbanization, daily customs, law, lifestyle, calendar, knowledge, architecture, citizenship, *mores*, and religion. Some of these categorizations are touched on below.

1.4.1 Romanization: Barbarians and Greeks in Italy became Romanized

For Strabo, barbarians in the empire became ‘Roman’ as they adopted the Roman way of life, spoke their language, and assimilated their *politeia* (community structures and laws). Strabo commented on ethnic transitions of south Italian Greeks, who become barbarian through local historical Italian conquest, “but have now become Romans.”²⁷⁵ Strabo provides a view of Romanized barbarians and Greeks who attained Roman citizenship and later, senatorial status. Van der Vliet proposes that Strabo fit this multi-ethnic category, educated as a Greek, likely a Roman citizen, from the non-Roman-client state of Pontus, with possibly barbarian ancestors.²⁷⁶

1.4.2 Romanization: Latin was adopted as an individual or communal language

Roman authors elevated Latin and Greek as socially superior tongues of civilization, by use and literature. However early imperial Roman authors, such as Pliny, often insisted Latin was superior, especially in connection with Roman affairs and as part of being influenced by

²⁷⁴ Ramsay MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus* (New Haven, RI: Yale University, 2000), xi.

²⁷⁵ Strabo, 6.1.2.

²⁷⁶ Van der Vliet, ‘The Romans and Us: Strabo’s Geography’, 269-270.

Rome.²⁷⁷ At times, other ethnicities became bilingual - as they became Romanized.²⁷⁸ Latin was used in the Greek East and was promoted for use in Greek and non-Greek cities.²⁷⁹ Multilingualism was common, often mixing local languages with Latin and/or Greek in Egypt and the Roman East.²⁸⁰

1.4.3 Romanization: Roman education and authors were adopted for local use

In addition, education in regions experiencing Romanization utilized Roman authors and rhetoric, including the works of Virgil, Cicero, Livy, and others to inculcate Roman values, ways of life, and mythical and real Roman history in newly acculturated populations.²⁸¹

1.4.4. Romanization: Assimilation of Roman culture, values, mores, and way of life

Roman *humanitas* and *mos maiorum* were initially adopted by provincial elite, and later by local populations to varying degrees. That the transfer of lifestyle and values was core to Roman views of cultural change and divinely sanctioned impact on shaping their world was vocalized by Jupiter in Virgil: “remember Roman, these are your skills: to rule over peoples, to impose morality, to spare your subjects and to conquer the proud.”²⁸² The assimilation of Roman morals resulted in absorption of Roman values across the empire, while simultaneously efforts were made by some populations to resist Romanization.

²⁷⁷ Pliny the Elder proclaimed that Italy was “a land nourished by all, yet the parent of all lands, chosen by the power of the gods to make even heaven more splendid, to gather the scattered realms and to soften their customs and unite the discordant tongues of so many peoples into a common speech so they might understand each other, and to give civilization to mankind, in short to become the homeland of every people in the entire world.” Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 3.39.

²⁷⁸ Woolf notes use of Latin, Greek and Gallo-Latin and Gallo-Greek inscriptions in Gaul. See Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998, repr. 2003), 54-58, 77-99 (94-96).

²⁷⁹ For Latin use in the Hellenistic East, and Roman aggressiveness in promotion of Latin in Greece, see J. N. Adams, ‘Bilingualism at Delos’ in J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (eds), *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 103-127.

²⁸⁰ For mixed use of Greek and Latin, even by the Roman elite, see Frédérique Biville, ‘The Graeco-Romans and Graeco-Latin’, 77-102. For evidence for mixing and bilingual use of Greek and Demotic in Roman Egypt, see Penelope Fewster, ‘Bilingualism in Roman Egypt’ in J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (eds), *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 220-245.

²⁸¹ Sacrovir takes hostage “the most well-born youth of the (Three) Gauls who were there (in Autun) receiving a proper education.” Tacitus *Annals* 3.43. Strabo comments on Gauls hiring both private and public teachers in major towns. Strabo, 4.1.5.

²⁸² Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid*, 2 Vols., H.R. Fairclough, (trans.), G.P. Goold, (rev.), *LCL* (London: Heineman, 1916, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2001), *Aeneid*, 6.851-3.

Britain's Romanization entailed adoption of Roman temples, residential architecture, competition for honor, education, especially rhetoric, and learning Latin. Also, the Roman toga, forms of leisure, bathhouses, banquets, and unfortunately, vices were embraced.²⁸³ Each of these developments may be perceived as elements of giving "faith" to or keeping "faith" (*fides*) with Rome. Their incorporation into non-Roman lifestyles increased participation in Roman life, gaining citizenship, and finally, under Claudius, the ability of provincials to become Roman senators, and members of the Roman elite.²⁸⁴ The point of Romanization, whether in Italy or the East, was captured in Strabo's observation of the Volcae Arecomici, who "are no longer barbarians, since most of them have been converted to Roman standards of language and lifestyle, and some of civic life too."²⁸⁵

1.4.5 Romanization: Roman architectural elements were adopted

Moreover, the Roman diaspora, both citizens and ethnically Roman, influenced and shaped non-Roman life and behavior across the empire.²⁸⁶ The foundation of new cities, and reconstruction of old incorporated Roman architecture and urban organization in cities such as Ephesus, Caesarea Maritima, Sebaste, Jerusalem, Tiberius, and Sepphoris.²⁸⁷ Provincial organization encouraged formation of local Romanized senates, magistrates, and laws, often detailed in municipal charters. Where city or religious laws already existed, they were enhanced or supplanted by Roman law, governance, and imperial decree.²⁸⁸ These took precedence when the issues of the broader empire came into conflict with local concerns, yet in many cases, local law was respected by imperial governance, creating a reciprocity of cultural exchange.

²⁸³ Tacitus, *Vol. 1, Agricola, Germania, Dialogue on Oratory*, M. Hutton and W. Peterson (trans.), R.M. Ogilvie, E.H. Warmington, and M. Winterbottom (eds.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1914), *Agricola* 21; Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 60-76, (69-71).

²⁸⁴ Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 63-65.

²⁸⁵ Strabo, 4.1.12.

²⁸⁶ Nicholas Purcell, 'Romans in the Roman World,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2005), 85-105.

²⁸⁷ For Romanized urbanization in the Ephesus and provincial Asia, Steven J. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia & the Cult of the Imperial Flavian Family* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 7-28, 57-73. For Roman urbanization and inclusion of cult construction in Palestine, Reuben Yat Tin Lee, *Romanization in Palestine: A study of urban development from Herod the Great to AD 70* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003), 11-15, 23-28, 32-34.

²⁸⁸ Corbulo assisted the Frisians in creation of 'a senate, magistrates, and laws.' Tacitus *Annals* 11.18-19. An example is the municipal law of Irni, see Woolf, *Becoming Roman*, 67 n. 82.

1.4.6. Romanization: Roman calendar and traditions of time were adopted

Furthermore, the Roman calendar added to or supplanted local holidays and months with changes essential for relations with Rome, which resulted in adopting her ways. It was possible for a community or ethnicity to have more than one calendrical process, reflecting both local ethnic identity and that of Rome, not only in Jerusalem, but also other cities such as Ephesus, or Alexandria where Judeans and Christ-followers resided.

1.4.7 Romanization: Roman religion was adopted or adapted by local ethnicities

Romanization of religion made itself evident in four areas; the integration of local and Roman deities, the construction of Roman-styled temples, the foundation and participation in the Roman imperial cult, and the appointment of local priesthoods to lead the cults. Each strengthened local acknowledgement of Roman social supremacy and exhibited cultural integration.

An example of Romanization of religion was the adoption and adaptation of Roman or Greek deities and local cults, including the imperial cult. The imperial cult was proactively initiated through temple construction, priesthoods, oaths of loyalty to Augustus, and in many cases, to the city of Rome.²⁸⁹ Worship of Augustus and Rome occurred in Caesarea Maritima, Sebaste, and Paneas in Herod's kingdom.²⁹⁰ Judean worship in Jerusalem honored Augustus and Caligula with prayers and sacrifices to God as attested by Josephus and Philo.²⁹¹ In turn, Romans made contributions to the Jerusalem Temple that were not refused by priesthood or populace.

Romanization reflected Rome's architectural styles in cult sites. Examples include Caesarea Maritima's temple of Augustus and Roma, whose construction occurred almost simultaneously with initiation of worship of Augustus' divine Genius in Rome while

²⁸⁹ For worship of Augustus in Italy, see Taylor, *Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, 214-223. For Augustus as *theos* in Greece, Asia and Palestine, S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power, The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, repr. 1994, c1984). 54-55.

²⁹⁰ Lee, *Romanization in Palestine*, 23-26, 33-34.

²⁹¹ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 9 Vols., H.St.J. Thackeray, R. Marcus, Allen Wikgren and L.H. Feldman (trans.), E.H. Warminster, Allen Wikgren, (eds.), *LCL* (London and Cambridge, MA: Heinemann, Harvard University, 1930-81), 18.124; Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 356.

Augustus was *pontifex maximus*.²⁹² Roman imperial architectural emulation is evident in Herod's reconstruction of the Jerusalem Temple, and other projects throughout Syria, Samaria, and Judea, including the Tomb of Abraham in Hebron.

1.4.8 Romanization: Early Christianity adopted and adapted Roman characteristics

There is debate over whether Judean "separateness" presumes non-assimilation of Roman cultural characteristics. Judeanism in Judea and Diaspora was shaped by relations with Rome, its military presence, economics, calendar, swearing faith, offering sacrifices on behalf of Caesar, the language of Roman life, which impacted Judeans across the empire, whether by acceptance or resistance of Romanization. Furthermore, Greek culture shaped early-Christ-followers as Hellenized peoples joined churches.

Similarly, early Christ-followers were immersed in Judean, Greek, and Roman society, a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic milieu, which shaped the language and concepts of the Christ experience. While early Christ-follower language and concepts were drawn from Judeanism, much also came from Greek culture, and as suggested in Chapters 2 & 3, much came from Roman culture. This is especially likely for Christ-followers receiving the Roman epistle. The language of Roman ideals, *mores*, values, and sociolect on an audience which heard Romans in its social context will be further explored in Chapter 3 and demonstrated in exploration of Romans 1:1-17 in Chapter 4.

1.5 Conclusions: Multi-Ethnic Rome as the Context of Romans

This chapter has examined how ethnic identity was constructed by Greeks and Romans. It has argued that Greek ethnic identity coalesced from related ethnic groups, into a common identity through a process of negotiation. Common identity involved consensus on language, ancestors, religion, gods, political structures, and ways of life, and some physical characteristics. As Hellenism coalesced it went through an ongoing conversation about ethnic purity, and what characteristics and behaviors represented the highest ideals of being Hellenic. In turn, as Greeks colonized or settled elsewhere in the Mediterranean, they engaged in promotion of the superiority of being Hellenic, while simultaneously going

²⁹² Taylor, *Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, 190-204, (192-193, 202-204), Also Carsten Peter Thiede, *The Cosmopolitan World of Jesus: New Light from Archaeology* (London: SPCK, 2004), 34-37.

through adaptation, acculturation, and adoption of characteristics of other ethnicities among whom they settled.

Rome's ethnicity also coalesced from numerous groups from which was constructed a Roman identity. They negotiated *Romanitas* by mythic and historic ancestry, characteristics, gods, religion, values, *mores*, and social constructs of being Roman. The city of Rome itself became viewed as divinized entity, as ethnic identifier. Ethnic purity was constructed in Rome, especially during the later republic and early empire. As Rome conquered, colonized and settled, it too engaged in a process of ethnic negotiation of what it expected other people groups to adapt or adopt in relation to Rome and becoming Roman or Romanized.

However, Rome also underwent a reciprocal process. Other ethnicities from across the empire moved to Rome, importing their cultural characteristics. Each influenced and caused acculturation, assimilation, adoption and resistance in Rome and fueled ethnic redefinition. Hellenization and Easternization occurred in Rome. The term "Easternization" is coined to describe the adaptation and assimilation of non-Greek and non-Latin culture and worship from Asia Minor, Syria, Judea, and Egypt by Rome's populace. See Appendix 1.2 for a graphic depiction of this multi-ethnic interaction and Appendix 1.3 for the dynamic forces that influence ethnic negotiation.

One sub-segment of Rome's Easternization was the Judeanization of Rome. Judeanization is the adaptation or adoption of Judean characteristics, including by those not born Judeans, who were proselytes or God-fearers. Judeanization summarizes the adoption of Judeanism's ethnic aspects such as Sabbath observance, synagogue attendance, Mosaic law, diet, and way of life. The process of Judeanization was an ongoing ethnic negotiation in Rome.

While many have presumed that Rome was anti-Judean or anti-Semitic, there is a gap in understanding how Rome simultaneously treated Judeans in comparison to other Easterners, such as Egyptians, through the late Republic and early empire, which has impact on how the ethnic negotiation between Christ-followers was heard within the Roman epistle. The interaction of Judeanization in relation to the Egyptianization of Rome, and its adoption of Egyptian practices, such as the Isis cult, and Egyptian way of life, as a parallel and contrast to Judeanism, is the topic of Chapter 2.

Reading Romans in Rome

CHAPTER 2:

Rethinking the Reality of Judean and

Egyptian Life in Rome:

From the Late Republic to Early Nero

2.1 Current Predominant Assumptions Regarding Judeans in Rome

2.1.1 Judeans as persecuted, disenfranchised, and segregated religious minority: Wiefel's Hypothesis

As reviewed in the introduction, Wiefel argues that Romans was written in relation to a long history of anti-Semitism in and by Rome.²⁹³ His position presupposes that the events of 19, 41, and 49 CE were highpoints of Roman anti-Semitism and form the cultural context for interpretation of the epistle.²⁹⁴ Particularly, Wiefel's position is that "all" Judeans were evicted from Rome in 49 by edict of Claudius and returned when it lapsed in 54, to anti-Judean opposition by the non-Judean populace, including those who were Christ-followers.²⁹⁵

Wiefel's theory has been a fundamental assumption among many NT scholars. The hypothesis has been argued and defended in some form by Minear, Watson, Walters, Slingerland, and Lampe, among others.²⁹⁶ Its influence is apparent in Schreiner's, and Wright's hermeneutics in their recent Romans commentaries and Talbert's "The Gentiles of Rome did not like the Jews."²⁹⁷

²⁹³ Wolfgang Wiefel, 'The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome and the Origins of Roman Christianity' in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing, 1977), 100-119, (103-104, 115).

²⁹⁴ Wiefel, 'The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome,' (1977), 103-104, 113-118, (115).

²⁹⁵ Wiefel, 'The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome,' (1977), 113.

²⁹⁶ Paul S. Minear, *The Obedience of Faith: The Purposes of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans* (London: SCM Press, 1971); Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism and Gentiles A Sociological Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); James C. Walters, *Ethnic Issues in Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993); H. Dixon Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking and the Early Imperial Repression of Judaism at Rome* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, Michael Steinhauser, (trans.), Marshall D. Johnson, ed., (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

²⁹⁷ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998, 3rd pr., 2003), 11-14; N.T. Wright, "The Letter to the Romans," *The New Interpreters Bible*,

Furthermore, it is often presumed that Judeans resisted ethnic assimilation and hybridity, and maintained cultural or ethnic purity. This position is well summarized by Reuben Lee's view: "‘To be Roman’ is a strange idea in ancient Jewish studies, because it is always known that the Jewish sense of ethnicity was strong. The idea of ‘becoming Roman’ would be extremely strange and absent among first century BC and AD Jews. Jews were always Jewish ethnically and culturally, even though a large number of them were in the Diaspora."²⁹⁸ Hadas-Lebel's fine work supports the imagery, providing insights into presumably predominant anti-Roman Judean views in this period.²⁹⁹

2.1.2 Problems with Wiefel's Hypothesis, Judean Exclusion, and Cappelletti's "Steps Forward" Regarding the Judean Context in Rome

Wiefel's theory, colored with Lee's summation, draws upon a narrow and selective historiography, read to create a "Judean" story. The "Judean" situations of 19, 41, and 49 CE have often not been immersed within the flow of historical life in Rome and rely on a set of assumptions challenged by the broader picture evident in Greco-Roman and Judean literature and archaeology. Wiefel's theory ignores Roman, Roman Judean, and non-Roman Judean interaction, involving the provincial Judean elite, or delegations who remained in Rome for years. Wiefel's theory does not adequately simulate the range of social behavior and cultural interaction between ethnicities present within Rome, which Lee and others have minimized by presumption of ethnic Judean resistance and purity. Additionally, Wiefel excludes comparison with other ethnic or religious groups persecuted or supported in Rome contemporaneously with resident Judeans. This comparison reshapes an understanding of Judeans in Rome, and the context of Romans.³⁰⁰

Cappelletti's recent work is a step forward in placing Judeans in interaction with Roman leadership, and Judeans being Roman.³⁰¹ Her work is excellent and helpful; however, it does

Vol. X (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2002), 406-408; Charles H. Talbert, *Romans* (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys, 2002), 6-9.

²⁹⁸ Lee, *Romanization in Palestine*, 7.

²⁹⁹ Mireille Hadas-Lebel, *Jerusalem Against Rome*, Robyn Fréchet (trans.), *Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion* 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006).

³⁰⁰ Besides a brief aside in regard to the Chaldeans and another to the Isis cult in relation to 19 CE, Wiefel, 'The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome,' (1977), 104.

³⁰¹ Silvia Cappelletti, *The Jewish Community of Rome, From the Second Century B.C. to the Third Century C.E.*, *SJSJ* 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

not substantially compare Judean treatment to other contemporaneously resident religious or ethnic groups, to determine if Judean ethnic treatment was substantially different. Thus, Cappelletti's work is both challenged and supported in this chapter, especially concerning the events of 19 and 49.

2.1.3 The Purpose of This Chapter: Re-examination of Judean Life in Rome as Multi-ethnic Rivalry within the Easternization of Rome

The Judean experience in Rome has not been substantially compared or contrasted with another Eastern ethnic group such as Egyptians, Egyptianized Greeks, Alexandrians, Egyptianized Romans, or the Isis cult, although the correlation is noted by Rutgers and Noy.³⁰² This neglected comparison challenges the hypothesis that Rome was specifically anti-Semitic, or that Judeans resisted ethnic assimilation into, or adoption of Roman culture and conventions. Furthermore, it challenges and thus casts doubt on the concept that all Judeans or Judean Christ-followers were exiled at any time, including during 49.

This chapter reexamines Judean life in Rome in interaction with Alexandrians and Egyptians as contemporaneous ethnic groups as further detailed in Appendix 3. It explores how their ethnic rivalry and respective cult worship were simultaneously treated in relation to Roman ethnic identity. It relates to two questions: "Who does what with ethnicity and why?" and also, "Why is it so difficult to imagine that someone can cluster two or three ethnic identities in his or her world?"³⁰³ It tests whether the broader evidence supports a conclusion that wider social factors were at work in circumstances involving Judeans that redefined their ethnic relationships and identity in Rome, which do not reflect nor substantiate anti-Semitism, but a fuller, interactive multi-ethnic rivalry, which Judeans often used to their advantage.

This re-exploration begins with the arrival of Judean captives in 63 BCE from Jerusalem's conquest and continues chronologically until receipt of Paul's letter in 56/57 CE. Finally, the

³⁰² Alexandrians, Greeks, and Egyptians from Roman Egypt will often be grouped together as "Egyptians," despite clearly being perceived as separate *ethnē* in the Greco-Roman world, see Leonard Victor Rutgers, 'Roman Policy toward the Jews: Expulsions from the City of Rome during the First Century C.E.' in Karl P. Donfried & Peter Richardson (eds.), *Judaism and Christianity in First Century Rome* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 93-116, (109); David Noy, 'Being an Egyptian in Rome: strategies of identity formation', in J. Zangenberg & M. Labahn (eds.), *Christians as a Religious Minority in a Multicultural City* (JSNTSS 243, London, 2004), 47-54, (47-48).

³⁰³ Tschernokoshewa, 'Blending worlds', 144, 146.

chapter draws conclusions about how this broader perspective of ethnic rivalry and relations in Rome may influence the reception of the Romans by its audience.

2.2 Judeans and Egyptians in Republican Rome 63 to 31 BCE

2.2.1 Judean beginnings in Rome

Judeans initially settled in Rome perhaps by the mid-second century BCE.³⁰⁴ However, numerous captives enslaved or held hostage after Pompey's campaign in Syria and Judea came to Rome in 63 BCE.³⁰⁵ This leads us to ponder where and how these Judean residents lived and worshiped, as slaves, freedmen, and Roman citizens. It is often assumed their arrangements were static; however, four or five Judean generations resided in Rome from 63 BCE to 56/57 CE. During these decades, they experienced significant change in their social and economic status, residential locations, and ethnic relationships with Egyptians and Romans.

2.2.2 Judean and Egyptian Life in Late Republican Rome 63 to 31 BCE

Our consideration of Judeans in Rome commences with the struggle between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus over the high priesthood and rulership of Judea in 64-63 BCE. To influence Pompey's intervention in the Judean civil war, Aristobulus sent Pompey a gift, a gold vine called "Terpole, the Delight."³⁰⁶ It had been donated by Alexander, Aristobulus' father to decorate the Jerusalem temple. Strabo remarked, "We ourselves saw that present repositied at Rome, in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus with this inscription: 'The Gift of Alexander, the king of the Jews.' It was valued at five hundred talents; and the report is, that Aristobulus, the governor of the Jews, sent it."³⁰⁷ However, Pompey's intervention conquered Jerusalem for Rome.

More went to Rome than golden gifts. Aristobulus, his sons Alexander and Antigonus, and two daughters were hostages in Pompey's triumph in September 62 BCE, probably with other

³⁰⁴ Valerius Maximus 1.3.3.

³⁰⁵ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 155; Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 3 Vols., St.J. Thackeray (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1971-1999), 1.154, 1.180; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 14.71, 79, 97, 120, 275, 304, 313, 321; 20.244.

³⁰⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.34.

³⁰⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.34.

Judean elite captives.³⁰⁸ Many other captured Judeans were sold in Rome's slave markets.³⁰⁹ However, some Judean elite were not imprisoned or enslaved, but given proper residence, education, and access to the city's facilities as hostages. Being hostage in Rome was human surety for the cooperation of a newly captured territory and people. It presented an opportunity for foreign ethnic elite to "become Roman" and enjoy Rome's benefits.

Joshel succinctly summarizes the legal plight of Judean slaves in Rome. Slaves had no rights, or claims, were aliens, and powerless property. They were sold, lent, mortgaged, gifted, or willed. Slaves were societal outsiders – powerless enemies if captured in conflict. Moreover, slaves brought captive to Rome were stripped of ethnicity or national heritage, despite their *natio* being stated at their sale to assist their acquirers determine their quality and fitness for work. Thus, a slave's prior ethnicity was perceived as a collection of idiosyncratic qualities. Finally, a slave had no legally recognized kin – fathers, mothers, spouses, or children. All belonged to and were possessed by their masters. Slave families had no legal or social recognition. This kinlessness and ethnic loss were a core element of a slave's alienness, their loss of generational linkage, and shamed status. In legal matters, a slave's testimony was only taken under torture. Without torture, it was not considered reliable. Those slaves who earned and created savings or *peculium* had it remain under the legal control of their masters.³¹⁰ This imagery of slave rights, obligations, and status underlies much of the slave imagery utilized in Romans 6-8.

Slaves were often freed after a period of service, and many Judeans were manumitted as Roman citizens.³¹¹ In manumission, despite their foreignness, some became *peregrini*, but numerous others became *libertini* or *cives Romani*, being granted the same advantages of others enslaved, brought to Rome, and granted freedmen status and often, Roman citizenship, yet were Asians, Egyptians, Greeks, or Syrians.³¹²

³⁰⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.66, 14.79; Cassius Dio, 37.15.2-4; 37.21.1-4.

³⁰⁹ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 155.

³¹⁰ Sandra R. Joshel, *Work, Identity and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of Occupational Inscriptions* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1992), 28-32; Ireneusz Zeber, *A Study of the Peculium of a Slave in Pre-classical and Classical Roman Law* (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wroclawskiego, 1981), 13-17, 24-33, 45-50, 70-71.

³¹¹ Roman citizenship took a number of forms depending on a variety of factors from age of the slave, place of manumission and status of owner resulting usually in *civitas* or *latini*. See E.G. Hardy, *Roman Laws and Charters* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912), 70-71; Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 155.

³¹² Susan Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen During the Late Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), 162-168; Rutgers, 'Roman Policy toward the Jews,' 97-98.

With this framework of slavery and manumission in mind, we return to Judeans in Rome. In 62 BCE, Cato eased Roman citizen grain distribution eligibility.³¹³ Cato's act increased incentives for those who had acquired slaves to manumit them, which placed them under ongoing obligations to their former masters turned patrons while providing service or *obsequium* after being freed, while partially fed by the city.³¹⁴

Legal Judean slave manumission possibly occurred in the temple of the patron's selected deity, similarly to Judean manumissions at Delphi, or potentially before the city magistrate.³¹⁵ Manumitted Judean slaves, now freedmen and Roman citizens, became eligible for the grain dole.³¹⁶ The former master's advantage was that Rome paid to feed these new citizens, while their new patrons reaped the benefit of their productivity. "For the masters, manumission was economically rational."³¹⁷ This development impacted Rome's grain demand and supply.³¹⁸

The Judean freedmen initially appear in Cicero's defense of Flaccus in 59 BCE.³¹⁹ Flaccus had been provincial Asian governor in 61-60, and was now accused of *res repetundae*, "extraction of money or property from provincials, foreigners, or subjects by Roman officials" while in office.³²⁰ The case was tried under laws recently passed by Julius Caesar limiting profits received by governors in office, the *lex Iulia repetundarum*.³²¹

³¹³ Plutarch, *Cato Min.* 26 in Plutarch, *Lives*, Vol. 8, Bernadotte Perrin (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1919); Plutarch, *Caesar* 8.6 in Plutarch, *Lives*, Vol. 7, *Caesar*, Bernadotte Perrin (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1919).

³¹⁴ Jane F. Gardner and Thomas Wiedemann, *The Roman Household* (London: Routledge, 1991), 152-158. Also, Alan Watson, *Roman Slave Law* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1987), 39-43. Also, George Long, 'Patronus' in William Smith, (ed.), *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (London: John Murray, 1875), 878-880.

³¹⁵ Elizabeth Leigh Gibson, *The Jewish manumission inscriptions of the Bosphoran Kingdom* (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1999). 68-69; Keith Hopkins & P.J. Roscoe, "Between Slavery and Freedom: On Freeing Slaves at Delphi" in Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1978), 133-170.

³¹⁶ Persius, 5.73, "At Rome it was the custom that all who on manumission became Roman citizens, should receive public grain in their number," in Persius, *Juvenal and Persius*, Susanna Morton Braund (trans.), Susanna Morton Braund, (ed.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2004); Also, Dionysius of Halicarnasus, 4.24.5, and Suetonius, *Augustus* 42.3.

³¹⁷ Keith Hopkins, "Why did the Romans Free so Many Slaves?" in Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1978), 115-132, (131).

³¹⁸ Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 38-39, 96-98; Neville Morley, 'Cities in context: urban systems in Roman Italy' in Helen M. Parkins (ed.), *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City* (London: Routledge, 1989), 42-58, (49-50); Morley, 'Cities in context,' 47-48.

³¹⁹ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 47.

³²⁰ Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, C. MacDonald, (trans.), *LCL* 324 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1977), 415, Introduction.

³²¹ Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 419-420, Introduction.

Wiefel perceives this case as presumed Roman and Ciceronian anti-Semitism.³²² However, Cicero documented numerous claimants jointly litigating against Flaccus.³²³ Others included provincial Asian leadership from Acmona, Dorylaeum, Temnus, and Tralles, extortionately taxed to finance an unconstructed fleet. At least four prominent Roman citizens victimized by Flaccus' abuse of power were attendant, with legal representatives. Importantly, the other provincial Asian claimants recognized and cooperated with the Judean legal team with no differentiation before the Roman elite and in Rome's court, analogous to a class action suit. Thus, Judeans were not alone in their persecution or prosecution, in a case of economic rapacity, not religion.

The Asian Judeans charged that gold destined for Jerusalem had been confiscated or misappropriated.³²⁴ Cappelletti notes that Flaccus may have suspended a Judean custom already protected by Roman law and attempted to justify his action as an act against "barbarous religion." If Judean gold shipment to Jerusalem was legally protected, it was under the Roman Senate's oversight of foreign religions, and it complicated Flaccus' case in relation to enacted Senate law.³²⁵ This is fairly certain, since Judeans likely already had gained religious rights from Caesar's earlier legislation.³²⁶

Cicero's trial tactic in defense of Flaccus was to besmirch each claimant and witness based upon their ethnicity or city, not just Judeans. Cicero lauded Greek achievements in literature and wisdom, but considered them characteristically unreliable witnesses.³²⁷ Later he altered his defense, determining 'true' mainland Greeks reliable, but Asiatic Greeks untrustworthy.³²⁸ To impugn Asiatic Greeks from Phrygia, Lydia, Mysia, and Caria, Cicero resorted to proverbial sayings about their ethnicity or cities to incite ethnic prejudice within the *concilium*.³²⁹ That these were Cicero's standard trial tactics is apparent from *Pro Scauro*, where he maligned Sardinians bringing charges against them as "Phoenicians" and

³²² Wiefel, 'The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome,' (1991), 87-88.

³²³ Wiefel, 'The Jewish Community in Ancient Rome' (1977), 102-103.

³²⁴ Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 425-426, Introduction.

³²⁵ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 45.

³²⁶ E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 133-136.

³²⁷ Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 9-12.

³²⁸ Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 62-64, 100.

³²⁹ Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 65-66.

treacherous liars, while lauding his own Sardinian witnesses as exhibiting characteristics of Romans.³³⁰

When Cicero finally addressed the Asiatic Judean charges in *Pro Flacco*, he remarked on the size of the Judean community in Rome, and the influence it had in public assemblies (*contiones*).³³¹ He used staged sarcasm to impress that Roman Judeans could be stirred into political action, even though they had no standing in the case. Further, he cited the Senate's actions that denied the export of gold, likely from Rome, in Cicero's consulship, as implied justification of Flaccus' forbidding gold to be shipped to Jerusalem, despite no direct linkage between the events.³³² His stratagem was weak, since during his consulship, gold was forbidden to leave the city in response to Cataline's conspiracy, to prevent payment of his military forces attempting to capture Rome from the Cicero-led Senate in 63/62 BCE. Judean depredations were not the focus of Cicero's early gold prohibitions and his audience and *concilium* knew it.

Cicero's next ploy was to label Judean beliefs "barbarian superstitions" (*barbarae superstitiones*) to be resisted, suggesting that to defy the "multitude of Jews" (*multitudo Iudaeorum*) was in the public interest, snidely noting their defeat in Jerusalem in 64 to demonstrate their ethnic inferiority to Rome and her gods.³³³

Cicero's legal argument provides insight into Judean ethnicity and involvement in Rome in 59. First, a potential crowd of Rome's Judeans may have been at the case against Flaccus and triggered Cicero's theatrics.³³⁴ It would have been in Roman Judean interest to attend, since they too sent annual offerings to Jerusalem, presumably without Roman interference, since the offerings were permitted by Julius Caesar, *pontifex maximus* at this time.³³⁵ Finally, if

³³⁰ Cicero, *Pro Scauro*, N.H. Watts, (trans.), *LCL* 252 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1931, repr. 2000), 36-44.

³³¹ Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 66.

³³² Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 67.

³³³ Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 67; "How dear that race is to the immortal gods may be seen from the fact that they have been conquered." (*quam cara (illa gens) dis immortalibus esset, docuit quod est victa.*), Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 69; Carl Koch, 'Roman State Religion in the Mirror of Augustan and Late Republican Apologetics,' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 296-329, (299).

³³⁴ Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2002), 19-23.

³³⁵ Denial of gold and silver shipment was done by quaestor Publius Vatinius in 63 BCE, whose extortions were so odious the populace complained to Cicero. Cicero, *In Vatinius* in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Pro Sestio. In Vatinius. B. Orations*, (R. Gardner (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, rev. ed. 1958); Julius Caesar as *pontifex maximus*, Velleius Paterculus, 2.43.

many Judeans were in attendance, they were likely far outnumbered, given the presence of Rome's elite, and groups who supported other delegations from provincial Asia.

However, Cicero's use of *contiones* provides insight into Judean status in Rome five years after Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem and Judea. While Cappelletti notes that Jews are not mentioned elsewhere in Roman assemblies, Cicero's statement should not be dismissed lightly.³³⁶ If they had not attended Rome's assemblies, Cicero could have been charged with *calumnia*, and suffered severe penalties under Roman law.

Judeans at a Roman *contio* were present in formal gatherings initiated by Roman ritual, sacrifice, and ceremony, called by the dictator, consul, or urban praetor. The *contio* was held in preparation for voting, as legislative, or judicial assemblies, or to inform the public on matters of interest, changes in government, danger, or reproofing those who dishonored Roman ancestral practice.³³⁷ Sacrifice at a *contio* would have included taking auspices, *auspicium* – performed when public business was conducted to ensure propriety with the gods.³³⁸ Citizens, foreigners, slaves, and women were allowed to attend a *contio*. Most meetings were held in the *Comitium* or Forum, though they may have occurred on the Campus Martius, mostly undeveloped land when Cicero defended Flaccus.³³⁹ A *contio* often led to a vote by the *concilium plebis*, Roman citizens. Votes could be called post-*contio*, tallied by political groups or Roman urban tribes, to resolve the legal or public issue in discussion.³⁴⁰

Cicero's defense ploy informs us that by 59, Judeans, whether long-time residents, recently-arrived slaves, newly-manumitted freedmen or Roman citizens, already attended public meetings with other Roman citizens. They were present during Roman religious ritual, which formalized these gatherings in the Forum or Campus Martius, including augury and auspices.³⁴¹ Judeans voiced their opinions in the public realm, as groups were not silent in *contiones*. They possibly voted as a block, or coordinated votes within their tribes on Roman matters as freedmen, and exercised knowledge and influence within Rome's political system

³³⁶ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 45.

³³⁷ Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 559-560; Daniel J. Gargola, *Lands, Laws, & Gods: Magistrates & Ceremony in the Regulation of Public Lands in Republican Rome* (London: University of North Carolina, 1995), 53-54; Also Elizabeth A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004), 86.

³³⁸ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 153.

³³⁹ Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 560.

³⁴⁰ Gargola, *Lands, Laws, & Gods*, 54-55.

³⁴¹ Gargola, *Lands, Laws, & Gods*, 26-28.

to their advantage like any other ethnic or economic group in this tumultuous period.³⁴² Judeans had attained, “both an integration [of Jews] within Roman society and a strong sense of their own identity.”³⁴³

Varro provided a different perspective of Judeans in Rome contemporaneous with Cicero. In delineation of ancient Roman values and way of life, he concluded that Judeans worshipped the supreme Roman deity Jupiter – as Iao.³⁴⁴ Furthermore, Judeans were laudable since they did not create images of their god, which Varro championed as the earliest form of Roman worship and piety.³⁴⁵ Thus, Varro held a more positive view of Judeanism than Cicero, who viewed the interaction with non-Roman gods differently, dividing Roman sacral law into those governing “new,” “immigrant,” or foreign gods, in opposition to recognized state divinities in *De Legibus*. Egyptians and Isis were not lauded in Varro’s view.

Cicero and Varro demonstrate that Judeans are involved in ethnic conflict and struggle for social status in the tumult of late Republican Rome, and that some elite Romans viewed them positively. Most importantly, Rome’s populace did not reject Judean freedmen’s participation in Rome’s political life.³⁴⁶

In 58 BCE, Clodius further extended the Roman grain dole benefit.³⁴⁷ This political decision gave masters even more economic motivation to manumit enslaved Judeans only five years after Pompey’s conquest of Judea.³⁴⁸ The state fed Rome’s new freedmen, while the patrons gained from their *operae* – expected labor as part of their *fides*, or keeping faith with their

³⁴² Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 67; Also Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 560-561.

³⁴³ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 22.

³⁴⁴ Varro, *Antiquities*, quoted by Augustine, *De Consensu Evangelistarum*, 1.22.30 in Augustine, *De Consensu Evangelistarum* in *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, F. Wehrich (ed.), CSEL 43, (Wien: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1904); also Louis H. Feldman and Meyer Reinhold, (eds.), *Jewish Life and Thought Among Greeks and Romans: Primary Readings* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 108-109.

³⁴⁵ Varro, *Antiquities*, quoted by Augustine, *City of God* 4.31; also John M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 286; Lydus, *De mensibus*, On the Months 4.53 in Ioannes Lydus, *Ioannis Lydi Liber de mensibus*, R. Wünsch, (ed.), (Leipzig: Teubner, 1898); Momigliano, “The Theological Efforts of the Roman Upper Classes,” 147-163, (152).

³⁴⁶ New, *di novi*, immigrant, *advenae*, or foreign, *alienigenae*. Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.19, 25; “*novo aut externo ritu sacrificare*.” Livy 25.1.12; Georg Wissowa, ‘The Historical Development of Roman Religion: An Overview,’ Christopher Barnes (trans.), in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 330-357, (340).

³⁴⁷ Cicero, *De Domo* 25 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *XI, Orations, Pro Archia. Post Reditum in Senatu. Post Reditum ad Quirites. De Domo Sua. De Haruspicum Responsis. Pro Plancio*, N. H. Watts (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1923); Cassius Dio, 38.13.1-2; Geoffrey Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980, 1996), 52-53.

³⁴⁸ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 174-5.

former masters.³⁴⁹ Additionally, Clodius restored *collegia* abolished in 64, and used legal and illegal *collegia* and political associations in the *vici* and *decuriae* to terrorize the city in 58-57.³⁵⁰ Judeans and Egyptians were politically pulled to project their own identity through *collegia* and in *contiones*, based upon allegiance to their patrons, factionalized elite, and their own ethnicity.

Clodius' actions dramatically increased state grain demand and created a shortage with resultant higher prices; and when supplies were depleted, famine resulted.³⁵¹ The shortage caused grain riots, disruption of the Apolline games, and threats to burn the Senate building.³⁵² Cicero noted that "hunger, incendiarism, murder, and pillaging" menaced the city, a description of mass social unrest.³⁵³ This dearth may have been worsened by grain shortages in Italy, due to disease. Wheat and barley rust were known to devastate grain crops, so much so that the Roman god, Robigus or Robigo received prayers and offerings during the Robigalia planting ceremonies.³⁵⁴ The cost of grain to feed Rome under Clodius, was, according to Cicero, 20 percent of Rome's Republican revenue, perhaps an exaggeration.³⁵⁵

Grain shortage resolution became Pompey's responsibility.³⁵⁶ He dispatched officials to Sardinia in 57-56, as well as Sicily and Africa to re-secure Rome's grain supplies.³⁵⁷ He used

³⁴⁹ Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 70, 74-75; Persius 5.73, "At Rome it was the custom that all who on manumission became Roman citizens, should receive public grain in their number."; Dionysius of Halicarnasus, 4.24.5; Suetonius, *Aug.* 42.3; On manumitted slave obligations to former masters, see Joshel, *Work, Identity and Legal Status*, 32-35.

³⁵⁰ Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 168-176.

³⁵¹ Cicero, *De Domo* 25; Peter Garnsey, 'Famine in Rome' in Peter Garnsey and C.R. Whittaker (eds.), *Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1983), 56-65, (59).

³⁵² Cicero, *De Domo* 11; Cassius Dio, 39.9.2; 39.4.2; Wilfried Nippel, *Public Order in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995), 76; Garnsey, 'Famine in Rome', 56-65, (57); Also, Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University 1988), 30-31; 206.

³⁵³ Cicero, *De Domo* 25.

³⁵⁴ Marcus Terentius Varro, *de Re Rustica*, 1.1.6, in W.D. Hooper and H.B. Ash (trans.), *Cato and Varro: On Agriculture*, LCL 283 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1934); "Stern Robigo, spare the herbage of the cereals, ...withhold we pray thy roughening hand..." was part of the official prayer at a Robigalia penned by Ovid. It suggests wheat stem rust was a serious disease in early imperial Italy. See Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovid), *Fasti* 4.907-942 in J.G. Frazer (trans.), G.P. Goold (rev.), *Ovid: Fasti*, LCL (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1931).

³⁵⁵ Cicero, *Pro Sestio* 55; Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 171; Keith Hopkins, 'The products of war' in *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1978, repr. 1980), 37-47, (38-39, n. 32).

³⁵⁶ Pompey was granted a five year control over the grain supply management of the entire Roman world. Cicero, *Ad Atticus* 4.1.6-7 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Ad Atticus, Letters to Atticus*, XXII, 4 Vols., D.R. Shackleton Bailey (trans.), D.R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), LCL, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1983); Cassius Dio 39.9.3; Livy, *Epitome* 104 in Titus Livy, *History of Rome, XIV, Summaries. Fragments. Julius Obsequens. General Index*, Alfred C. Schlesinger, (trans.), Russel M. Geer, (contrib.) LCL, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1959, rev. 1967).

long-term contracts and grants of Roman citizenship to those who transported food to assure grain shipment.³⁵⁸ That Egyptians and Judeans would have benefited can be surmised, given Egypt's naval prowess, and potential Judean freedmen's interest in trade, in conjunction with their patrons.

Not only regular Judeans, but also their elite suffered and took advantage of Rome's tumult. In 57, the Hasmonean Judean, Alexander, escaped from Rome, returned to Judea, and attempted to overthrow Hyrcanus.³⁵⁹ He failed and was re-exiled to Rome. Later, Alexander's sons, Aristobulus and Antigonus fled Rome, perhaps in 56, but both were swiftly recaptured and returned in 55.

Cicero viewed the tumult and instability of 58-56 BCE as prodigies and divine displeasure including "envoys slain in violation of earthly and heavenly law," and "good faith and oaths neglected," calling for expiations due to "Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, Tellus, and the heavenly gods."³⁶⁰

Judean participation and manipulation of Rome's and Judean provincial issues interrelated with these events. It is apparent that from Pompey's triumph in 62 until 55 BCE, members of the provincial Judean elite resided in Rome as exiles without incarceration, along with other Judeans. Though the majority may initially have been slaves, many were manumitted given the expanded grain dole's economic incentivization and political maneuvers of prior masters. Newly freed Judeans settled in Rome and became politically active in its affairs. As a hint of Judeans favorably viewed in Rome, in 55 BCE, the Roman Senate released Aristobulus' children. They returned to their mother in Judea, while their father remained imprisoned or hostage in Rome until 49-48 BCE.³⁶¹

³⁵⁷ Cicero, *Ad Q. F.* 2.1-6 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Epistulae Ad Quintum Fratrem Et M. Brutum*, Shackleton Bailey (trans.), *Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004).

³⁵⁸ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 56-57; Cicero, *Pro Balbo* 24, 41 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *B. Orations, Pro Caelio. De Provinciis Consularibus. Pro Balbo*, R. Gardner (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1958); Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply*, 216-217.

³⁵⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.92.

³⁶⁰ Cicero, *De res haruspicum* 36, 37, 20 in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *XI, Orations, Pro Archia. Post Reditum in Senatu. Post Reditum ad Quirites. De Domo Sua. De Haruspicum Responsis. Pro Plancio*, N.H. Watts (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1923); Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 156.

³⁶¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.97.

Aristobulus' favorable political status while hostage in Rome and political relations with the Julii are evident in 48 BCE. Caesar freed the incarcerated Hasmonean and gave him command of two Roman legions during a campaign to Syria against Pompey and ultimately to overthrow Hyrcanus in Jerusalem.³⁶²

The implications are profound. Aristobulus, a Hasmonean Judean and high priesthood contender and hostage in Rome, gained and exercised political influence among Rome's elite, likely with assistance of Judeans and non-Judeans alike who supported Julius Caesar. To be given legionary command or legatory status implied that Aristobulus had been granted Roman citizenship, and rank of a Roman general. To be granted command, the Roman Judean Aristobulus would have been appointed and approved by the remaining Roman senators, sworn an oath of faith with Julius, the Senate and Roman people, accompanied by requisite Roman ritual and sacrifices, with Julius Caesar as *pontifex maximus*. Despite this, there is no intimation of his relinquishing his Judean heritage or religion. Nevertheless, Pompeian loyalists poisoned him in Rome before commencement of the Syrian campaign.³⁶³

Caesar reached Antioch in 47 BCE, and reaffirmed Hyrcanus as Hasmonean Judean high priest and ethnarch. He memorialized this renewed treaty in Rome, with public placement of the bronze inscription of sworn faith, and a gold shield, perhaps in the Temple of Concord.³⁶⁴ Typically, these treaties were engraved in Latin and Greek on brass columns in Rome and listed the rights and privileges granted to Hyrcanus and Judean ambassadors. As long as the bronze inscribed treaty or law hung in public view, it was considered in force in Rome and in Judea, where a copy may have also been publicly displayed.³⁶⁵ This honor makes it apparent that Hyrcanus, a Hasmonean Judean High Priest, entered into a treaty and honors in tension with aspects of Judean law – a pig sacrificed by the *Fetiales* would have sealed the faith-sworn treaty.³⁶⁶

³⁶² Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.123-124.

³⁶³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.123-124.

³⁶⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.145-148.

³⁶⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.143-148; Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 95-99.

³⁶⁶ For killing a pig in oath or faith-based treaty making, see Robert Turcan, *The Gods of Ancient Rome: Religion in Everyday Life from Archaic to Imperial Times*, Antonia Nevill (trans.), (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2001), 95-96; For fetial oath-making in Republican Rome, Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 8.86 in Matthew Dillon, Lynda Garland, *Ancient Rome: from the early Republic to the assassination of Julius Caesar* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2005), 126; For Augustus as fetial priest, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 7; For portrayal of fetial oath/faith-making in Augustan Rome, Paul Rehak, John Grimes Younger, *Imperium and Cosmos: Augustus and the Northern Campus Martius* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 2006), 118-120; For fetial pig sacrifice to seal treaties in Claudian Rome, Suetonius, *Claudius* 25; Livy 1.24.6-9.

Another contemporary example was Judean relations with Athens. From the Athenian *pyrtanaean* and its high priest, Hyrcanus received a gold crown, a brass statue of himself in the temple of Demas and the Graces, presentation of his crown at the Dionysian, Panathenean, Eleusinian, and Gymnical events.³⁶⁷ Josephus does not provide his response to these bestowed honors. However, given that his personal honor, and that of Jerusalem, Athens, and indirectly, his newly gained honors in Rome were at stake, Hyrcanus likely accepted them as a *xenos*, foreign friend of Athens. There is no mention they were declined.

Other Roman treaties confirmed Antipater as Judean procurator.³⁶⁸ His friendship with the Romans and Julius Caesar had been in development for some time, obvious by Judean and Idumean support in Rome's war with Egypt. Antipater was granted honors and Roman citizenship by Julius Caesar in conjunction with Hyrcanus. This *xenos* friendship, turned into fellow Roman citizenship and patron-client relationship soon inherited by his son, Herod the Great.³⁶⁹

Julius Caesar went further. He decreed that Judeans residing in Rome had the right to keep their own feasts and festivals, "according to the customs and laws of their forefathers," while he forbade Bacchanal "rioters" to meet in the city.³⁷⁰ For such a decree to be valid, Senatorial approval was required. Additionally, Julius, as *pontifex maximus* exercised his role as Rome's high priest in their being granted. As a result, Roman Judeans were publicly granted legislated rights not given to other "superstitions" in the city – Bacchanal or Egyptian Isiac – whose rights were curtailed in 48 BCE.³⁷¹ These grants to Rome's Judeans came in conjunction with friendship between the Roman and Judean elite, the grant of citizenship and legionary leadership to Aristobulus, and later citizenship and honors to Hyrcanus and Antipater.³⁷² Thus, *xenos* friendship, citizenship, and patron-client relations between Roman and Judean elite benefactorially filtered down through Rome's Judean society.

³⁶⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.149-155.

³⁶⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.190-210, *War* 1.199-200.

³⁶⁹ A Avidov, 'Peer Solidarity and Communal Loyalty in Roman Judea' in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, XLIX, No. 2, (Autumn, 1998), 264-279, (266-267).

³⁷⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.213-216.

³⁷¹ "...bees had settled next to a statue of Heracles in the Capitoline region. Since rites (sacra) for Isis happened to take place (or cult-images or objects happened to be there at that time), the soothsayers were of the opinion that the precincts of the temples of Isis and Serapis had to be razed to the ground once more," Cassius Dio, 42.26. Sarolta A. Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 65.

³⁷² A. Avidov, 'Peer Solidarity and Communal Loyalty,' 266-267.

After Caesar's assassination in 44 BCE, the angry crowd torched the Senate house and attempted "to bury his body in the temple (of Jupiter *Capitolinus*) along with the gods."³⁷³ The priests, likely of Jupiter, turned the crowd back to the Forum where citizens, elite Roman women, and Julius' soldiers stood vigil along with Judeans, and a multitude of other foreigners who mourned at and protected the funeral pyre remnants for several nights.³⁷⁴

Here Rome's Judeans are very Roman. They were present amongst the mourning throngs for his funeral oration, procession, and crowd reaction. Let us consider whom they are honoring. Julius Caesar had already been lauded in Rome during his lifetime as a god as the crowd was reminded in his funeral oration.³⁷⁵ His statue had been erected in the temple of Quirinius inscribed "To the Unconquered God."³⁷⁶ The Roman Senate had ordered a temple constructed dedicated "To Julius Caesar and his Clemency," imitating that of Jupiter.³⁷⁷ Julius Caesar was popularly placed among the state gods, and the Augustan games honoring Caesar's deification were comet-assisted in placement of his deified soul among the gods in heaven.³⁷⁸

This glimpse of Judeans being Roman in Rome as clients and friends of Julius provides further confirmation of their active participation in the political, religious, and social life of the cosmopolis. How and when they participated is not entirely clear, but their observed presence at Roman cult practices honoring the deified dead go far beyond what usually is contemplated as religious or ethnic Judean behavior, less than a generation after Jerusalem's conquest by Pompey. Additionally, Judeans resident in the *Transtiber* had easy access to the *horti Caesaris*, woodlands gifted to the Roman people for enjoyment in Julius Caesar's will, along with other parks and gardens including the *Antoniani*, and *Clodiae*, surrounding the *Transtiber*, and among the farms, wineries and villas to its north.³⁷⁹ It is apparent that Judean residents and citizens considered Rome their "fatherland."

³⁷³ Appian, *Roman History III, The Civil Wars*, 4 Vols., Horace White, (trans.), LCL (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1912-13), 2.143-148.

³⁷⁴ Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, 84; Keith Hopkins, "Divine Emperors or the Symbolic Unity of the Roman Empire" in *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1978, repr. 1980), 197-242, (202-203).

³⁷⁵ Appian, *Civil Wars*, 2.143-145.

³⁷⁶ Cassius Dio, 43.45.

³⁷⁷ Cassius Dio, 44.6.

³⁷⁸ Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, 88.

³⁷⁹ *Horti Caesaris* and *Antoniani*, Cassius Dio, 47.40.2; *Horti Clodiae*, Cicero, *Pro Cael.* 36, *Ad Atticus.* 12.44.2; gardens and farmland of the *Transtiberum* to the *Vaticanus*, Ö. Harmansah, "Trans Tiberim" in Lothar

Shortly after Caesar's death in 44, Josephus recorded another provincial Judean delegation present in Rome. Mark Anthony and the Roman Senate reaffirmed extant treaties with the Judean high priest Hyrcanus, which were again inscribed and preserved in the Temple of Concord.³⁸⁰ Moreover, at the conclusion of Josephus' list of Roman treaties with Judeans who resided in Asian cities, he claimed that many more are "engraved on columns and tables of brass in the Capitol that are still in being," demonstrating their ongoing enforcement even after the Judean War.³⁸¹

In 40 BCE, Parthian invasion of Judea hurled Herod into flight to Rome. After meeting Mark Anthony and the convened Senate, they decreed Herod king of Judea and other provincial territory. The newly appointed king and his entourage attended the appropriate Roman sacrifices to seal the treaty on the Capitoline with Mark Anthony, the Roman Senate, and the Roman elite, including Octavian, already self-titled "son of god," of the divinized Julius.³⁸² In conjunction with these events, Herod and his compatriots were likely spectators of games and shows while in Rome, and introduced to the Senate by Mark Anthony in accordance with recent treaties with Hyrcanus. In 39, Herod returned to Judea, and after defeating his opponents, regained power in Jerusalem in 37. The result of Jerusalem's resistance was more Judean captives paraded through the Forum in Sosius's triumph in 34, sold as slaves who perhaps regained freedom by Judean purchase.³⁸³

2.3 Judean and Egyptian Life in Augustan Rome 31 BCE to 14 CE

Beginning in 33, and especially after Actium, Octavian and Marcus Agrippa focused on urban renewal of emergent imperial Rome, on restorations of temples, theaters, and civic buildings. Octavian provided free oil and salt to its citizens, including Judeans and Egyptians.³⁸⁴ Furthermore, he restored the water supplies to each *vicus* of Rome, with it flowing into public basins, used by Judeans and non-Judeans alike, located next to the public

Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 247-248.

³⁸⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.219-222.

³⁸¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.266.

³⁸² Keith Hopkins, 'Divine Emperors or the Symbolic Unity', 202; Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.381-389.

³⁸³ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 14.465-490, *War*, 1.345-357, 5.398; Cassius Dio 49.22; D. Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers* (London: Duckworth with the Classical Press of Wales, 2000), 256-257.

³⁸⁴ Cassius Dio, 49.43.2-3; Diane Favro, 'Making Rome a World City', in Karl Galinsky, (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to The Age of Augustus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2005), 234-263, (240).

vici or compital altars.³⁸⁵ It is of interest that during this religious, moral, and civic renewal, Marcus Agrippa exiled astrologers and other unrecognized religious cults from Rome, but not Judeans, Egyptians, or Isis adherents, who would seem a ripe target in light of conflict with Egypt and Anthony before 31.³⁸⁶

During the 20s BCE, Octavian commenced construction of Rome as an imperial capital, and placed much of the responsibility in the hands of his friend, Marcus Agrippa.³⁸⁷ This creation of Rome as a world cosmopolis included expansion of the Roman Forum, Campus Martius, Transtiberum, and other sections of the city as detailed in Chapter 1. During these years of imperial expansion, more Judean synagogues were constructed.

As Richardson points out, three synagogues were named after important Roman imperial personages, Augustus, Marcus Agrippa, and Volumnius.³⁸⁸ It is likely that the Augustan and Agrippan synagogues were built during Rome's urban renaissance in the 20s. Augustus' and Agrippa's friendship with the Judean elite would have benefited Roman Judeans during these years.³⁸⁹ The Augustan synagogue would have epitomized honorable patron-client relations and friendship expressed communally and concretely between Romans and Judeans.³⁹⁰ Perhaps the synagogue was built by Augustus for use by Judeans in his extended household.³⁹¹ If the synagogue named in Augustan honor was located in the Transtiberum, then its construction would likely have occurred in conjunction with other religious and beautification projects of the region, likely completed by Agrippa or Augustus by the mid-20s BCE. However, it may have been constructed on the Campus Martius as part of Rome's new city center, outside Rome's *pomerium* but where it shared equal honors with the Egyptian *Iseum*.

³⁸⁵ J. Bert Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004), 70-72.

³⁸⁶ Cassius Dio, 49.43.5; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979, repr. 1996), 124; Ramsey MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1967), 132.

³⁸⁷ Favro, 'Making Rome a World City,' 239-249.

³⁸⁸ Peter Richardson, 'Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome' in Karl P. Donfried & Peter Richardson (eds.), *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 17-29, (20-22).

³⁸⁹ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 292-295.

³⁹⁰ L.M. White, 'Finding the Ties that Bind: Issues from Social Description,' *Semeia* 56 (1992), 3-22 (19); Romano Penna, 'The Jews in Rome at the Time of the Apostle Paul' in *Paul the Apostle: Jew and Greek Alike Vol. 1*, Thomas P. Wahl (ed.), (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1996), 19-47, (29-30).

³⁹¹ Margaret Williams, 'Being a Jew in Rome: Sabbath Fasting as an Expression of Romano-Jewish Identity' in *Negotiating Diaspora: Jewish Strategies in the Roman Empire*, John M.G. Barclay, (ed.), (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 8-18, (12).

That Marcus Agrippa would have been patron of a synagogue built in Rome, potentially for some of his own freedmen, is reasonable, given his close friendship with Herod and its possible location near his villa, either on the Campus Martius or northern Transtiber.³⁹² Additionally, the *Campenses* synagogue was probably built around this time on the Campus Martius.³⁹³ Its edifice amidst the monumental and public facilities of burgeoning imperial Rome would have honored Herodian friendship with Augustus given its construction was of similar quality and style as surrounding buildings. A *Campenses* synagogue placed outside Rome's *pomerium* or sacred precinct left it under the jurisdiction of the Senate and Augustus as *princeps* and later *ponitifex maximus*, but free to operate within the stipulations of Roman law and treaties with Roman Judeans, and in harmony with Judean Law and customs.³⁹⁴

It is possible the synagogue of the *Libertini*, mentioned in Acts 6:9, was constructed in Rome during this time. That freedmen acquired property in desired locations, and disbursed construction funds provides a sense of Roman and Judean freedmen wealth. That Judeans attained property and monies is apparent in the presence of the Hasmonean and Herodian families, and the number and potential distribution of newly constructed synagogues in Rome.

Herodian relatives resident in Rome with its elite are well documented. In 23/22 BCE, Herod's two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, were sent to Rome to reside with Gaius Asinius Pollio, the famous Roman poet and historian who founded the first public library on the Aventine.³⁹⁵ However, Augustus brought the young Herodians to his *domus* on the Palatine, and gave them an elite education.³⁹⁶ His action brought sons of Herod and the Hasmonean Judean, Mariamme I of Jerusalem – circumcised provincial Judean elite and their accompanying entourage – into the Augustan household. They became intimate friends of Germanicus, Tiberius, Agrippa, and others in Augustus' immediate circle and with the literary world of Rome. Yet, while resident among Rome's imperial elite, they were able to

³⁹² The synagogue of the Agrippesians is mentioned in three catacomb inscriptions, probably from Monteverde, *CIJ* nos. 365, 425, 503 in Jean Baptiste Frey, (ed.), *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*, Corpus of Jewish Inscriptions (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1975); H.J. Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960, repr. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995), 140 ff; For Agrippa's villa at *Villa Farnesina*, see Ö. Harmansah, 'Villa Farnesina' in Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 272-273; Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 292-293.

³⁹³ Frey, *CIJ*, I, nos. 88, 319, 523, perhaps 433.

³⁹⁴ Penna, 'The Jews in Rome,' 37, Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.143.

³⁹⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.342-343; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 35.10.

³⁹⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.343-344, 16.7.

observe their Judean festivals and meetings as Judeans in Rome, “according to their forefathers,” as earlier decreed by Caesar, Anthony, and Augustus, including not eating pork.³⁹⁷

That this literary world is familiar with Judean ways is apparent in Horace and Ovid. Horace ends one humorous satire threatening his critic with a crowd of poets who will pressure him like the Jews.³⁹⁸ I concur with Barclay that Horace’s aside reflects their social and political power more than religious affinities in Rome.³⁹⁹ However, Horace’s next tongue-in-cheek deals specifically with offense to circumcised Jews in relation to Sabbath observance. For the comment to have popular impact, it needs to allude to possible Sabbath observance in some form by non-Judean Romans.⁴⁰⁰ Ovid’s line about the seventh day rites of the ‘Syrian Judean’ linked two groups of Easterners, and assumed the readers were familiar with Judean Sabbath observance.⁴⁰¹ He later recommends amorously luring a girl on Sabbath since many shops were closed that day, further suggesting non-Judeans may have practised a form of Sabbatarianism.⁴⁰² Elsewhere, Ovid satirized Judean reluctance to travel on Sabbath, again marking a particular Judean practice with wit.⁴⁰³

In 23 BCE, another grain shortage impacted Rome. The following year, in response to the famine’s severity, Augustus took control of the grain supply. It is quite possible that Philo’s reference to Augustus’ allowance of Roman Judeans to collect their monthly grain dole the day after Sabbath was decreed at this time, given the scarcity of grain and recipient reduction.⁴⁰⁴ If this is assumed, then certainly some Roman Judeans received tickets, official documents or *tabulae* as legal confirmation of their right to receive grain, since Augustus’ action in 22 BCE resulted in administrative restructuring and reissuance of tickets or legal documents to limit and legitimize the number of Roman citizens receiving the ration.⁴⁰⁵ However, Judean religious laws were respected in this reform by legislation agreed by the Roman Senate, yet in turn, Judeans honored imperial and neighborhood cult interests by

³⁹⁷ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 294.

³⁹⁸ Horace, *Sermones* 1.4.142-143.

³⁹⁹ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 296.

⁴⁰⁰ Horace, *Sermones* 1.9.60-78.

⁴⁰¹ Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.75-76 in Ovid, *II, Art of Love (Ars Amatoria). Cosmetics. Remedies for Love (Remedia Amoris). Ibis. Walnut-tree. Sea Fishing. Consolation*, J.H. Mozley (trans.), G.P. Goold (rev.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1929).

⁴⁰² Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.413-416.

⁴⁰³ Ovid, *Remedia Amoris* 219-220.

⁴⁰⁴ Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 158.

⁴⁰⁵ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 62-63.

collecting the grain at the compital altars. The grain was likely distributed by the *modius*, the standard grain measure for rations in the military and perhaps civilian life in Rome.⁴⁰⁶ As Gruen remarks of the circumstances, “Rome did not have a ‘Jewish problem.’”⁴⁰⁷

From 22 to 18 BCE, various members of the provincial Judean elite continued in residence in Rome, some within the Augustan household or in their own. Many Roman Judeans were now likely second or third generation freeborn Roman citizens, with full civil rights and privileges of the city, in addition to freedom to honor the Judean feasts and festivals of their ancestors.⁴⁰⁸ Not only were Herod’s sons friends of the Roman elite, but Aristobulus’ wife Bernice was a close friend of Antonia, Drusus the elder’s wife. In turn, Bernice’s son Herod Agrippa I was close friends with Drusus, the future emperor Tiberius’ son.⁴⁰⁹ In 18 BCE, Herod the Great revisited Rome and asked that his sons return to provincial Judea.⁴¹⁰ Augustan consent was granted, and Alexander and Antipater sailed home, later to be accused of intrigue to commit patricide.⁴¹¹ Their departure does not end Herodian presence in Rome, since Bernice and Herod Agrippa I likely remained.

In 12 BCE, Herod returned to Rome with scheming sons in tow, and consulted Augustus over their parricidal intentions.⁴¹² He accused them of enmity before the *princeps*.⁴¹³ Of interest is the sons’ defense. They perceived the appropriateness and interest of their father in “saving them,” since he brought them to the sacredness of Rome, “its temples and altars,” to demonstrate Herod’s justice and mercy. Yet they denied the accusation by citing their futility, given the “religion of all your subjects, and the piety of the whole nation, and the sons’ inability to enter the most holy temple,” in Jerusalem if parricides.⁴¹⁴ This trial defense is significant in that the sons play on Rome’s piety, perhaps for Augustus’ mercy, yet their personal observance of Judean religion and personal piety is the core of their refutation. I suggest this is an example of Judean assimilation of both Roman and Judean environments,

⁴⁰⁶ An example of the *modius*, Paul Bidwell, *Roman Forts in Britain* (Stroud, United Kingdom: Tempus Publishing, 2007), 106.

⁴⁰⁷ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 28-29.

⁴⁰⁸ Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, Percival Vaughan Davies (trans.), (New York: Columbia University, 1969), 2.4.11, which records Augustus’ later ironic humor that he would rather be Herod’s pig than Herod’s son, denoting some knowledge of Judean diet.

⁴⁰⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.143-146.

⁴¹⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.6-7.

⁴¹¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.66-86.

⁴¹² Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.270-271.

⁴¹³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.90-91.

⁴¹⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.106, 16.115.

and exploitation of both to their advantage. They exploited Roman knowledge of Judean law and practice, as well as Roman ideals. The result? Herod, with encouragement from Augustus, was reconciled with them.

Macrobius records Augustus' ironic humor, perhaps in relation to these instances that he would rather be Herod's pig than Herod's son, denoting some knowledge of Judean diet, which may have been practised by the Herodians and their entourage while resident in Augustus' household.⁴¹⁵ If Herod's pigs were safe from slaughter, then it seems appropriate to surmise that his household in Rome honored Judean dietary laws, avoiding pork.

After the trial, Herod lingered in Rome with his sons. He sponsored performances for the people of Rome, including its Judeans, and granted gifts to the city or its populace, which likely included benefits to its Roman Judean residents. It may have included the "Synagogue of the Herodians" unless this *proseucha* was constructed later by Herod Agrippa I.⁴¹⁶ Certainly, Herod and his entourage attended the shows he sponsored in the theater or amphitheater. On the same journey, he possibly placed his son, Antipater, under Marcus Agrippa's patronage, just before the great Roman's death.⁴¹⁷ Once again, another member of the Judean elite resided in Rome at the highest levels of society, and perhaps Archelaus, Agrippa, or Philip were already resident in 12 BCE. Yet Herodians were not the only famous Judeans resident among Augustan Rome's elite. Caecilius of Calacte, originally from Sicily, was a Judean freedman originally named Archagathus. He took his Roman patron's name, became an orator and literary critic of Greek, and focused on history and rhetoric in Rome.⁴¹⁸ We might argue that he was not Judean, yet Josephus presents him as of Judean ethnicity, although perhaps not practising its religion, which he leaves nebulous.

After Herod's return to Judea in 12 BCE, problems with Sylleus in Arabia caused a rift in Herod's relationship with Augustus. This resulted in his rejection of Herod's initial provincial delegation in 10 BCE, despite Antipater's residence with Marcus Agrippa, and possibly his sons dwelling in Augustus' Palatine household after Marcus Agrippa's demise. Upon the spurned delegation's return and learning of Sylleus' deceptive intrigue, Herod sent a new delegation to the emperor in 9 BCE. It was led by Nicolaus of Damascus who

⁴¹⁵ Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 2.4.11.

⁴¹⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.128, 270-271; Richardson, 'Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome', 23-28.

⁴¹⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.86.

⁴¹⁸ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 295 n. 34.

successfully reconciled Herod with Augustus and sent Sylleus to his death, inferring an ongoing presence of the Herodian Judean delegation in Rome for some months, in addition to its resident Herodian family members.⁴¹⁹ At least three of Herod's other sons in addition to Antipater were in Rome; Antipas, Archelaus, and Philip were raised and educated in the city during this period.⁴²⁰

At some point, possibly in 10 or 9 BCE, Antipater returned to Judea to be with Herod. For local Judeans and Herodians present in Rome in 8 BCE, they would have participated in Augustus' *lustrum*, or census, which re-established Roman eligibility for the grain dole, and reconfirmed the *pomerium* or Rome's sacred boundaries, which prepared it for its division into fourteen regions, and possible partition into 265 *vici*.⁴²¹ Other Roman Judeans would have participated as well, along with the populace.

Additional intrigue resulted in Herod's returning Antipater and his entourage, including Bathyllus, a Judean freedman, with his friends to Augustus in Rome, in 6 BCE.⁴²² Antipater accused Archelaus and Philip of intrigue against Herod by having Herod's friends send accusatory letters to the king while the sons concurrently dwelt in Rome.⁴²³ However, these letters bore no weight with Herod, given his discovery of Antipater's own efforts to poison him, while Antipater was in Rome with his brothers.⁴²⁴ The linkage between Herod's and Augustus' households is further illustrated by the presence of a Judean slave named Acme who belonged to Julia, Augustus' wife, implicated in Antipater's plot against Herod and Salome.⁴²⁵

Herod sent another delegation to Augustus, likely in 5 BCE, with substantiation of the conspiracy hatched by Antipater and Acme.⁴²⁶ The emperor, based on evidence supplied by Herod's delegation, executed her.⁴²⁷ Antipater returned to Judea in mid-5, was thrown into prison, and executed in 4 BCE, just before Herod's death. Herod's other sons, Archelaus, now only 18, and the younger Antipas and Philip, also evidently returned from Rome to Jericho or

⁴¹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.270-271.

⁴²⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.20-21.

⁴²¹ Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 87-89.

⁴²² Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.52-53; 17.79.

⁴²³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.80.

⁴²⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.78-81.

⁴²⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.141.

⁴²⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.146.

⁴²⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.182.

Jerusalem on the eve of Herod's death, briefly breaking an almost continuous presence of Herodian spouses and children resident among Rome's elite for approximately 18 years. These elite Judeans were noted to have been in relationship with other Judeans in the city, such as Acme, and household stewards and other Judeans would have cared for their affairs.

Shortly after Herod's death in 4 BCE, Archelaus, and Antipas and Salome, Herod's sister, returned to Rome to contest Herod's testament before Augustus.⁴²⁸ Dispute resolution took time, and all remained in Rome, possibly due to cessation of the sailing season. While in Rome with their delegations and entourages, another 50 delegates arrived from Judea to complain to Augustus about the province's treatment under Archelaus, and first request autonomy under Judean law, but finally a Roman governor.⁴²⁹ Philip, brother of Archelaus and Antipas, arrived shortly with the political support of Varus, Roman governor of Syria.⁴³⁰ The support of Varus for Philip's claim to Judean rulership is a further example of elite Judean interaction and friendship between Herodian and Roman elite in Rome.

The subsequent events portray Roman Judeans' involvement with, and interest in, Herodian and Roman affairs and Judea. When Augustus heard the dispute over Herod's will, 8,000 Roman Judeans supposedly gathered either as onlookers, or in support of the various provincial Judean petitions, including Roman governorship.⁴³¹ Sicker suggests their presence was to counter Mesopotamian Judean influence in Jerusalem and a chance of Judean-Parthian alliance, but this seems overstated given Rome's firm control in the East, since 37.⁴³² They are likely present given their interest in Judean affairs and also in support of various Herodian factions, based upon kinship, patronage, and benefaction, in addition to ethnic concerns.

Augustus gathered Rome's leading men, senators and his *concilium*, to hear the case. Most significant is the hearing's location – inside the Temple of Palatine Apollo. This temple housed the image of the law-making Greco-Roman god who granted Augustus' victory at Actium, and his mythical divine father.⁴³³ The temple contained the Sibylline oracles and

⁴²⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.219-249; *War* 2.14-18.

⁴²⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.299-300; 314; *War* 2.20-22.

⁴³⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.303.

⁴³¹ Josephus, *War* 2.80-83

⁴³² Martin Sicker, *Between Rome and Jerusalem: 300 Years of Roman-Judean Relations* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 106-108.

⁴³³ Zanker, *Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, 50-53.

numerous objects dedicated to Apollo. Into this sanctuary entered 50 provincial Judeans, most likely from Jerusalem, in addition to Herod Philip, Archelaus, Antipas, Salome, and their various counselors, to plead their interests before Augustus under the watchful eye of Apollo.⁴³⁴

We cannot know how many of the presumably 8,000-strong crowd of Roman Judeans crammed into this sanctuary, but Josephus mentioned they were present in Apollo's temple, a seat of imperial power and morality, filled with statues of deities linked with Augustus.⁴³⁵ It is of significance that this Judean crowd was welcome on the Palatine. They were not barred from the proceedings and they, in turn, did not protest the venue. Additionally, the number of the Judean Romans in attendance may provide a basis for quantitative assessment of the number of Judeans in Rome. If it is assumed that these men represent much of the male Roman Judeans residents, and that each hypothetically represents a "household" of 3-5 persons, then it is not unreasonable to assume a total Roman Judean population ranging from 25,000 to 40,000. Additionally, freeborn Roman citizens among them would have worn the toga.⁴³⁶ Again, Judeans are very Roman while being Judean, in an ethnic, political, and religious environment that portrays them being both.

After Augustus' ruling, and the rival Herodian groups departed for Judea, a pretender arose – a Roman Judean freedman from Sidon, who assumed the identity of Alexander, Herod's dead son. He traveled to Rome as claimant of the Judean throne, and was met by a "whole multitude" of Roman Judeans with joy, praise, and royal treatment.⁴³⁷ However, after careful questioning, Augustus quickly ended the charade, since he had intimately known Alexander and Aristobulus.⁴³⁸ Of significance, is the fact that Roman Judeans were able to meet the pretender, created a celebratory procession in the city, likely held meetings at a large venue to accommodate the crowds, and engaged in a political rally in Rome that caught the imperial attention – without negative intervention by Roman forces or leadership.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁴ Stewart Perone, *The Later Herods* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958), 15-16.

⁴³⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.300-303; *War* 2.80-81; Susan Walker, 'The Moral Museum: Augustus and the City of Rome' in *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City*, Jon Coulston and Hazel Dodge, (eds.), Oxford University School of Archaeology Monograph 54 (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2005), 61.

⁴³⁶ Walker, 'The Moral Museum: Augustus and the City of Rome', 69.

⁴³⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.330; *War* 2.101-105.

⁴³⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.338; *War* 2.106-110.

⁴³⁹ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 27-28.

There seems to be a decline in royal Judean visits to Rome from Judea after 4 BCE. However, Archelaus maintained a steward, perhaps a freed slave also named Archelaus, who managed his affairs in Rome, as other Herodian royalty would have done. Roman Judeans with interests in Judea, Galilee, and in Rome, no doubt interacted with these Roman Judean Herodian households and they in turn with other Judeans resident in Rome.

Ten years later, in about 5/6 CE, Archelaus was summoned by Augustus to answer accusations of a delegation from provincial Judea and Samaria sponsored by his Herodian relatives. After trial by Augustus, Archelaus was sentenced to exile in Gaul.⁴⁴⁰ From this evidence, it is reasonable to presume that despite a dearth of recorded Herodian journeys to Rome, at the least, delegations from Judean-ruled tetrarchies travelled to the imperial capital during the later Augustan years, while other Herodian sons remained resident in Rome, given the relationships of Salome, and Livia, among others that intertwined Judean and Roman interests.

Another serious grain shortage arose in Rome, that affected Roman Judean life in 5/6 CE. It was far more severe than that of 23/22 BCE, possibly exacerbated by nomadic invasion of Africa, with ensuing unrest, loss of Roman control to robbers, simultaneous with revolt in Sardinia.⁴⁴¹ The resultant famine in Rome was so relentless in 6 CE, it forced evacuation of all classes of her populace as a serious fire added to Rome's misery.

As a result, gladiators and slaves for sale were banished to further than 100 miles from the city to preserve security and prevent greater unrest. Non-citizen foreigners of all ethnicities – Greeks, Judeans, Egyptians, and others – were ejected, except doctors and teachers. Large segments of Roman elite households, including judges, senators and that of Augustus, left the capital to alleviate grain demand and ease its shortage. Augustus again made provision for the remaining population from his own funds and rationed grain.⁴⁴² Here we find non-Roman Judeans likely expelled, but Roman Judeans permitted to remain in the city as legal grain dole recipients. These Roman actions were not ethnically driven, but compelled by economics and grain supply. However, the departure of such a significant proportion of the

⁴⁴⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.342-344.

⁴⁴¹ Famine in Rome, Cassius Dio, 22.26.1-3; Similar revolts to 6 CE occurred in 19 CE, Cassius Dio 55.28.1, 55.28.4; Tacitus *Annals* 3.20; Garnsey, 'Famine in Rome,' 58; MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 262.

⁴⁴² Cassius Dio, 55.22.3; 26.1-3; 28.1; Suetonius, *Augustus* 42.3; Garnsey, 'Famine in Rome,' 63.

population, both Judean and non-Judean, resulted in great disruption of life in Rome leaving the city on the edge of revolt.

Rome's trials continued; a massive revolt erupted in Dalmatia and Pannonia of provincial Illyricum in 6 CE. It was a terrible threat to Rome and Tiberius initially was placed in command to suppress it.⁴⁴³ At one point, almost a third of Rome's military strength campaigned to end the rebellion. The result was a military in which troops remained in the ranks past retirement. The rest were exhausted and on the edge of mutiny.⁴⁴⁴ In the face of such extremities, Augustus broke with legionary tradition and recruited freedmen and liberated slaves to form new voluntary cohorts, perhaps equipped as *auxilia*. The recruitment was inadequate and Augustus resorted to forced conscription in Italy and in Rome, offering Roman citizenship to non-Romans and liberated slaves at retirement.⁴⁴⁵ If Judeans were resident in Rome as citizens, freedmen, or liberated slaves, they were not exempt from recruitment. It is possible some were drafted in the emergency recruitment drive, as they represented a sizeable minority in Rome among the citizens, freedmen and possibly the slave population.

The acute military emergency did not end in 6 CE for Rome, Augustus or Judeans. Varus' debacle destroyed three legions in 9. Augustus again resorted to forced military conscription in Rome in fear of Germanic invasion of Italy. He involuntarily conscripted Romans and freedmen from Rome, some by drawn lots. They were hastily armed, trained and sent north, either as *auxilia* or as replacements to bring remaining legions up to strength. It is important to note that there were no exceptions based upon religion or ethnicity in this event. It is probable that Judeans and Egyptians were enrolled as any other group in Rome, based upon the lottery.⁴⁴⁶

In light of ongoing instability, in 11 CE, Augustus again took action against astrologers, most probably over speculation of Rome's survival, and regarding his death and succession. It was one of ten expulsions from Rome astrologers suffered between 33 BCE and 93 CE. Again, Judeans were not singled out in this action, and neither were other groups considered

⁴⁴³ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 16.1.

⁴⁴⁴ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 16.5; Cassius Dio 56.12.2.

⁴⁴⁵ Cassius Dio, 55.31.1; Tacitus, *Annals* 1.314; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 104.

⁴⁴⁶ Cassius Dio, 56.23.2; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 108.

superstitio.⁴⁴⁷ If some Judeans practised astrology or foretelling the future, they would have been expelled, while other Judeans were exempt.

2.3.1 Rethinking Judean Life in Rome: Judean-Roman Relations at the end of the Augustan Era

In summary, this review of Judean life in Augustan Rome provides insight into their assimilation into Rome's culture, and resistance to that assimilation. Judeans found themselves at both ends of the social spectrum, as slaves and as elite. Many enslaved likely gained their freedom quite early after 64 BCE, implying many became Roman citizens and assumed the obligations of freedmen to their patrons' families. Attaining citizenship involved Roman manumission in which Judeans took their master's name, and became a member of his Roman tribe. Later, as Roman citizens, they enrolled in the *vici* of Rome and gained eligibility to vote.

It is often argued this Roman social mobility was denied to Judeans because of religion; however, social mobility for some freed slaves is apparent in Roman literature, with some attaining elite status under Augustus, Claudius, and Nero. It is certain some Judeans served the Judean elite in this period and Judean elite dwelt in Roman homes, without expectation of shedding Judean identity. In some cases, the Roman elite assisted their Judean freedmen and descendants in attaining honor and elite status, as Augustus and Agrippa did with the Hasmoneans and Herodians.⁴⁴⁸ Judean freedmen, like others, were linked by patronage and business relationships to Rome's elite, and both were mutually dependent in commerce, social status, and economics.⁴⁴⁹ These beneficial relationships are especially apparent for freedmen who gained status due to their relationship with the emperors and their extended families, especially Augustus. Roman elite and imperial friendship resulted in receiving wealth, honors, status, citizenship, and prestige by Judeans in Rome.

⁴⁴⁷ Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 124.

⁴⁴⁸ Henrick Mouritsen, 'Mobility and social change in Italian towns during the principate' in Helen M. Parkins (ed.), *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City* (London: Routledge, 1997), 59-82.

⁴⁴⁹ Helen Parkins, 'The "consumer city" domesticated? The Roman city in elite economic strategies' in Helen M. Parkins (ed.), *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City* (London: Routledge, 1997), 83-111 (87, 90-96).

Areas where Roman Judeans resided experienced these intertwined business interests, property owner relationships, and ethnic interchange.⁴⁵⁰ Cicero and Juvenal's *Satire 3* provide a slanted view of life in *insulae* in Rome, although high rents may be realistic, given space constraints.⁴⁵¹ Roman Judeans citizens or freedmen would have entered into numerous business and housing relationships, likely based upon written contracts with rights of recourse under Roman law, which they effectively used to promote their interests in Rome. Pompeii provides a sample of public property leasing for business and similar slave and freedmen links with the elite.⁴⁵²

With their newly-gained voting rights, Roman Judeans took part in late Republican trials and in public meetings in the Forum and Campus Martius, where they were informed and expressed their views, or in *Comitia* where they voted, and at which Roman sacrifices and augury were commonplace. They grasped and utilized the power of the voting block in Roman politics. They were present along with the Roman elite, military and the public at the funeral pyre and Roman rites for Julius Caesar's death. The treaties of provincial Judea were publicly displayed and honored by Roman sacrifice. Originals were hung in the Temple of Concord and perhaps Fides. Judean elite, including Hasmonean priests and Judeans, were granted privileges to attend Roman shows and games. Moreover, their Roman citizenship included them in the census, in which they pledged faith with Rome and gained capability to win and maintain grain dole eligibility, both when the number of its beneficiaries was expanded and when recipients were reduced. Their political voice enabled them to preserve their religious tradition, including Sabbath observance, in exception to grain dole timing.

As discussed in Appendix 2.3, most Judeans presumably lived in the *Transtiberum*, the newest, high-growth section of Rome, where land values and business opportunities increased, and an area of social mobility in proximity to the Campus Martius's public amenities. However, given the Villa Torlonia findings, and despite Philo's remarks, I suggest a larger geographic dispersion of Judeans early in Rome, given catacomb and synagogue distribution, as suggested by Penna, and further detailed in Appendix 2.4-5.⁴⁵³ Synagogue and catacomb construction in a relatively short period of not only Monteverde catacombs, but almost simultaneously, a second catacomb at Villa Torlonia across the city substantiates

⁴⁵⁰ Parkins, 'The "consumer city" domesticated?,' 92-97.

⁴⁵¹ Juvenal, *Satire 3*, 165, 193-198; Cicero, *Ad Att.* 14.9.

⁴⁵² Parkins, 'The "consumer city" domesticated?,' 103-107.

⁴⁵³ Penna, 'The Jews in Rome,' 37.

that Judean wealth and organization existed to purchase the property and fund construction. This strengthens grounds for consideration of a Roman Judean elite presence active in Rome, and an early date of a Roman Judean population with economic resources and legal standing to construct synagogue and catacomb projects, or given their significant political and economic resources, in conjunction with Judean elite, to attract Roman elite and imperial benefaction based upon friendship reciprocity.

Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that early Roman Judeans were spread throughout the city and interacted with, were affected by, and influenced its culture, from the commencement of Judean presence in Rome. They lived not only in the Transtiber, but on the Aventine, in the Subura, the Campus Martius, the Palatine, and received non-Judean Roman elite patronage. The population distribution is reasonable given that the provincial Judean elite were intertwined with that of imperial Rome both when visiting and in residence. Judeans were allowed to worship in the city in their own groups – their synagogues, and likely in their own buildings if the Judean synagogue of Ostia is assumed an example of Judean worship locales in Rome.⁴⁵⁴

The most telling event of Roman Judean assimilation and acculturation, and the parameters of that assimilation, was the Augustan settlement of Herod's testament. In that moment, Roman Judeans, both local population and provincial Judean elite raised in Rome and Judea, without protest of venue, gathered in the Temple of Apollo, in the presence of the god who granted Augustus his power and semi-divine status, and engaged in a trial and debate over rulership of their motherland, mother city, and responsibility for its temple, their most sacred place of worship. They did not worship the Roman gods, but accommodated to being in their presence. As Romans, they strode up the Palatine, engaged in a Roman trial process, and were a political voice in a Roman world – one that converged with their desire to preserve and enhance the core of what constitutes their "Judeanness." Roman Judeans present on the Palatine were both clearly Roman *and* Judean, who utilized and experienced classic hybridity of both ethnic identities as they chose, or suited their cause, while rebuffing others as it suited their circumstances. This ethnic hybridity continued during the Tiberian principate.

⁴⁵⁴ Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 156-157; Donald D. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts: The Place of the Synagogues in the Second Temple Period*, SBLDS 169 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 332; Anders Runesson, 'The Synagogue of Ancient Ostia: The Building and its History from the First to the Fifth Century' in Birget Olson, Dieter Mitternacht, and Olof Brandt, eds., *The Synagogue of Ancient Ostia and the Jews of Rome: Interdisciplinary Studies* (Stockholm, Sweden: Svenska Institutet i Rom, 2001), 29-99.

2.4 Judean and Egyptian Life in Tiberian Rome: 14 to 37 CE

Upon Augustus' death in 14, Tiberius became emperor and Rome's world changed.⁴⁵⁵ It is assumed by some that Judeans in Rome experienced continued "anti-Semitic" suppression under Tiberius. Particularly, the events of 19 CE are cited as an example of anti-Judean treatment. However, that conclusion may not be supported by closer analysis.

2.4.1 The Events of Rome prior to the "Judean Crisis" of 19 CE in Context

Traditionally, the focus for New Testament scholars when reviewing 19 CE has been Tiberius' removal of 4,000 Judeans, and by some accounts, Egyptians, of military age as narrated in Josephus, Tacitus, Dio, and Suetonius.⁴⁵⁶ Slingerland's rationale is an example of the general argument of Tiberian "anti-Semitism." He commences a review of Tiberius' Judean "repression" with an assessment of Valerius Maximus. Slingerland cursorily notes various cults Valerius reported as previously banned from Rome and abruptly dismisses the core rationale for Valerius' *exempla*, defaming him as only being devoted "to the prosperity-bringing practices of traditional Roman religion."⁴⁵⁷ He accuses Valerius of unsympathetic justification of past suppressions of charlatanism and foreign *sacra* in Rome, concluding that Valerius "revealed his own contemporary hostility towards those rites," and narrated them to support anti-Jewish/anti-Isiac measures by Tiberius in 19 CE.⁴⁵⁸ In this, Slingerland ignores the third alternative reading of Valerius' *Factorum* 1.3.3, which does not mention Judeans, but only followers of Jupiter Sabazius as those compelled to leave Rome.⁴⁵⁹

As demonstrated in Chapter 1.2.4.8-9, a considerable amount of research completed before and after Slingerland's treatise provides a substantially different perspective of Valerius Maximus' *Factorum* than he assumes. Chapter 1.2.4.9 utilized Valerius's *exempla* to

⁴⁵⁵ Cassius Dio, 56.45.1-3.

⁴⁵⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.65-84; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.85.4, Suetonius, *Tiberius* 36; Cassus Dio, 57.18.

⁴⁵⁷ Valerius 1.3; Slingerland cites Constant's 1935 work, who portrays Valerius as having devotion to a religion of the state, a political religion inaugurated by Augustus, exhibiting a 'false zeal.' See Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 42, n. 10; Pierre Constant, *Valère Maxime: Actions et paroles mémorables*, Pierre Constant (ed.), 2 Vols. (Paris: Librairie Garnier Frères, 1935), 2:346.

⁴⁵⁸ Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 42-44.

⁴⁵⁹ Slingerland uses Lane's article to refute the validity of the third reading, Eugene N. Lane, 'Sabazius and the Jews in Valerius Maximus: A Reexamination,' *Journal of Roman Studies* 69 (1979), 35-38; Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 40-41. Judean inclusion: Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 150-151; Mueller excludes Jewish expulsion in *Factorum* 1.3.3. Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 100-101.

comprehend Roman views regarding the values, beliefs, and practices of late Augustan and early Tiberian Roman ethnicity, especially *mores* and *pietas* towards the gods, as a construction of idealized Roman ethnicity as superior to Hellenicity. Simultaneously, an ethnic Easternization of Rome occurred. Egyptianization, a subset of Rome's Easternization, has been described as an example of ongoing ethnic assimilation, acculturation and resistance within Rome itself, enmeshed in the politics, religion, and economics of the city as described in Appendix 3.

Thus, Slingerland's result is a distortion of Valerius' intent and too narrow an approach to considering Valerius' and others' references to Judeans without a comparative view of competing ethnic relations in Tiberian Rome as detailed in regard to Egyptians in Appendix 3, and Judeans and Egyptians below.

With this model of competing ethnic interests in mind, and visualized in Appendix 1, Figure 2, let us revisit Tiberius' decisions in regard to Rome, Egyptians and Judeans in 14-19 CE. I propose that three spheres of Roman life provide a context for Tiberius' action. These are Rome's military situation, its economic circumstances, and the imperial and senatorial concern over the decline of Roman morals, religion, and piety – Rome's religious situation. Events and responses drive the Roman legal, military, economic, and religious rationale of Tiberius' actions pre, during, and post 19. Finally, I will suggest a point of view regarding the Judean situation that reflects this range of circumstances and their implications for Rome, Egyptians, and Judeans.

2.4.1.1 The "Judean Crisis" of 19 CE in its Context: The military situation

Rome had generally relied on recruited volunteers, allies and some conscription to fill the ranks of its legions and auxiliary forces.⁴⁶⁰ In the west, legionary recruits were primarily Roman citizens, but not all Italians.⁴⁶¹ *Auxilia* were traditionally raised within other provinces and client kingdoms.⁴⁶² Initially, they were permanently posted near their place of recruitment. However, the transfer and settlement of auxiliary troops to new areas became

⁴⁶⁰ I.P. Haynes, 'The Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes* of the Roman Imperial Army From Augustus to Septimius Severus' (Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1993), 39-49.

⁴⁶¹ Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 85 n. 15.

⁴⁶² Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*,' 42-46.

more common.⁴⁶³ More importantly, Augustus and Tiberius were reluctant to pursue conscription unless the needs of the empire absolutely required such action.⁴⁶⁴ The last forced levy in Italy before the events of 19 CE had been one enacted by Augustus, after Varus's devastating defeat in 9 CE. In response to those events, Augustus raised 30 cohorts of troops (*cohortes civium Romanorum*) by force, including freedmen from Rome and Italy, a recruitment reinforced by execution of resisters. "Nevertheless, he (Augustus) made preparations as best he could in view of the circumstances; and when no men of military age showed a willingness to be enrolled, he made them draw lots, depriving of his property and disenfranchising every fifth man of those still under thirty-five and every tenth man among those who had passed that age. Finally, as a great many paid no heed to him even then, he put some to death. He chose by lot as many he could of those who had completed their term of service and of the freedmen, and after enrolling them, sent them in haste with Tiberius into the province of Germany."⁴⁶⁵

Given this, Roman events prior to 19 CE demonstrate that Tiberius had an urgent military need to levy new *auxilia* and legionary troops, which drove his rationale for the Jewish and Egyptian conscription during that year. In 14, Tiberius feared the legions in Germany and Pannonia would revolt – and they did – over pay and length of service.⁴⁶⁶ Tiberius initially relented to some demands, but in 15, he insisted that legionaries outside Italy serve their full 20 years, even if relieved from the main ranks.⁴⁶⁷ Those who served longer were discharged into new *coloniae* for veterans, or settled close to their old legions. The situation was unsatisfactorily resolved, for in 16 Tiberius faced revolt and warfare in Germany by numerous tribes led by Arminius, who were defeated, but not crushed by Germanicus.⁴⁶⁸ The human cost of retirements and campaigns reduced the veteran manpower of the Rhine and

⁴⁶³ Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*,' 48-49, 103-110.

⁴⁶⁴ Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 85-86. Tiberius, in Velleius Paterculus, 2.130.2, was extolled for provision of replacements (*supplementum*), without resorting to forced levy (*delectus*). Suetonius, *Gaius* 43, commented that Gaius prepared for his German campaign by forced levying "everywhere very harshly." According to Tacitus, *Annals* 13.7, 13.35, in the reign of Nero, drafts were carried out in the east in 54 CE and in Galatia and Cappadocia in 58 to replenish legionary manpower. In 58, according to Tacitus, *Annals* 16.13, levies were held in Narbonese Gaul, Africa, and Asia to replenish legions in Illyricum.

⁴⁶⁵ Cassius Dio, 56.23.1-24.5; Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*,' 46.

⁴⁶⁶ Robin Seager, *Tiberius* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), 58-71; Tacitus, *Annals* 1.16-52; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 117-125.

⁴⁶⁷ Dio Cassius, *History* 57.3.1-57.6.5.

⁴⁶⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.5.

Pannonian legions. Simultaneously, trouble developed in Armenia that drew further on Roman military resources.⁴⁶⁹

In 17, further unrest developed in the east. Cappadocia, Commagene, and Cilicia fomented for change from independent kingship to direct Roman governance. In Syria and Judea, there were disturbances over taxation, and additional political events in Armenia became worrisome. These developments led Tiberius to dispatch Germanicus to resolve the threats to Roman power and peace.⁴⁷⁰ Resolution occupied Germanicus throughout 17-19, until his death in Syria. Furthermore, Tiberius sent Drusus to command the legions in Illyrium in 17 to prepare for potential Roman involvement in a German civil war involving Arminius, or to maintain peace inside the empire.⁴⁷¹ Simultaneously, revolt flared in North Africa into open warfare. Although Tacfarinas, its leader, was defeated, the rebellion continued through 24, expending Roman military resources and disrupting Rome's grain supply. Its continuation was such a threat to Rome and her food supply that Tiberius transferred an additional legion from Pannonia, through Italy to Africa during 20.⁴⁷²

It is apparent from the examples that significant threats of rebellion or war were taxing the Roman military and its leadership on the frontiers where most legions and auxiliary forces were stationed. Additionally, there were problems in recruiting manpower for the legions and auxiliaries; with little success in voluntary recruitment from Italy, and critical needs for defense along the empire's periphery, more forces were required.⁴⁷³

2.4.1.2 The "Judean Crisis" of 19 CE in its Context: The economic situation

Gruen helpfully expands the circumstantial assessment by a hint at economic hardship as a potential factor. However, he does not explore the link between economics and Tiberian action in 19.⁴⁷⁴ As previously demonstrated, the interaction of economics and religion is important in Rome and its provinces and no less before 19. In 15 CE, Rome suffered serious flooding, which disrupted her economic health, including food and water supplies.⁴⁷⁵ This

⁴⁶⁹ Seager, *Tiberius*, 82.

⁴⁷⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.43.

⁴⁷¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.41-46.

⁴⁷² Tacitus, *Annals* 2.52, 3.9; Seager, *Tiberius*, 167-170.

⁴⁷³ That recruitment was an ongoing problem, see Tiberius' comments in Tacitus, *Annals* 4.4.

⁴⁷⁴ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 29-31, 34.

⁴⁷⁵ Seager, *Tiberius*, 138.

flooding was so severe that consultation of the gods was called for, but Tiberius refused to do so as *pontifex maximus*, concerned to not reveal any weakness in calming public unrest in Rome.⁴⁷⁶ Almost simultaneously, there was a public appeal to the Senate to reduce the one percent auction tax which Tiberius refused, since the empire desperately needed the funds to pay military salaries.⁴⁷⁷ In response to public need in 17, Tiberius, as part of Germanicus' triumph, awarded 300 sesterces to each male Roman citizen, no doubt appreciated by Romans, and Roman Judeans and Egyptians alike.⁴⁷⁸ Additionally, Tiberius finally reduced the one percent sales tax in Rome given the annexation of Cappadocia, both of which were stimuli to Rome's economy.⁴⁷⁹

Circumstances changed for the worse. In the winter of 18-19, Germanicus conducted an unauthorized trip to Egypt and was received with Alexandrian acclamations of "god," "savior," and "Augustus" – titles reserved for Tiberius.⁴⁸⁰ The praise was mixedly deserved. While there, Germanicus relieved an Alexandrian food crisis by opening warehouses stocked with grain scheduled for shipment to Rome in 19.⁴⁸¹ The additional local supply allowed merchants and the Alexandrian population to purchase grain at lower prices.⁴⁸² It is possible they sold released grain to other provinces, possibly to Judea as had occurred earlier under Herod, and later under Claudius' reign.⁴⁸³

However, Germanicus' action deprived Rome of grain in spring, 19, and Tacitus noted concern over potential starvation in the city.⁴⁸⁴ Economically, Rome was dependent upon her provinces, especially Egypt and Africa, for grain and goods. If its needs were not met, protests and riots flared in Rome – public insecurity least desirable for imperial stability. For Tiberius, if Rome was viewed as unstable and weak by the provinces, then greater instability would become a reality across the empire, already in a state of unrest in the North, the East, and in Africa.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 1.76.1; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 172.

⁴⁷⁷ J.B. Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army: 31 BC-AD235* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984, 1996), 173.

⁴⁷⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.42.

⁴⁷⁹ Tacitus *Annals* 2.42.

⁴⁸⁰ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 52.2, Seager, *Tiberius*, 103-104.

⁴⁸¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.59

⁴⁸² Tacitus, *Annals* 2.59, Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 81.

⁴⁸³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.51, 101; 15.304-316.

⁴⁸⁴ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.59, 87

⁴⁸⁵ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 81-83.

More importantly, if we take seriously Josephus' observation that Rome depended on provincial Africa to supply twice the amount of grain as Egypt, then Tacfarinas's revolt in 17 likely led to a significant drop in grain shipped from that province concurrently with the Egyptian shortage. Tacfarinas' actions in provincial Africa during 18 CE included village destruction and regional plundering, which would have included the grain supply, thus having impact on shipments to Rome in 19.⁴⁸⁶ The suggestion of a dramatic drop in grain supply is substantiated by Tiberius' unprecedented transfer of a legion to Africa in 20, to suppress the revolt. Thus, Rome faced the prospect of starvation in 19 with her primary and secondary sources of grain supply compromised.⁴⁸⁷

2.4.1.3 The "Judean Crisis" of 19 CE in its Context: The moral and religious situation

Tiberius' efforts to return Rome to its traditional moral and religious conservatism also commenced before the events of 19, and were concurrent with resolution of her military and economic emergencies.⁴⁸⁸ Even Augustus had earlier been concerned about Rome's moral decline. In 15, Tiberius and the Senate enacted legislation to control actors who had rioted in 14 and caused public unrest.⁴⁸⁹ In 16, the Senate prohibited the private and public display of wealth, banning silk garments, and the use of gold and silver vessels for anything but sacred ceremonies.⁴⁹⁰

Furthermore, Tiberius' role as *pontifex maximus* and supreme authority over divination was threatened in 16 by another magician's attempt to influence him by a false spirit in a dream, a threat presumably enhanced by Manilius' *Astronomica*, published around 14.⁴⁹¹ Additionally, Libo Drusus, a distant Tiberian relative, approached an astrologer with necromantic requests that hinted at imperial ambitions.⁴⁹² The role of astrologers in prognostication of Tiberius' fate and who might attain *imperium* at his demise was well known, thus the following action

⁴⁸⁶ On North African importance, Tacitus, *Annals* 12.43; Dennis P. Kehoe, *The Economics of Agriculture on Roman Imperial Estates in North Africa*, Hypomnemata 89 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 3-4, n. 8; Josephus maintained that Africa fed Rome 8 months of the year. Josephus, *War* 2.383; Tacitus, *Annals* 3.20-21.

⁴⁸⁷ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.59; Philip Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006), 158-159.

⁴⁸⁸ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 33.

⁴⁸⁹ Seager, *Tiberius*, 137-138; Cassius Dio, 57.14.10; Tacitus, *Annals* 1.54,77. Suetonius, *Tiberius* 34.

⁴⁹⁰ Cassius Dio, 57.15.1-3; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.33.

⁴⁹¹ Cassius Dio, 57.15.7; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.32.

⁴⁹² Tacitus, *Annals* 2.28.2, 2.30.1; J.P.V.D. Balsdon, *Romans and Aliens* (London: Duckworth, 1979), 243-244; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 69; MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 140.

was possibly driven by Tiberius' concern that others might engage in private intrigue or public disturbance regarding his future, or to seize power.⁴⁹³

Tiberius was considered an expert astrologer and kept Thrasyllus, an Egyptian Greek, Platonist philosopher and personal astrologer, as constant companion from his time in Rhodes until Thrasyllus' death.⁴⁹⁴ Tiberius would not tolerate others exercising astrological interference with his rule or religious authority. Thus by senatorial decree and following Augustan precedent, he outlawed divination by unapproved individuals, including astrologers (*mathematici*), Chaldeans, diviners, (*arioli*) and other similar practitioners.⁴⁹⁵ After the decree, Tiberius executed all foreigners and banished all citizens who practised unauthorized astrology or magic. Two Roman citizens connected with Libo Drusus were executed for astrological practice.⁴⁹⁶ Nevertheless, Tiberius pardoned astrologers who renounced their profession and allowed them to remain in the city.⁴⁹⁷ The emperor's extreme actions reflect the seriousness not only of the religious activity, but its impact on Rome's economic and political stability.

In 17 CE, Tiberius undertook additional steps to preserve traditional Roman values, return to *pax* with the gods through piety in action, and resist further ethnic and religious change. He repaired and rededicated old temples to Roman deities, Liber, Libera, Ceres, Janus, and Hope, located in the Circus Maximus and the Herb Market.⁴⁹⁸ Additionally, he built a new temple to Fortuna in the *Transtiberum*, where many Judeans, Syrians, and other Easterners dwelt.⁴⁹⁹ Thus, Rome's ancient deities received renewed interest and promotion by the emperor. The same year, Tiberius heard an adultery and treason case against a distant member of the imperial family and after dropping the treason charges, sentenced the perpetrator to the traditional Roman penalty for adultery – banishment more than 200 miles from Rome.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹³ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 86.

⁴⁹⁴ Tacitus, *Annals* 6.2-21; Seutonius, *Tiberius* 14.4; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 158-159; Cassius Dio, 57.15.7; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.44.

⁴⁹⁵ Cassius Dio, 56.25.5; M. Hyamson (ed.), M. Hyamson (tr.), *Mosaicarum et romanarum legum collatio* (London: H. Frowde, Oxford University, 1913, repr. Buffalo: 1997), 2.1; Tacitus, *Annals* 3.32.3; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 174-175; As had Augustus in 11 CE, MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 129.

⁴⁹⁶ Cassius Dio, 57.15.7-9; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.32.

⁴⁹⁷ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 14.

⁴⁹⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.49; Seager, *Tiberius*, 139-140.

⁴⁹⁹ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.49.

⁵⁰⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.50.

Unfortunate prodigy and prophecy inflicted Rome from the commencement of 19 CE. The consul Norbanus played his trumpet in the religious ceremonies on January 1st and a statue of Janus, Rome's protector, toppled, symbolizing a year of trouble for the city, triggering speculation about the end of a *saeculum*, and apocalyptic destruction of Rome.⁵⁰¹ Later, in early 19, Rome was disturbed by a suspect Sibylline prophecy, that led Tiberius as *pontifex maximus* to examine all prophetic books and supposed Sybilline prophecies to determine which were spurious, or a threat to the empire, to reestablish their canonicity, following earlier Augustan precedent from 12 BCE.⁵⁰² Tacitus' mention of the oracle of Clarian Apollo prophetically foretelling Germanicus' death may have been known in Rome as well.⁵⁰³ Pliny adds that in winter 18-19 Germanicus' consultation of the Apis bull in Alexandria also predicted his death by refusing to eat grain offered by him.⁵⁰⁴ That the story reached Rome during the early sailing season is plausible. If so, it would have added to the city's unease. Egyptians would have deemed the account as prophetic confirmation of the Egyptian gods' powers, as detailed in Appendix 3.

Germanicus' death in 19 led to further disturbance in Rome, especially since his demise in Antioch was rumored to involve lead curse tablets, poisons, witchcraft, and magic.⁵⁰⁵ His popularity fed speculation over the circumstances surrounding his death, hopes he was alive, instability, and unrest among Rome's citizenry, especially during the return of his body, funeral, and trial of Calpurnius Piso, the governor of Syria implicated in his presumed assassination.⁵⁰⁶ One outcome of Piso's trial and Germanicus' funeral was that honors for Germanicus were published on bronze tablets and publicly displayed throughout the empire.⁵⁰⁷

Gruen suggests that magic and the black arts in Germanicus' death triggered heightened Roman religious response to honor of traditional deities against external superstitions, and discredits Josephus' accounts involving the Isis cult and Judeans.⁵⁰⁸ This is problematic since

⁵⁰¹ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 99-100.

⁵⁰² Cassius Dio, 57.18.4-5; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 95; Astrologers and similar practitioners were expelled from Rome ten times between 33 BCE and 93 CE. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 130, 132-133.

⁵⁰³ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.54.2-3; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 16, 169.

⁵⁰⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 8.185.

⁵⁰⁵ Cassius Dio, 57.18.9; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.69, 3.13; Gruen, *Diaspora*, 33.

⁵⁰⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 3.2-3.6, 3.14; Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar*, 139-142.

⁵⁰⁷ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 115-116.

⁵⁰⁸ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 33-34.

it minimizes the link of the more compelling accounts of Judean and Egyptian inclusion in these events, and focuses primarily on religious aspects without adequately addressing the interrelationships of the broader determinants and outcomes as described in this section and following.⁵⁰⁹

Moral and religious anxieties increased further. A flagrant criminal breach of traditional morality came to the fore with public proclamation of adultery among Rome's elite. Vistilia, a praetorian family female, triggered the crisis by publication of her prostitution, and was exiled.⁵¹⁰ In response, the Senate decreed that no woman, if her father, grandfather, or husband had been a Roman *eques* (knight), could be left unpunished if she engaged in prostitution or adultery, or was found unchaste. Public proclamation of this plunge in morals, adultery, undue divorce, or unchaste actions of men or women shamed the Roman elite, and they re-legislated traditional punishment by banishment.⁵¹¹

The Senate and Tiberius were meeting legal responsibility to uphold Roman *mos maiorum* and preserve its ethnic *mores*. The Senate had responsibility to legislate the practice of 'superstitions' and as previously described, had already acted when *pax deorum* and *pax urbis* were threatened by astrologers and spurious prophets. Furthermore, the Emperor as *pontifex maximus* had responsibility to maintain right relationship with the gods, *pax deorum*. Peace of the city and with the gods were both dishonored by these shameful degradations that violated traditional Roman values and law. By legislation and actions, against astrologers, prophets, adulterers and high status prostitutes, Tiberius preserved Roman religion in relation to moral values, and 'external superstitions' in Rome.

Within this milieu, Josephus detailed two more events that amplify the Roman problems, for the decline in morals encompassed not only the shameful municipal adultery by the elite, and prostitution that accelerated the destruction of home and family, but also the corruption of traditional and appropriate religious practice of other non-Roman cults, including Isis. In this environment of social, moral, economic, and religious disturbance, we consider Josephus' account of Paulina, a chaste, rich, beautiful, modest, married woman of the Roman elite, whose husband was an *eques*. She was pursued by Decius Mundus, also an equestrian who

⁵⁰⁹ For Gruen's focus on 19 CE as a religious response, see Gruen, *Diaspora*, 33-34.

⁵¹⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.85.

⁵¹¹ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 35.

desired an affair, which she appropriately refused, living out Roman values and obeying recently enacted law. After bribing the priests of Isis, of whom Paulina was an avid adherent, Decius played the part of the god Anubis, and ravished Paulina all night in the inner sanctuary of Isis, before her sacred image, the personification of her presence in Rome. Later, Decius brazenly confronted Paulina with her seduction as the persona of Anubis. With her honor and chastity destroyed, she declared all to her husband, who appealed to Tiberius to investigate the matter.⁵¹² The honor, not only of Paulina and her husband were at stake, but also of the Senate, emperor, and Rome's relationship with her traditional deities.

Tiberius' response is shaped by the recently-passed Senatorial legislation against corruption of public morals and his recent actions to uphold traditional Roman religion and piety, hallmarks of Rome's ethnic superiority.⁵¹³ There are two activities he judged, first the desecration of the temple, and second Decius' luring Paulina into adultery. Tiberius' crucifixion of the priests and freedwoman involved in the debauchery was justified, since they took bribes, enabled adultery in opposition to Roman law, desecrated the temple for which they were responsible and polluted the innermost sanctuary of Isis, a holy place of chastity, thus violating the sanctity of the goddess.⁵¹⁴ Their crucifixion prompts us to presume that non-Roman Egyptian priests led the Isean cultic rites practised in Rome's *Isis Campensis*, since Roman citizens, by law, were not crucified.⁵¹⁵

Yet Tiberius may have seen this breach of religious values as one that had not only legal ramifications but also divine. Isis, as an external superstition, was a competitive religious threat to the traditional Roman worship of Ceres as goddess of grain; the grain shortage of 19 had likely already commenced in Rome. Thus, the destruction of Isis' temple, likely the one constructed by Augustus on the Campus Martius, and the hurling of her image – the embodiment of Isis – into the Tiber was an expression of disgust at religious desecration and a statement of Roman ethnic superiority (certainly the Roman Tiber was superior to the Egyptian Nile) and suitable to Josephus' anti-Egyptian interests. However, Suetonius adds that the vestments and utensils of Egyptian priests and her temple were burned, an act of Roman religious purification.⁵¹⁶ Josephus neglects to mention Isis adherents' banishment

⁵¹² Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.65-78.

⁵¹³ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 33-35.

⁵¹⁴ For the Isis temple plan, see Price, 'Religions of Rome', 297.

⁵¹⁵ David Noy, 'Being an Egyptian in Rome', 51.

⁵¹⁶ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 36.

from Rome, but Tacitus does, unless her followers renounced her worship and ways.⁵¹⁷ The recantation would have been a renunciation of being Egyptianized, and a reaffirmation of one's being Roman. Thus, Roman imperial action in response to the Isiac event was a contemporary example of Tiberius' restoration of Rome to its ancestral ways in very trying circumstances, which threatened Rome's stability, ethnicity, and *pax deorum*. It followed the pattern of previous retribution on the Isis cult in times of crisis in Rome in the late Republic and under Augustus as detailed in Appendix 3. The subsequent banishment of Decius Mundus for adultery followed the dictates of the recently passed Roman law on public morals.⁵¹⁸

2.4.2 Tiberius' "anti-Semitic" Event Revisited: Judeans, Egyptians, and the Roman Crisis of 19 CE.

Josephus next related activities of Judeans in Rome, who "professed to instruct men in the Law of Moses."⁵¹⁹ They persuaded Fulvia, a Judean proselyte and wife of a wealthy Roman, perhaps an *eques*, to make a donative offering for Jerusalem's temple. They defrauded her. She notified her husband, who as one of Rome's elite, complained to Tiberius.⁵²⁰

Tiberius' actions were commensurate with the defense of Fulvia's honor as a Roman matron. The Judeans not only committed criminal fraud, but also "temple robbery."⁵²¹ The indictment fitted their action of not delivering goods dedicated to 'a god' – a serious offense in Roman religion, and deemed a harbinger of divine wrath. One that did not keep faith with a god was subject to their wrath, as will be detailed further in Chapter 3. However, Dio adds one more nugget for consideration, "...Judeans had flocked to Rome in great numbers and were converting many of the people to their ways..."⁵²² To take on another ethnic way of life was cultural assimilation that threatened Tiberius' program of traditional Roman ethnic preservation and restoration among the elite in the face of increasingly dire circumstances. It also hints that Romans were not anti-Semitic, or repressing Judeans, but rather, adopting their ways.

⁵¹⁷ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.35.

⁵¹⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.79-80.

⁵¹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.81-82.

⁵²⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.83.

⁵²¹ (A charge that perhaps echoed in Romans 2:22, certainly familiar to Rome's Judean Christ-following residents as hearers of the epistle.)

⁵²² Cassius Dio, 57.18.5a.

Suetonius added that Tiberius dismissed proselytes to that religion from the city, not specifying if this meant the Isis cult, Judeanism, or both, noting adherents' vulnerability to the penalty of slavery for life if they remained and continued to practise either superstition.⁵²³ In any case, Dio adds that some ethnic Romans were becoming Judean Romans, evidence of non-Judean Romans assimilating Judean ways – part of the “Judeanization” of Rome. If these competitive ethnic, cultural, and religious aspects are factored into the Fulvia event, in light of earlier Tiberian action to strengthen traditional Roman *mos maiorum*, then this event heightened the concern of Rome's *pontifex maximus* for the preservation of Rome's social and ethnic superiority and intensified ethnic rivalry that shaped these events.⁵²⁴ It suggests Fulvia was a living example of the Judeanization of Rome, as Paulina was of its Egyptianization.

Let us summarize what Tiberius must resolve at this moment. First, Rome was under threat, externally and internally. He faced a series of military situations stretching available legionary and auxiliary manpower, including open revolt in Rome's primary grain province – Africa.

Second, the revolt resulted in a shortage of grain in Rome due to supply reduction from Africa and harvest shortfall in Egypt. Tacitus noted near simultaneous public protest against unstable and presumably high corn prices in 19 CE.⁵²⁵ Rome had previously experienced famine during the reign of Augustus. Tiberius had failed, at least once, to supply grain to Rome. The result was Augustus' personal intervention to prevent famine and unrest. Augustus had given Tiberius responsibility for Rome's grain supply in 23 BCE, and he failed to move grain up the Tiber in quantities to prevent shortage, potential famine, and unrest. It took Augustus' personal intervention to correct the situation.⁵²⁶ Augustus had again intervened in 18 BCE to provide grain for 200,000 and 2 BCE for over 100,000 citizens, supplying his own grain or funds to Rome's citizens.⁵²⁷ Additionally, there had been

⁵²³ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 36.

⁵²⁴ Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 299.

⁵²⁵ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.87. Suetonius, *Tiberius* 48.

⁵²⁶ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 8; Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 5.

⁵²⁷ Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 15, 18.

shortages in Rome in 5 and 6 CE before the shortage of 19.⁵²⁸ Now, as emperor, Tiberius could not fail to feed Rome or chaos would result.

As noted, Rome's historical grain sources were not within Italy. In 67 BCE, the initial phase of Pompey's campaign against pirates threatening Rome's grain supply had been to restore grain trade from Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa to Rome, before sweeping eastward.⁵²⁹ More accurately, Livy clarified that Rome received grain from Sardinia, Sicily, Carthage/(Africa), and Numidia.⁵³⁰ Cicero noted that Sicily and Sardinia were great storehouses that provided goods, and above all, grain to Rome.⁵³¹ Moreover, Josephus informed his post-Tiberian readers, approximately one third of the city's grain was supplied by Egypt through Alexandria and two-thirds from provincial Africa.⁵³² In response to the shortage and famine threat, Tiberius had to act to secure alternate grain sources to feed an uneasy Rome, from its pre-Egyptian conquest sources. The closest source was Sardinia, 100 miles from the Tiber and capable of feeding an estimated 125,000-200,000 hungry Romans.⁵³³

Third, Tiberius had to deal with a series of flagrant breaches of newly enacted law regarding public morals, especially prostitution and adultery, both threats to Roman households. The two public morals cases and earlier events involved four external superstitions – astrology, prophecy, Isis, and Judeanism – in competition with traditional Roman religious practices, calendar and ancestral ways, and her gods – deities now potentially angered as demonstrated by recent events throughout the empire.⁵³⁴

Given the historical conflict between increased public veneration of Isis and Roman elite opposition to it in times of hunger and starvation as detailed in Appendix 3, it is reasonable to assume that Isaic cult adherent numbers increased as people became hungry in 19. They

⁵²⁸ The shortage in 5 CE is mentioned in Cassius Dio, 55.26.1-3, in 6 CE, Cassius Dio, 55.26.1, 27.1; Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 7.129; In 32 CE another grain shortage was experienced in Rome, leading to a demonstration in the theater for several days for Tiberius to act to end the shortage, with no Judean evictions. Tacitus, *Annals* 6.13; Barbara Levick, *Tiberius the Politician* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 122.

⁵²⁹ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 51-52.

⁵³⁰ Livy 26.39.1, 33.42.8; 36.2.12; 36.4.5, 37.2.12, 50.9.

⁵³¹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *IX, Orations, Pro Lege Manilia. Pro Caecina. Pro Cluentio. Pro Rabirio Perduellionis Reo*, H. Grose Hodge (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1927), = Cicero, *De Imp. Gn. Pomp.* 34; Also Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 33, 44-45.

⁵³² Josephus, *War*, 382-3, 384-6; Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus, The Caesars*, H.W. Bird, (trans.), (Translated Tests for Historians, Vol. 17), (Liverpool: Liverpool University, 1994), ch. 1.

⁵³³ Robert J. Rowland, Jr. 'The Production of Sardinian Grain in the Roman Period' in *Mediterranean Historical Review* 5 (1990), 14-20, (18-19).

⁵³⁴ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 34.

likely called on her to safeguard grain passage from Egypt and Africa, which usually took 60 days on average in summer.⁵³⁵ The attraction of Judean practices additionally challenged Roman religion as an aspect of ethnic superiority if the number of adherents or proselytes were growing in Rome as Dio mentions.⁵³⁶ Typical Tiberian behavior and legal precedence was stringent action and banishment of persons and practices that threatened the stability of Rome – public, military, economic, moral, or religious.⁵³⁷ Banishment was usually more humane than death. The focus of Tiberius’ previous decrees and action had been the Roman elite who preserved and modeled its way of life. It is possible that exile and banishment were directed at that narrower target – the elite of Rome, on whom Roman ethnic and social superiority was dependent, not the general masses of the Roman populace.

Just what were Tiberius’s responses to the Roman Judean issue? Tacitus claimed all adherents to Judean and Egyptian rites were ordered to leave Italy. This would have severely disrupted Rome’s population, economics, and social fabric, something Tiberius had been attempting to avoid.⁵³⁸ Cappelletti assumes Tacitus does not include Egyptians or Isis adherents, while Suetonius does.⁵³⁹ According to Josephus, Tiberius “ordered all the Jews banished out of Rome,” but Josephus minimized the total, since he focused on Judeans sent to Sardinia, and certainly not all were sent to that destination.⁵⁴⁰ Josephus narrated that the consuls selected 4,000 Roman Judean men and sent them to Sardinia, punishing those who resisted conscription into the *auxilia*. He claimed that their resistance was due to violation of observance of the laws of their ancestors. However, as will be argued below, this was not a pan-Judean argument, was in fact fictitious, and may have been a local attempt to avoid unpopular military service, even more odious if one adds ethnic rivalry with potentially conscripted Egyptians. This forced conscription confirms the seriousness of Rome’s grain situation, the military threat, and defense needs.

⁵³⁵ It was 57 days for news to travel from Rome to Egypt on average, about 30 days in summer, and 80 days in winter. R. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale of the Roman Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990), 15, 26-27; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 111.

⁵³⁶ Cassius Dio, 57.18.5a.

⁵³⁷ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 37.

⁵³⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.35.

⁵³⁹ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 65.

⁵⁴⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.83-84; also Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 300, n. 46.

Resistance to conscription had been encountered previously in Rome under Augustus' mobilization, described in section 2.3.⁵⁴¹ Josephus heightened the Judean "repression" and its tragic severity, editorializing that four wicked men caused the retribution, and ignoring mention of concurrent Egyptian enrollment or "expulsion."⁵⁴² Suetonius cryptically added that those sent were destined for military service in unhealthy provinces.⁵⁴³ However, Tacitus linked the two stories. He stated that 4,000 Roman freedmen, both Judean and Egyptian, were shipped to Sardinia to end banditry on the island. The rest of the Judeans and Egyptians were presumably ordered to leave Italy, more likely Rome, if they did not renounce their religion.⁵⁴⁴ Conscribing freedmen into the *auxilia* was an act of desperate necessity, but they were granted full Roman citizenship at retirement, if not already possessed at conscription.

In actuality, Tiberius was simultaneously resolving a number of problems faced by Rome. His initial response to Rome's grain shortage and consequential increased prices was to fix market prices and personally subsidize grain costs, which substantially alleviated the possibility of immediate starvation by grain hoarding or exorbitant prices. However, ending the grain shortage involved securing an alternate food supply than Egypt and Africa and a reduction of Rome's population to ease demand. Both policies had previously been implemented by Augustus. Thus, in these actions, Tiberius simultaneously resolved two food security issues. He reduced Rome's population and resultant grain demand, and increased security of Rome's alternate grain supply from Sardinia. The direness of the grain shortage in 19 is implied by the honor of *pater patriae* which Rome's Senate and populace desired to award Tiberius in response to his subsidization of fixed grain prices, and by implication his other actions to resolve the crisis.⁵⁴⁵

Thus, by senatorial edict, Tiberius ordered the conscription of 4,000 Judean and Egyptian freedmen, likely Roman citizens of military age from within the city. Their number is adequate to man from four to ten new cohorts of *auxilia* troops for transfer to Sardinia, Rome's closest traditional grain supply.⁵⁴⁶ The shift of able-bodied military-aged Judean and Egyptian men into the *auxilia*, moving them and their dependents out of Rome to Sardinia,

⁵⁴¹ Cassius Dio, 55.28; Also Gary S. Webster and Maud Teglund, "Toward the Study of Colonial-Native Relations in Sardinia from c. 1000 BC-AD 456" in Robert H. Tykot and Tamsey K. Andrews (eds.), *Sardinia in the Mediterranean: A Footprint in the Sea* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 448-472, (462-464).

⁵⁴² Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.83-84; also Gruen, *Diaspora*, 31.

⁵⁴³ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 36.

⁵⁴⁴ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.35.

⁵⁴⁵ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.87.1; Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply*, 222.

⁵⁴⁶ Depending on cohort size at enlistment, Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*,' 43-44, 104.

would have reduced the population fed in Rome, following Augustus' example from 6 CE, also undertaken when crushing a rebellion in Sardinia.⁵⁴⁷ That inner Sardinia had been in unrest for many years can be surmised from Diodorus' assertion that neither the Carthaginians nor the Romans had conquered its interior, aptly named *Barbaria*.⁵⁴⁸

Senatorial provinces, those assigned to the Senate's control and not the emperor, did not require a military garrison. It is more than coincidence that Sardinia, which had been a senatorial province, switched to imperial control in 19; and received an imperial governor and garrison from 19 until 46 CE.⁵⁴⁹ The island exported grain to Rome, though not as tithe, but as grain paid for in cash and exported by grain merchants.⁵⁵⁰ Its plains and lower hillsides were known for grain production, despite the lagoons and swamps along its coasts that were considered pestilential, likely due to malaria, giving weight to Suetonius' comment.⁵⁵¹

Thus, Tiberius solved his military manpower shortfall, resolved threats to Rome's traditional ethnicity, and fed Rome. To deal with brigandage in Sardinia, likely caused by inhabitants of the inland *Barbaria*, or coastal piracy, these new conscripts were trained, armed, transported at state expense, paid as Roman *auxilia*, housed in military forts constructed by state monies, and received full Roman citizenship at the end 20 years of service, if not already citizens.⁵⁵² Moreover, recruits would have sworn allegiance to the emperor, as Roman Judean citizens had already done in private life, and in Jerusalem's Temple. They would have been further Romanized, but it was not the policy of Rome's army to dictate the religious beliefs of its troops.⁵⁵³

⁵⁴⁷ Cassius Dio, 55.28; Webster and Teglund, 'Toward the Study of Colonial-Native Relations in Sardinia', 462-464.

⁵⁴⁸ Diodorus Siculus, 4.30.4-6 and 5.15.3-5.

⁵⁴⁹ Carlo Tronchetti, 'The Cities of Roman Sardinia' in Miriam S. Balmuth and Robert J. Rowland (eds.), *Studies in Sardinian Archaeology* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1984), 237-283, (241-242); Barbara Levick, *Claudius* (New Haven: Yale University, 1990), 48-49.

⁵⁵⁰ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 83-84.

⁵⁵¹ Peter J. Brown, 'Malaria in Nuragic, Punic, and Roman Sardinia: Some Hypotheses' in Miriam S. Balmuth and Robert J. Rowland (eds.), *Studies in Sardinian Archaeology* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1984), 209-235; also Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 106-107.

⁵⁵² On banditry in the Roman Empire, B.D. Shaw, 'Bandits in the Roman Empire', in *Past and Present* 105 (1984), 3-52; On brigandage in Sardinia, see MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 262; Tronchetti, 'The Cities of Roman Sardinia', 241-242; On receipt of citizenship, Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*', 324.

⁵⁵³ Cassius Dio, 57.3.2; Religious practice, see Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*', 234-273.

Auxilia deployment of Judeans and Egyptians to Sardinia probably resulted in their families or slaves moving as well.⁵⁵⁴ Assuming each conscript represents a household of 2.5 to 3.5 members, possibly 10-15 thousand Judeans, Egyptians, or others relocated from Rome to Sardinia during or shortly after the 19 CE conscription. Judean presence on the island is documented by at least three archaeological finds including a gold ring and a funerary inscription from the first century CE.⁵⁵⁵ Thus, the conscription of *auxilia* to end unrest and protect Sardinia, a threatened essential grain source at a time of low supply in Rome, made compelling economic, military, political, moral, and religious sense from the Roman perspective.⁵⁵⁶

Finally, the direness of Roman action is apparent, not only in the extremely unpopular conscription of levies from Rome, but that it included Egyptians. Egyptians were rarely recruited as *auxilia* or legionaries, because they were considered untrustworthy.⁵⁵⁷ Thus, Tiberius' conscription of Roman Egyptians was extraordinary, fell within Roman law, and was not without precedence in times of extremity in Rome.

Josephus' comment about the Judean majority resisting conscription by alluding to their inability to fight on Sabbath, was based upon provincial Asian treaties he cited elsewhere. In this circumstance, it is Josephan dramatics.⁵⁵⁸ Judeans had served in the Seleucid military in many provinces, distinguishing themselves in battle.⁵⁵⁹ They had garrisoned Ptolemaic fortresses on the Egyptian borders for generations, including Elephantine.⁵⁶⁰ Judean troops from Palestine were commanded by Herod Antipater and joined with Egyptian Judeans who served in the Ptolemaic military in Pelusium, and Onias relieved the besieged Caesar at the behest of the Judean High Priest.

⁵⁵⁴ Haynes, 'Romanization of the *Alae* and *Cohortes*', 110-118.

⁵⁵⁵ Robert J. Rowland, Jr, *The Periphery in the Center: Sardinia in the ancient and medieval worlds* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2001), 95.

⁵⁵⁶ Rowland, 'Production of Sardinian grain, 14-20; Also R. Rowland, 'The case of the missing Sardinian grain,' *AncW* 10 (1984), 45-48.

⁵⁵⁷ Naphtali Lewis, *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 27-28.

⁵⁵⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.83-84.

⁵⁵⁹ William David Davies, Louis Finklestein, William Horbury, John Sturdy, Steven T. Katz, *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990) Vol. 2, 145-148.

⁵⁶⁰ Josephus, *The Life, Against Apion, (Contra Apionem)*, H.St.J. Thackeray (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1926, 1976), *Against Apion* 2.42; Davies, Finklestein, Horbury, Sturdy, Katz, *Cambridge History of Judaism*, Vol. 2, 132; Gabriele Boccaccini, "Elephantine Papyri" in David Noel Freedman, Allan C. Myers, Astrid B. Beck (eds.) *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 391.

Judeans later served in provincial Judea under Herod the Great, as his own or perhaps as Roman commanded troops.⁵⁶¹ Furthermore, Josephus is aware of military accommodation for Judean troops in the Roman military, for rations and marching. “When the rations were distributed free of charge, if the food provided was forbidden to Jews, the Roman Army would pay Jewish soldiers the value of their rations.”⁵⁶² Furthermore, at least one, and perhaps as many as five *auxilia* cohorts of Judean horse archers patrolled southeast Syria as part of the Herod’s forces attached to the Roman military.⁵⁶³ Later, Augustus resettled some of these Judean *alae* from Herodian controlled areas as a Roman military garrison in Cyrene, home to numerous Judeans.⁵⁶⁴ Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa II both had sizable Judean military forces through the mid-first century that would also sworn faith, not only to their local rulers, but also to Rome and emperor.⁵⁶⁵

The comment in Tacitus about the Egyptian and Judean conscripts perishing in Sardinia, if uttered by Tiberius as assumed, would have been an outrage against the Roman army at a very sensitive time, given recent legionary riots in Pannonia and thus unlikely an imperial comment.⁵⁶⁶ It is more likely Tacitus’ own snide parenthetic aside, as a prevalent Roman view of pestilential Sardinia.⁵⁶⁷ The concept of pestilence being a killer in Sardinia worse than in Rome was in reality not true.⁵⁶⁸ In fact, the worship of deified Health in Rome, to survive the city’s malarial depredations during Tiberius’ rule, is attested by coinage with the bust of Livia bearing the inscription *Salus Augusta*.⁵⁶⁹

The ongoing precariousness reflected in the events of 19 and the potential recurrence of famine in Rome remained uppermost in Tiberius’ thought. Further economic, political, and religious crisis called for consolidation of the Praetorian Guard, to enable it to act as a coherent unit in case of mass revolt. Tiberius permitted Sejanus to relocate the Praetorian and

⁵⁶¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.127-132, 14.190-195, 14.395; *War* 1.186-194, 1.290-291, 2.74,

⁵⁶² Citing Josephus, Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, “Did the Jews Enjoy a Privileged Position in the Roman World?” in *Revue Des Etudes Juives*, Vol. 154 (1995), 23-42, (27-28).

⁵⁶³ Shimon Applebaum, ‘The Troopers of Zamaris’ in *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 47-65; Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.23-31.

⁵⁶⁴ Shimon Applebaum, ‘Ein Targhuna’ in *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 66-69.

⁵⁶⁵ Possibly a legion in size at the time of the Judean wars, Shimon Applebaum, ‘The Troopers of Zamaris’, 59-61; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.109-115; 19.333.

⁵⁶⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.85.

⁵⁶⁷ Brown, ‘Malaria in Nuragic, Punic, and Roman Sardinia, 227-229.

⁵⁶⁸ On pestilence and sickness in Rome see Walter Scheidel, ‘Germs for Rome’ in Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003), 158-176; Also, Brown, ‘Malaria in Nuragic, Punic, and Roman Sardinia’, 228-229.

⁵⁶⁹ Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 167; Margarete Bieber, *Ancient Copies: Contributions to the history of Greek and Roman Art* (New York: New York University, 1977), 47-49 fig. 173.

Urban cohorts from within Rome to a new military camp beyond the Servian wall to house the 6,000-10,000 strong garrison.⁵⁷⁰

Tiberius' speech in 22 before the Senate highlighted this continued threat: "But, Heaven knows, not a man points out in a motion that Italy depends on external supplies, and that the life of the Roman nation is tossed day after day at the uncertain mercy of wave and wind. And if the harvests of the provinces ever fail to come to the rescue of master and slave and farm, our parks and villas will presumably have to support us! That, Conscript Fathers, is a charge which rests upon the shoulders of the *princeps*; that charge neglected will involve the state in utter ruin."⁵⁷¹

Military and economic solutions were intertwined with the repair of the breach in Roman religion, morals, and the disruption of right relationship with the Roman gods. Tacitus followed the Judean and Egyptian events by recounting the careful selection of a new Vestal Virgin in 19. A Vestal was a living representation of Roman moral purity, chastity, and propriety towards the gods, and closely aligned with promoted Augustan ideals.⁵⁷² The Vestals were of great importance to public and religious ceremony in Roman culture and core to Roman religion, preserving the state by their purity. They prepared the *mola salsa* used as part of every Roman sacrifice.⁵⁷³

The final candidate selected to be a Vestal by Tiberius received her position based upon her parents never being divorced, being the proper age, a virgin, and all of her family in proper relationship of *domus* and *potestas*.⁵⁷⁴ She embodied all that had been violated in Josephus' account in 19 and preceding events that undermined Roman *mores*. The unselected candidate was highly honored by a large imperial dowry to honor her virginity and faithfulness to marriage.⁵⁷⁵ Both served the purpose of restoration of the morals of Rome, to restore right

⁵⁷⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 4.5.5; Cassius Dio, 57.19.6; Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 21.

⁵⁷¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 3.54, 609.

⁵⁷² Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins: Sex and Category in Roman Religion* (London: Routledge, 1998), 135; Russell T. Scott, "Vestae Aedem Petitam?: Vesta in the Empire" in Sheila K. Dickison and Judith P. Hallett (eds.), *Rome and Her Monuments: Essays on the City and Literature of Rome in Honor of Katherine A. Geffcken* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2000), 173-191, (180-181).

⁵⁷³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 24.2; Albius Tibullus, *Catullus. Tibullus. Pervigilium Veneris*, F.W. Cornish, P. Postgate, J.W. Mackail (trans.), G.P. Goold (rev.), G.P. Goold (ed.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1913), Tibullus, 1.5.14.

⁵⁷⁴ Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins*, 138-140.

⁵⁷⁵ Tacitus, *Annals* 2.85-86.

relationships within its elite, with its gods, and to serve as a moral and ethnic example to Rome's residents.

Philo presented a sanitized account, ignoring the events of 19 CE. On the contrary, Philo claimed Tiberius did not interrupt or change the Roman Judean benefit of the grain dole received as citizens of Rome pre-, during, or post-19.⁵⁷⁶ Since one of the triggers of the events of 19 was the grain shortfall, Philo's comments are significant. They documented Roman Judeans still resident in Rome who continued to receive what was legally theirs by Roman citizenship. It affirms that Judeans were not evicted in 19. Why would Philo note no change in policy if Judeans were not there to receive the grain?

In summary, the external and internal events which pressured Rome from 14 to 19 CE are obvious. Tiberius and the Senate embarked on a campaign to return, by legislation and law, to traditional Roman morals, values, and ways of life, in a city in which the ethnically Roman elite population was decreasing, Roman morals declining, and her ethnic way of life and relationship with her gods was under threat. Rome's elite and citizenry were adopting or assimilating external superstitions of astrologers, Egyptian Isis, Judeanism and other belief systems. This occurred while the state and city approached military, moral, ethnic, and economic crisis, which traditionally intimated anger of the gods. Seneca's remarks about his cessation of philosophically-derived vegetarianism to avoid entanglement in accusations of foreign superstition participation gives a glimpse of how far the Roman elite were challenged to return to traditional Roman ways.⁵⁷⁷ Only drastic steps, including the appointment of a new Vestal, renewed the core values of Roman ethnicity for Tiberius and Rome's elite, and in turn restored right relationship with the gods, to avert calamity. In these circumstances, Tiberius' actions were not unusual in relation to Roman law, nor that different from preceding Republican or Augustan actions against ethnic or religious groups in Rome when core values were threatened. In comparison, they were not very different from Judean actions in Judea towards those deemed offensive to Judeanism in times of crisis.

Given Tiberius' ongoing relationships with the Judean elite resident in Rome, it is apparent that "anti-Semitism" is a fallacious categorization for his actions. Those friendships did not

⁵⁷⁶ Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 159.

⁵⁷⁷ Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *VI, Epistles (Epistulae Morales.) 93-124*, 3 Vols., Richard M. Gummere (trans.), *LCL*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1925), 108.22; also Gruen, *Diaspora*, 30; Robert Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, Antonia Nevill (trans.), (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 89.

end, nor were they dishonored in these events. However, it is clear that Tiberius is engaged in a contest to maintain Rome's ethnically derived superiority in its own streets teeming with numerous ethnicities. Large numbers of Rome's populace were likely attracted to, and either religiously or socially adapted or assimilated characteristics of Judeanism as noted by Dio, and many also Egyptianized.⁵⁷⁸

Finally, it is not clear all Judeans, Egyptians, or adherents to Judeanism or Isis were ejected from the city in 19, other than those conscripted into the *auxilia*, or those who accompanied conscripted Judeans and Egyptians to Sardinia, or Roman elite who refused to end their cult associations which directly challenged previously enacted senatorial law. Cappelletti echoes similar sentiments, concluding only a limited number of Jews, primarily those Judean *peregrine* inhabitants, or slaves granted informal manumissions were expelled, while others, primarily Roman citizens of both ethnicities, remained in Rome.⁵⁷⁹

2.4.3 Post-19 to 37 CE: Tiberius and Judeans in Continued Relationship in Rome and Capri

Post-19 CE reveals astrologers, Judeans and Egyptians remaining in Rome. While the Isis cult was perhaps denied early return to the Campus Martius, numerous Alexandrians likely involved in the Isis cult played an influential role in Rome during these years. For example, Thrasyllus, Egyptian astrologer and Platonic philosopher had returned from Rhodes to Rome in 4 CE with Tiberius, remained his close friend and constant companion throughout these years of presumed repressive turmoil against astrologers and the Isis cult in Rome from 14 to 19. He remained with Tiberius in Rome or Capri until the Egyptian's death in 36.⁵⁸⁰ Thus, at least some astrologers and Egyptians were not expelled from Rome in 19.⁵⁸¹

Any broader action by Tiberius against adherents of Isis in 19 other than destruction of her temple on the Campus Martius seems short-lived. Additionally, the possibility and implications of ordering all Isis followers from Rome are problematic at best. Many sailors in the Roman fleet were Egyptian. Any reduction in their number would have been troublesome to the Roman military, given the Ravenna fleet headquarters in the Transtiber and a naval

⁵⁷⁸ Cappelletti ably argues Dio's evidence is valid, but ignores the attraction to Isis. Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 66.

⁵⁷⁹ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 64-65, 67.

⁵⁸⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 6.20-21.

⁵⁸¹ Gregorio Marañón, *Tiberius: A Study in Resentment* (London: Hollister & Carter, 1956), 189-190; see also Harold Tarrant, *Thrasyllan Platonism* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1993); Cassius Dio, 55.11.1-3.

base in Rome. Tiberius could ill afford to offend the navy or army after the recent legionary revolts in 14 to 16, or with the immediate need to guarantee the safety of Sardinian grain shipped to Rome, needing naval escort. An example of this Roman military fragility is still apparent when in 23, Tiberius sent Drusus through the provinces to recruit. His son noted the shortage of legionary enrollees and allegedly commented that “only the poor and vagrant” joined voluntarily. Worse, those that joined the legions lacked “virtue and self-control,” considered key characteristics of good recruits.⁵⁸²

In fact, Tiberius does not continue to repress Egyptian practices after 19. He is represented in an Isaic dedicatory inscription from 23 in Rome as sacrificing to Hathor, Horus and Isis.⁵⁸³ It is doubtful Tiberius personally performed the act, yet the inscription portrays an emperor who re-permitted public worship of Isis, and perhaps patronized her worship, during Rome’s grain shortage in 22-23. This revised stance toward Isis worship and astrology, I suggest, would also have carried over to adherents of other philosophies and deities, which included Judeans.⁵⁸⁴

Post-19 presence of non-evicted Judeans is most apparent by continued residence of the Judean elite. Earlier, Bernice’s mother, Salome had left most of her estate to Livia in testamentary mark of their friendship, so Judean land became Augustan family property.⁵⁸⁵ Her daughter, the elder Bernice, mother of Herod Agrippa I and his siblings, had remained in Rome since their father Aristobulus’s execution by Herod the Great in 7 BCE. Bernice was a close friend of the elder Antonia, wife of the elder Drusus, Tiberius’s brother and the mother of Germanicus and Claudius.⁵⁸⁶ The friendship of Antonia and Bernice was such that Claudius and Herod Agrippa I were educated together in Rome.⁵⁸⁷ A demonstration of Bernice’s friendship after her death was testamentary transfer to Antonia of the obligation of *operae*, or service, by her freedman, Peter, possibly a Judean.⁵⁸⁸ The freedman was evidently involved in management of Bernice’s financial affairs and later, those of Antonia’s.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸² Tacitus, *Annals* 4.4.

⁵⁸³ *Allgemeine Zeitung*, (AZ) (Augsburg, Tübingen, Stuttgart, and Tübingen, 1798, sqq), 38, 124ff; *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (SEG) VIII, P. Roussel, et al. (eds.), (Leiden: 1923-), 8, 654.

⁵⁸⁴ Gruen, *Diaspora*, 300. Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 22

⁵⁸⁵ Stewart Perowne, *The Later Herods* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1958), 41.

⁵⁸⁶ Perowne, *Later Herods*, 60.

⁵⁸⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.164-165.

⁵⁸⁸ Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 76-78.

⁵⁸⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.156.

Antonia, given her friendship with Bernice, was subsequently patroness and friend of her children.⁵⁹⁰

There was further commingling of imperial family and Herodian Judeans in Rome. Herod Agrippa I was a close friend of Tiberius' son, the younger Drusus.⁵⁹¹ Moreover, Agrippa I helped tutor the younger Drusus' son, Tiberius Gemellus in Rome during through the 20s.⁵⁹² Herod Antipas temporarily dwelt in Rome in the mid-20s, since it was there he fell in love with Herodias, wife of the non-tetrarch Judean, Herod Philip, also resident in Rome.⁵⁹³ Despite Antipas' adultery, contrary not only to Judean but also Roman law, Herod Antipas' friendship with Tiberius was visibly manifest in his new Galilean city Tiberias, founded in the emperor's honor in 27.⁵⁹⁴

From this, it is evident that Bernice, Agrippa I, extended Judean Herodian family members, and more importantly, their entourages from Rome, Palestine and Syria were resident in or frequented Rome and were in regular contact with the imperial family during the teens and 20s. Agrippa I and his family residency continued at least until his mother's death or possibly as late as 32, through years of presumed Judean repression. They and their households remained in ongoing relations with many of Rome's other elite. This occurs not only from 19 to 26, but also through the years of Sejanus's domination of the city.⁵⁹⁵

Additionally, Judeans who worked for the Herodians were also resident in Rome during these years. For example, Peter, one of Bernice's freedmen, a Roman Judean remained in Rome through the 20s, to become a member of Antonia's household.⁵⁹⁶ Marsyas, Agrippa I's freedmen, knew Peter from Rome and approached him later in Ptolemais for a sizeable loan on behalf of his Judean patron.⁵⁹⁷ Silas, Agrippa I's friend while the Herodian was imprisoned in the late-30s, was also resident in Rome, since he later often reminded the king of his earlier hardships and obligation to him.⁵⁹⁸ Herennius Capito, Tiberius' procurator in

⁵⁹⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.182; Cassius Dio, 55.14.1; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 136.

⁵⁹¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.142, 156; Nikos Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse*, JSOP 30 (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic, 1998), 272-275.

⁵⁹² Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.191; cf. 206, 211.

⁵⁹³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.109-111.

⁵⁹⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.36.

⁵⁹⁵ Michael Kaplan, *Greeks and the Imperial Court, from Tiberius to Nero* (New York: Garland, 1990), 18.

⁵⁹⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.156.

⁵⁹⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.157.

⁵⁹⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.204; 19.299; 19.317-320.

Jamnia, knew Agrippa I and of his imperial debt incurred in Rome, intimating they were both previously present there.⁵⁹⁹ Thus, Judean elite freedmen and friends and their households remained in intimate interaction with members of Augustus' and Tiberius' extended families from 19 through the 30s.

In addition to Herod's descendants, Alexander Lysimachus, Philo's extremely wealthy brother and later the Alexandrian Judean Alabarch, resided in Rome during the teens and 20s, and was a friend of Claudius.⁶⁰⁰ While some scholars may question Herodian piety, Alexander was considered pious by Josephus, and renowned for his later gifted gilding of Jerusalem's temple gates.⁶⁰¹ Alexander Lysimachus was known by Claudius' parents, the emperor's brother Drusus senior, and his wife Antonia. There is no mention of Alexander Lysimachus being disgraced or disparaged as a Roman Judean in post-19 Rome by Judean or non-Judean writers. It seems the pious elite Judean and his extended household from Alexandria commingled with the Roman elite in the post-19 era as did other Judeans considered pious in Jerusalem and Alexandria. These Judean elite from Rome were not spurned by the Alexandrian Judeans upon return, but honored with communal leadership, and crowds proclaiming their support.

Given these significant interrelationships, it seems doubtful that in 19 CE Agrippa I and his extended household were expected to renounce their Judeanism, and even less plausible that they were evicted from the cosmopolis for being Judean. More likely, their immediate family, and their Judean household members would have remained in Rome. Judean freedmen, or slaves associated with Agrippa I or the extended Herodian family, would have stayed to care for their households and affairs, since their eviction would have been an insult to those in friendship with the imperial household, not to mention it would have violated the treaties between Rome and the Herodian families that hung in Rome's temples, and in Jerusalem.

By 23, despite a second banishment of actors from Rome for debauching women and causing riots, during another grain shortage, Tiberius' attempt to directly reinforce traditional Roman

⁵⁹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.158; Fergus Millar, "The Fiscus in the First Two Centuries" in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 53, 1 & 2, (1963), 29-42, (33).

⁶⁰⁰ Katherine G. Evans, 'Alexander the Alabarch: Roman and Jew' in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1995*, Eugene H. Lovering Jr. (ed.), (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1995), 576-594.

⁶⁰¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.276; 20.100.

values seems to have ended. The Egyptian and Judean populace remained active in the city, and in relationship with members of the extended imperial household.⁶⁰²

Judean elite involvement in Rome's imperial affairs post-23 served Roman Judean interests by providing benefaction and patronage to other Judeans, but moreover, may have been crucial to Tiberius' continued reign. In 23, Sejanus persuaded Tiberius to consolidate the Praetorian Guard in one camp along with the Urban Cohorts. In 26, Tiberius withdrew to Capreae, leaving Sejanus to consolidate power. Already Rome's Prefect, he became praetor, then senator, and gained further control and honor.⁶⁰³

Philo makes a mysterious assertion in regard to this period, that Sejanus schemed to destroy the "Judean nation," because of its defense of the emperor, presumably in reference to events in Rome during 26 to 31.⁶⁰⁴ During these years, Sejanus and Tiberius engaged in a long security campaign, including 60 trials for suspected treason against the emperor or the prefect.⁶⁰⁵ It is possible some brought to trial were Judeans, yet neither Philo nor Josephus makes mention of Judeans tried for treason.

Perhaps Philo's claim of Sejanus' scheme alluded to Pontius Pilate's appointment as provincial Judean procurator in 27.⁶⁰⁶ However, Philo's comments allude to events which commenced in Rome during 29. That year Tiberius' mother Livia died, which removed a significant barrier to Sejanus' schemes to gain full political and military control from the absent Tiberius.⁶⁰⁷ His increased authority and status were reflected by appearance of his statues in legionary camps, city theaters, and forums outside Rome, an imperial honor.⁶⁰⁸

One of Sejanus' acts shortly after Livia's death, and with Tiberian acquiescence, was denouncement of Agrippina the Elder, widow of the popular Germanicus, and her eldest son, Nero Caesar.⁶⁰⁹ Rome's populace protested. Both senators and populace demonstrated outside the Senate, bearing images of Agrippina and Nero Caesar. The crowds invoked their oath to the emperor and claimed the Sejanus-supplied letter from Tiberius denouncing

⁶⁰² Cassius Dio, 57.3.3.

⁶⁰³ Tacitus, *Annals*, 4.2; Cassius Dio, 57.19.6; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 131-133.

⁶⁰⁴ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 159-160.

⁶⁰⁵ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 133-135.

⁶⁰⁶ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 299-305.

⁶⁰⁷ Tacitus, *Annals*, 5.1-2.

⁶⁰⁸ Tacitus, *Annals*, 4.2.4.

⁶⁰⁹ Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar*, 142-149.

Agrippina was a forgery. That fictitious speeches denouncing Sejanus were posted in the city that night leads to consideration that these were not an impromptu reaction, but a pre-planned protest to embarrass Sejanus, who viewed the crowd's actions a revolt.⁶¹⁰ Given Philo's comments, it is possible Judeans also protested, since Germanicus had been a friend of Judeans in Rome.

Tiberius affirmed the letter, Agrippina and Nero Caesar were removed from the city and Drusus Caesar, Germanicus' second eldest son, was imprisoned. Only Gaius and Tiberius Gemellus, tutored by Agrippa I, remained potential competitors to Sejanus' aspirations to imperial power.⁶¹¹ By 31, Sejanus had become second only to Tiberius in the empire's affairs. He was prefect, praetor, senator, commanding general of the army, was consul that spring and expected engagement to Julia Livilla, Tiberius Gemellus' mother, and close friend of Agrippa I's Judean family.⁶¹²

However, Antonia, Julia Livilla's mother, and close friend of Herodian Judeans, sent a damning letter regarding Sejanus to Tiberius.⁶¹³ Tiberius acted to remove the aspiring prefect from power. He appointed Macro, previous *Vigiles* Prefect, to replace Sejanus.⁶¹⁴ Macro determined his former *Vigiles* would likely support his actions in Rome. Their allegiance was aligned with their current and former commanders who reported directly to the emperor, and to whom they had sworn faith, rather than Sejanus.⁶¹⁵

The seven *Vigiles* cohorts were not garrisoned with the Praetorian Guard and Urban cohorts, but stationed throughout the city. Traditionally *Vigiles* were recruited from non-Roman freed slaves and poorer citizens from Rome, drawn from all its *vici*, including the *Transtiberum* and other areas of Judean residence. Roman law, enacted in 24, granted Roman citizenship to *Vigiles* after six of 20 years expected service to the city. The law would have induced Judeans and other ethnicities to participate in their city's protection from damage and disturbance, given incentives of pay and citizenship.⁶¹⁶ Thus in 31, many *Vigiles* would have

⁶¹⁰ Tacitus, *Annals*, 5.3-4.

⁶¹¹ Suetonius, *Tiberius* 50-54.

⁶¹² Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.181-182. Cassius Dio, 55.14.1

⁶¹³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.182; Cassius Dio, 65.14.1; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 136.

⁶¹⁴ Macro was Quintus Naevius Cordus Sutorius Macro, previously *Praefectus Vigilum* according to monumental inscriptions in Alba Fucens, M. Buonocore, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell'Occidente Romano. III. Regiones Italiae II-V: Sicilia, Sardinia et Corsica (Vetera, 6)* (Rome: Quasar, 1992), 110, no. 75.

⁶¹⁵ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 98.

⁶¹⁶ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 22.

been new Roman citizens, as freedmen who had joined the cohorts in 24.⁶¹⁷ It is possible some Judeans had become *Vigiles*, given their extended habitation in Rome, being, or becoming Roman citizens, and now paid to maintain city order that benefitted their own ethnic community.

The *Vigiles* supported Macro, executed Tiberius' directives to regain control of Rome, arrested Sejanus and enabled Macro to replace him as Praetorian Prefect.⁶¹⁸ Most certainly, Judeans throughout the city would have known Macro by his previous responsibility as the *Vigiles* Prefect. Even more certain, Agrippa I and his family were familiar with Macro given his prior role, interaction with the emperor and extended imperial family relations. Suetonius asserted that Tiberius rejected Sejanus because he vented his anger "against the sons of Germanicus."⁶¹⁹ However, Caligula was the only son of Germanicus remaining free, who likely dwelt with his grandmother, Antonia, since his mother was exiled. If Sejanus' plot had been against the teenaged Caligula, and prevented by Antonia, it is quite possible the Herodian Judeans supported or colluded with Antonia in the matter, given the intertwined friendships and tutelage, and that they had already represented provincial Judean grievances before the emperor in regard to Pilate, and indirectly against Sejanus.⁶²⁰

Furthermore, Philo's assertion regarding Sejanus' "calumnies" against Judeans in Rome makes compelling sense when considered within a context of Herodian Judean conspiratorial support for Antonia leading to Sejanus' downfall in 31, and reaffirmation of Tiberian familial power.⁶²¹ There is further circumstantial evidence that Agrippa I assisted Antonia in the overthrow of Sejanus. Thaumastus, slave of Caligula and Antonia the Younger's household, later became Agrippa I's freedman. Thaumastus served Herod Agrippa II as his estate or household manager in Rome. He embodied the intertwined friendships, households, and fortunes of Herodian Judeans and Augustus, Tiberius, and later – Claudius.⁶²² Philo follows cryptically that after Sejanus' downfall, Tiberius countermanded any Judean punishment, "except for the guilty."⁶²³ The guilty would have been those Judeans who had supported Sejanus, plotted against the emperor, or Herodian Judeans who had supported Antonia.

⁶¹⁷ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 137.

⁶¹⁸ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 136-137; Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar*, 150-151.

⁶¹⁹ Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 61.1.

⁶²⁰ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 300, 303.

⁶²¹ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 159-160; Kokkinos, *Herodian Dynasty*, 274-275.

⁶²² Kokkinos, *Herodian Dynasty*, 274-275; 274, n. 39.

⁶²³ Philo, *Leg. Gauim*, 160-161.

The positive relationships between Tiberius and Antonia with Herod Antipas and Herod Philip continued while they ruled Palestine, and when Agrippa I returned to Rome in the mid-30s.⁶²⁴ In 35, an indebted Agrippa I left Galilee, journeyed to Syrian Antioch, and joined the *concilium* of an old friend from Rome, Lucius Pomponius Flaccus. However, sometime later, he accepted a bribe to influence the governor, and on discovery returned in disgrace to Galilee.⁶²⁵ Shortly thereafter, in 35/36, Agrippa I determined to return to Rome and his imperial patrons. After significant depredations, he journeyed to Alexandria and borrowed funds from Alexander Lysimachus, alabarch of Alexandria, childhood Judean friend in Rome, and now steward of Antonia's imperial interests in Egypt. Agrippa still owed considerable amounts to the imperial treasury in 36, but after arrival in Italy, cleared that debt with the financial largess from Antonia.⁶²⁶

Thereafter, Agrippa I was welcomed by the emperor to Capreae. He already knew Tiberius' Egyptian astrologer Thrasyllus, and certainly Thrasyllus' son-in-law Macro, prefect of the Praetorian Guard in Rome after Sejanus in 31.⁶²⁷ It was not extraordinary for Tiberius to grant Agrippa I the honor of tutoring Gaius on his arrival at Capreae, if he had been involved in Sejanus' overthrow and preservation of Tiberius Gemellus and Gaius. Amazingly, Agrippa I was not executed when accused of treachery toward the emperor, but only imprisoned in Rome.⁶²⁸ Macro's incredulity at Tiberius' command to arrest Agrippa I demonstrated the Judean's excellent personal relations with the imperial elite.⁶²⁹

Agrippa I was imprisoned in Rome's Praetorium, under Macro's jurisdiction. His incarceration's terms were facilitated by Antonia in consultation with Macro, as the Praetorian prefect enabled Agrippa to observe a Judean diet, since Antonia was concerned about his culinary habits and Judeans prepared and supplied his meals, matching the Roman laws respecting Judean religious customs.⁶³⁰ While incarcerated, Agrippa was frequented by ethnic Roman friends, and by Judean freedmen: Marysas who had accompanied him from

⁶²⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.143-146; Antipas ruled Galilee from 4 BCE to 39 CE, Philip over Batanea from 4 BCE to 34 CE. Perowne, *Later Herods*, 40-41, Table IV.

⁶²⁵ Flaccus had been consul of Rome in 17 CE, *ILS* 9337; Anthony A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power* (Manchester, UK: Batsford, 1989), 36.

⁶²⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.158-166.

⁶²⁷ Cassius Dio, 58.9.2-6, 58.28.4.

⁶²⁸ Marañón, *Tiberius*, 157-158; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.126, 161, 164-166, 183-204.

⁶²⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.188-191.

⁶³⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.203-204.

provincial Judea, Stechus from Rome, and Silas, a Judean friend resident in Rome.⁶³¹ In addition, Agrippa's Judeanness appears in the Aramaic exchange with Marysas on rumor of Tiberius' death.⁶³²

More intertwined ethnic relationships appear in Roman interaction with provincial Judea. Tiberius appointed Lucius Vitellius, consul of Rome in 34, as governor of Syria in 35.⁶³³ Vitellius was loyal to Tiberius and Antonia, knew Agrippa I, and Tiberius Julius Alexander of Alexandria.⁶³⁴ Thus, Lucius Vitellius was personally familiar with Judeans and Judeanism prior to his appointment as governor. Vitellius' familiarity, support, and participation in Judean interests was apparent. He wrote Tiberius, likely in 36, for permission to return the high priest's vestments to Judean control, and received imperial approval, with Agrippa I's and Antipas' support.⁶³⁵ Vitellius discharged Pilate in early 37 to face charges by Samaritans and Jews before Tiberius.⁶³⁶

Furthermore, in April 37, Vitellius was magnificently welcomed at Passover in Jerusalem.⁶³⁷ He reduced agrarian taxes, replaced the high priest, and returned the high priest's vestments to Judean care, then departed for Antioch.⁶³⁸ On his arrival, dispatches received from Tiberius ordered him to undertake a punitive expedition against the Nabatean Aretas in support of Herod Antipas. He marched with two legions and auxiliaries, but left them on campaign to not offend Judean traditions regarding images and journeyed to Jerusalem with Antipas to celebrate another Judean feast, likely Pentecost in June 37. While in attendance for three days, he offered sacrifice to God, replaced Jonathan with Theophilus as high priest post-festival, and when news of Tiberius' death arrived the next day, oversaw the assembled Judean population's oath of faith to Gaius.⁶³⁹

⁶³¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.155-157, 203-204, 228-230.

⁶³² Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.228-230.

⁶³³ Cassius Dio, 58.24.1; Tacitus, *Annals* 6.28,32.

⁶³⁴ Tacitus, *Histories* 3.66.

⁶³⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.404-405; It took several months for a petition to go to Capreae or Rome, and a response to return to Syria. An example of a "good" return voyage of less than two months is found in Josephus, *War* 2.203.

⁶³⁶ Though Tiberius was dead before Pilate's arrival. Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.88-90.

⁶³⁷ Sacha Stern, *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar 2nd Century BCE – 10 Century CE* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2001), 55-57.

⁶³⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.90-95.

⁶³⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.122-124.

Vitellius was obviously a Roman honoring Judean ways. In turn, these instances reveal Judean integration with Roman ways, for not only is the oath of faith to Gaius willingly taken by Judean leadership and Jerusalem's populace, but Judeans sacrifice, as many as 100 bulls, on the new emperor's behalf, as they had previously for Augustus and Tiberius.⁶⁴⁰ If 100 bulls are offered in Jerusalem, then three aspects are important. First, Judean sacrifice of a bull for the emperor mimicked the Arval Brother's worship practice in Rome at an imperial inauguration. Second, the Judean-offered quantity was a higher honor than paid in Rome, where only one bull was sacrificed. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the only imperial deity offered bulls at inauguration and in annual accessional celebration in Rome was the living emperor's divine *Genius*.⁶⁴¹ Judeans honored the living emperor in ways recognized in Rome and by Rome as honorable, yet that did not seemingly violate Judean religious sensitivities or Law.

2.4.4 Summarizing Tiberian-Judean Relations 14 to 37 CE

In summary, Roman Judeans under Tiberius experienced the same fluctuations in imperial policy as other Romans, Egyptians and other ethnicities. Actions involving Judeans were not selectively anti-Semitic, but were a segment of the multi-ethnic, interactive, organic fluctuation of economics, military action, politics, religion, and variances of life in Rome. When Tiberius determined to legislate a return to traditional Roman values and ways, Romans of all ethnicities and status were pressured by emperor and Senate, not only those who practised Judean or Egyptian ways, but also those who did not, as in the case of Seneca and his family. Others, especially Roman elite, astrologers, and others who flouted Roman law, were banished from the city and perhaps included some Egyptians, or Isis cult adherents and plausibly some Judeans. However, the Sardinian conscription does not match these issues, but was a response to a confluence of crises that required immediate military response to feed the city. It was less dire a response than what Augustus had done a decade earlier.

What is significant is that not all Judeans are expelled as often presumed. The Roman Judean elite and their Hasmonean and Herodian households remained in Rome through 19 and were

⁶⁴⁰ Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 157, 231-232, 280, 317, 355-357

⁶⁴¹ Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and the Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2002), 179; Guilielmus Henzen, *Acta fratrum Arvalium quae spersunt* (Berolini: Georgii Reimeri, 1874, repr. 1967), LXIX = *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, Theodore Mommsen, et al. (ed.), (Berlin: Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1863 sqq.), *CIL* VI 2041.

not banished, and remained in close relationship with Antonia, Drusus, and Tiberius after Bernice's death and Agrippa I's departure after Drusus' death in 23, or perhaps later.

It seems reasonable to conclude that Philo, Tacitus, Dio, and Suetonius demonstrate that Tiberius did not persistently repress Judeans as anti-Semitic action, but in reality, did the opposite. This evidence counters Josephus' supposed eviction of all Judeans from Rome in 19, and the presumption of a long-delayed Judean return to the city. From the evidence, Tiberius recognized the Judean elite's role in preserving his power, and supported their general presence in Rome and among the imperial elite in the 20s and 30s in Rome and Capreae.⁶⁴²

Thus, Judeanism is just one of the Eastern ways of life, including those of Alexandrians and Egyptians, accommodated, assimilated, practised, or rejected in the city. It shared the experience of many ethnicities, ways of life, and religious beliefs vying for ethnic status and the preservation of ongoing practice of their ways of life within the imperial capital, a Rome simultaneously struggling to maintain its unique mores and ethnic distinctiveness.

2.5. Judean and Egyptian Life in Rome under Gaius: 37 to 41 CE

Gaius' reign brought dramatic change and disruption for Rome, Roman Judeans, and Egyptians. Given the interrelatedness of Judean circumstances and residents in Rome with events elsewhere in the empire, I will follow a historical chronology with brief consideration of military, economic, and moral and religious areas of interest that impact Judeans resident in Rome.

2.5.1 Gaius and Judean Relations in Rome: March to December 37

When Gaius came to power in March 37, the empire was secure. The populace of Rome, including Roman Judeans, swore oaths of faithful allegiance to Gaius and his sisters at his accession.⁶⁴³ With Tiberius' demise, Antonia and Caligula freed the imprisoned Agrippa I. He was restored to his household in Rome, with his own staff, many of whom were likely

⁶⁴² I differ with John Barclay, who holds that Tiberius was the source of their concerns. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 301.

⁶⁴³ Cassius Dio, 59.3.4.

Judeans. Philo significantly comments of his being surrounded by “friends, freedmen, and domestics” within his palace.⁶⁴⁴ While granted kingship of Philip’s former tetrarchy, he remained in Rome through 37 and much of 38.⁶⁴⁵ The granted kingship plausibly triggered a positive response from Roman Judeans, since it restored a potential patron aligned with their interests within the inner imperial elite circle. Agrippa I’s kingship would have been voted by the Senate, and sealed by a sworn oath, treaty, and requisite Roman sacrifices.

Gaius fell ill in September 37 and it was almost fatal. While his recovery was celebrated by many, including Judeans of Alexandria by prayers and in Jerusalem with sacrifice of 100 bulls, the consequence brought horrific tragedy and instability in Rome.⁶⁴⁶

2.5.2 *Gaius and Judean Relations in Rome: Descent into Madness – January 38 to Spring 40*

By summer 38, Agrippa I departed Rome and sailed to his new kingdom by way of Alexandria.⁶⁴⁷ Agrippa’s Alexandrian visit proved tragic for local Judeans who, publicly exuberant at his accession and large entourage, triggered a demeaning, then devastating response of open riot, destruction of Judean property, synagogue desecration, and Judean deaths by Greek Alexandrian citizenry which culminated in execution of Alexandria’s Judean leaders in August, 38.⁶⁴⁸ Flaccus, the unresponsive Egyptian governor, was arrested in October, based upon Greek Alexandrian charges, returned to Rome, and soon was banished, likely with Judean support.⁶⁴⁹

The Alexandrian destabilization was the greatest military and economic threat to Rome during Gaius’ early reign. He dispatched Pollio as Egypt’s prefect to restore order.⁶⁵⁰ The events in Egypt impacted Rome, causing decreased grain shipment and luxury goods from the east, as Alexandria served as a trans-shipment point for goods from India and Asia through Berenike and other Red Sea ports in southern Egypt.⁶⁵¹ Circumstances in Alexandria

⁶⁴⁴ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 272.

⁶⁴⁵ Philo, *Flaccus* 25; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.237; Cassius Dio, 59.8.2.

⁶⁴⁶ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 356.

⁶⁴⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.238; Philo, *Flaccus* 25-28.

⁶⁴⁸ Philo, *Flaccus* 27, 32-40; 62-85.

⁶⁴⁹ Philo, *Flaccus* 62-85.

⁶⁵⁰ Pollio had previously been governor in 16-17 and 31-32, also Barrett, *Caligula*, 187.

⁶⁵¹ Philo, *Leg. Gaium* 129; Strabo mentions a fleet of 120 Roman ships sailing from Egypt to India in 25/24 BCE. Strabo 2.5.12; Richard Duncan-Jones, “Trade, taxes and money” in *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990), 30-47 (33); Helen Jefferson Loane, *Industry and*

led to a Judean Alexandrian delegation led by Philo dispatched to Rome, likely in 39 despite Barrett's argument for 40 CE.⁶⁵²

Shortly after Agrippa I's return to Palestine in mid-38, out of competitive jealousy, Herod Antipas' wife, Herodias, urged Antipas to travel to Rome, and appeal to Gaius for rulership of an expanded tetrarchy, possibly with hopes of acquiring Judea.⁶⁵³ They departed for Rome in early 39, and met Gaius at Baiae. Agrippa I, aware of their intent, dispatched Fortunatus, one of his Roman Judean freedmen, to protect his interests. Fortunatus arrived almost simultaneously as the competing Herodians, bearing gifts for Gaius and treasonous accusations against Antipas.⁶⁵⁴ Agrippa I accused his relative of Parthian collusion and arming for revolt.⁶⁵⁵ The result was Antipas and Herodias exiled to Lyon and Agrippa I's receipt of *imperium* over Galilee and Perea, in addition to his just granted territories.⁶⁵⁶ Shortly thereafter, in mid-summer 39, Agrippa I returned to Rome, presumably accompanied by family and entourage. How he remained in good stead with the emperor whose mental disturbance deepened is mystifying, but somehow the Judean succeeded.⁶⁵⁷

Vitellius, who had earlier been active in Judean interests in Rome, Judea, and Jerusalem, was recalled by Gaius from Syria in 39. His replacement in 40 was Publius Petronius. Here the intertwining of Judean and Roman relations deepens. First, Lucius Vitellius and Petronius are in-laws. Lucius' son, Aulus, had married Petronius' daughter and Petronius had married Vittelea.⁶⁵⁸ Like Lucius Vitellius, Publius Petronius was familiar with Judeanism. According to Philo, Petronius studied Judeanism in his youth, and refreshed his understanding when becoming governor of Syria.⁶⁵⁹ Who taught him is left unstated. However given the cluster of Judean elite, intermingled with Rome's leadership, it is plausible they provided the initial instruction and reacquainted him with Judean ways and Mosaic Law. We might conjecture

Commerce of the City of Rome (50 B.C. – 200 A.D.) (New York: Arno, 1979), 50-53, 138-139; See the Berenike excavation reports for details.

⁶⁵² Barrett, *Caligula*, xiv, 188; E.M. Smallwood, *Philonis Alexandrini, Legatio ad Gaium* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 47-50; Andrew Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance in Roman Egypt: The Case of the Acta Alexandrinorum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2008), 14.

⁶⁵³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.240-246.

⁶⁵⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.247-249.

⁶⁵⁵ Martin Sicker, *Between Rome and Jerusalem*, 111-112; Barrett, *Caligula*, 183; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.250-252.

⁶⁵⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.252-255.

⁶⁵⁷ Cassius Dio, 59.24.1-2.

⁶⁵⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 3.49, 6.32.5-7; Cassius Dio, 59.27.4-6.

⁶⁵⁹ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 244-245.

Agrippa I had significant influence in Petronius' re-education, since he seems to be the common predominant Judean, with tutorial experience in these Roman relationships.

The end of the sailing season before winter of 39/40 saw Rome without adequate grain supplies. Rome's populace, including Roman Judeans and Egyptians and Isis cult adherents, suffered severe famine.⁶⁶⁰ It was tragic, since Egypt had an abundant harvest in 39 and grain supplies in Alexandria were plentiful. Rome's famine was caused by Gaius' vain disruption of grain shipments by his bay-bridge building extravaganza.⁶⁶¹ The economic results were increased grain prices, civil unrest in Rome, and no doubt greater fervency in prayers and worship of the gods, including Isis, as goddess of grain and seas, in hopes of food shortage alleviation.

New Year, 40 commenced with a hungry Rome offering gifts and sacrifices at an empty chair representing the absent emperor. Prayers were offered on his behalf and for his health, but not yet to him, something that Roman Judeans likely enacted as well in Rome's synagogues, as done in Jerusalem and Alexandria.

2.5.3 Gaius and Judean Relations in Rome: Demanded Divinity – Summer 40 to January 41

By mid-40, Gaius returned to Rome, furious with the Senate for not voting him divine honors. Gaius now perceived himself a god.⁶⁶² Conspiracy became Gaius' foremost concern, and many of Rome's elite faced torture and death, along with suspected household members.⁶⁶³ Fear of destruction drove the Senate to finally proclaim divine honors for Gaius, declaring him a demigod and then a god.⁶⁶⁴ Prayers and sacrifices were made by the Roman elite and populace to Gaius.⁶⁶⁵ Lucius Vitellius, who had previously worshipped in Jerusalem, and had been recalled from Syria in 39, role-played to Gaius' alleged divinity, likely for survival.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶⁰ Cassius Dio, 59.17.1-3; on Alexandrian grain freighters at Dicearchia/Puteoli see Philo, *Flaccus* 25-27. Rome needed approximately 20,000,000 modii of grain from Egypt and 40,000,000 from Africa annually; On Rome's grain requirements possibly being 6,000 average shipload equivalents, see Loane, *Industry and Commerce*, 13.

⁶⁶¹ Philo, *Flaccus* 63; also possibly Suetonius, *Caligula* 26.

⁶⁶² Suetonius, *Caligula* 46; Cassius Dio, 59.25.4-5

⁶⁶³ Cassius Dio, 59.25.5-26.2.

⁶⁶⁴ Cassius Dio, 59.26.5.

⁶⁶⁵ Cassius Dio, 59.26.10, 59.27.1-2; by Vitellius, Cassius Dio, 59.27.5-6

⁶⁶⁶ Cassius Dio, 59.27.2-6.

It is during 40 that the entreaties of Agrippa I for the Jerusalem temple, Petronius' efforts to delay the installation of Gaius' image in its *cella*, and Philo's fateful meeting with Gaius who demanded divine worship must be placed.⁶⁶⁷ These events fit the context of Gaius' general demands of divine worship, not only by provincial Judeans, but also by other ethnicities in no less a violation of sacred practice. The fatal danger of interaction with Gaius during early summer, 40, was aptly demonstrated by the execution of Ptolemy, king of Mauretania, possibly for as slight an action as attracting more attention than Gaius by his appearance during a show.⁶⁶⁸ No wonder Philo and the Judean delegation from Alexandria were petrified of Gaius' moods and rashness when finally heard in September 40, after being resident in Rome since fall 39.⁶⁶⁹

Gaius desired to be worshipped as a living god, not only in Rome, but elsewhere, demanding the Temple of Apollo in Miletus be dedicated to his worship, an affront to its population as it was to Jerusalem's.⁶⁷⁰ Gaius' second temple in construction on the Palatine was to house the statue of Olympian Zeus, remodeled as Gaius.⁶⁷¹ He commanded Zeus Olympos' statue, most sacred to Greeks, be shipped to Rome. Pheidias' statue was praised not only for its unparalleled artistry, but was perceived as the incarnation of the supreme deity, an expression of aesthetic holiness, divine nature, and power in stone.⁶⁷²

Previous removal of other Greek deities' statues to Rome had caused consternation and grief. However, no emperor had attempted to move the primary representation of supreme Greek deity from Olympia. The statue's removal would have likely triggered mass revolt in Macedonia and Achaia, the abode of Greeks most attached to the Hellenistic pantheon's residence and expression of their ethnic identity. This revolt potential is hinted in the actions of Memmius, Achaia's Roman governor, who engaged in similar delaying tactics as Petronius over placing Gaius' statue in Jerusalem's Temple.⁶⁷³ According to Dio, Memmius

⁶⁶⁷ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 261-333; 207-260, 334-336; Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.289-299; 18.260-288; 18.298-309.

⁶⁶⁸ Suetonius, *Caligula* 35.1; Barrett, *Caligula*, 116-117.

⁶⁶⁹ Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 17-18.

⁶⁷⁰ Cassius Dio, 59.28.1; Geoff W. Adams, *The Roman Emperor Gaius 'Caligula' and His Hellenistic Aspirations* (Boca Raton, FL: Brown Walker, 2007), 189-191.

⁶⁷¹ Suetonius, *Caligula* 22; Cassius Dio, 59.28.3.

⁶⁷² Froma I. Zeitlin, "Vision and revisions of Homer" in Simon Goldhill, (ed.), *Being Greek Under Roman Rule: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2001), 195-266, (220-223).

⁶⁷³ Barrett, *Caligula*, 90; Cassius Dio, 59.28.3-4.

informed Gaius it was impossible to budge the statue from Olympus, since it resisted movement and the ship constructed for transport had been supernaturally destroyed.⁶⁷⁴ Additionally, strange noises emanated from the statue – seemingly the god audibly resisting.⁶⁷⁵

In revulsion toward Gaius’ mentally depraved behavior, and his abuse of Rome’s populace and elite alike, an assassination plot was concocted by the Praetorian prefects. Other senators and the Roman elite supported them, possibly including Claudius and Agrippa I.⁶⁷⁶ Gaius’ assassination on January 24, 41 CE, triggered civil, financial, and economic unrest in Rome, with the Senate seizing the treasury, and the city falling into uproar and riot.⁶⁷⁷ Gaius’ corpse was beaten, abused, and spat upon by an enraged populace, but more importantly for Roman Judeans, the crowds were united in toppling Gaius’ statues and images, the focus of his divine worship, revenge for the horrors the city had endured.⁶⁷⁸

2.5.4 Summarizing Gaius and Judean Relations 37 to 41 CE

In summary, Gaius’s actions involving Judeans have been presumed by some to be a continuation of Tiberian “anti-Semitism.” However, as previously argued, it is unlikely Tiberius was “anti-Semitic,” but continued favorable relationships with Judeans even when engaged in campaigns of traditional Roman ethnic restoration. Gaius, in turn, freed a Roman Judean from prison and made him a new client king. Philo and an Alexandrian Judean delegation remained in Rome, before and after meeting Gaius, and despite no ruling on their behalf, were not harmed by Rome’s populace or Gaius, despite their fears. Even when insane, Gaius responded positively to Agrippa’s letter, reaffirmed his friendship, and initially respected the Judean king’s council in regards to the Jerusalem temple, before reversion to his plan to erect his statue there, instigated by Helicon, an Isis-following Alexandrian.⁶⁷⁹ Gaius’s adamancy about his statue being worshipped in Jerusalem was not a behavior singularly directed at Judeans, but represented his broader pattern of claiming temples and divine honors. These edicts were resisted by other Roman governors and provincial cities to

⁶⁷⁴ Cassius Dio, 59.28.3-4.

⁶⁷⁵ Suetonius, *Caligula* 57.1

⁶⁷⁶ Cassius Dio, 59.29.1-4; on foreknowledge and potential participation of Claudius and Herod Agrippa I, Levick, *Claudius*, 35-37.

⁶⁷⁷ Cassius Dio, 59.30.

⁶⁷⁸ Cassius Dio, 59.30.1-2.

⁶⁷⁹ Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 166-172; 202-205; 331-337; Barrett, *Caligula*, 37.

prevent his worship as a living god that usurped their relations with local or ethnic deities, and that were counter to Rome's previous policy of generally preserving the religion, customs, and way of life of many peoples in the empire.

During the height of imperial blood-letting and divinity claims, Gaius did not oppress Roman Judeans by forced placement of his images in Rome's synagogues, nor is there evidence other Romans oppressed Judeans in Rome, despite conflict between Alexandrian Greeks and Judeans. Simply, Gaius's actions in relation to Judeans were not a systematic anti-Semitic campaign, but part of his own dementia, encouraged by Isis-worshipping Alexandrians or Egyptians. Gaius' demand and actions were resisted by Judeans, Miletans, and likely Macedonian and Achaean Greeks. Romans cooperated with Judeans to thwart Gaius' actions at high risk to themselves and their families in Rome. Judeans in turn likely conspired with Romans to overthrow the emperor. The circumstances demonstrate a fluidity of ethnic and religious rivalries, in which mixed parties promoted or prevented instability threatening to engulf much of the eastern empire in revolt.

2.6 Judean and Egyptian Life in Claudian Rome: 41 to 54 CE

With Gaius's assassination, instability ensued. Claudius attained emperorship in early 41 by Praetorian Guard support, crowd action, debated participation by Agrippa I, monetary donations, and finally cautious rapprochement with the Senate over a month in maturation.⁶⁸⁰ Ultimately, the Praetorian Guard swore the oath of faith with Claudius, which ensured elevation to imperial rule and continuation.⁶⁸¹ The urban cohorts soon followed and the Senate acquiesced to the new reality. The rest were assuaged with a mixture of executions, pardons, honors, forgiveness for some, and ignominy for others and Gaius.⁶⁸²

2.6.1 The "Judean Crisis" of 41 in Context: Claudius, Rome, Romans, Egyptians, and Judeans

Claudius simultaneously endeavored to balance interests and pressures of numerous groups, and restore normalcy across the empire. Re-establishment of security called for ethnic,

⁶⁸⁰ Cassius Dio, 60.1; Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.212 -273; Albino Garzetti, J.R. Foster (trans.), *From Tiberius to the Antonines: A History of the Roman Empire AD 14-192* (London: Methuen, 1974), 106-108.

⁶⁸¹ Suetonius, *Claudius* 10.1-4.

⁶⁸² Cassius Dio, 60.3.2-5; Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines*, 108-109.

cultural, moral, religious, economic, and political restabilization among competing interests. Attainment was Claudius' primary and urgent objective. In all these actions Romans, Egyptians and Judeans interacted in a stream of ethnic, security, economic and religious events and negotiation.

2.6.1.1 The "Judean Crisis" of 41 in Context: The Restabilization of Rome: Economics, Politics, Security, and the Military Situation

Much of Claudius' early work in Rome was to reverse the havoc of Gaius' last months. He revoked recently imposed sales taxes, released captives, returned banished elite, restored property, reinstated honors, days, and games in tribute of imperial family members, and engaged the Senate in these actions.⁶⁸³ Claudius returned monies confiscated by Gaius or Tiberius, ended required naming of the emperor as beneficiary in wills, and abolished recently required imperial donations. Claudius' monetary compensation to the military, public works projects and gifts to the citizens of Rome in 41 may have totaled as much as 747 million sesterces or 90 % of annual tax revenue, in addition to normal operating costs; however, it commenced reestablishment of public order and prosperity.⁶⁸⁴

Security and control of Rome remained fragile. Claudius granted his promised donative to the Praetorian Guard in reciprocity for their imperial faith-swearing. He issued either 5,000 or 3,750 sesterces (dinarii) per praetorian in 41, the equivalent of five years pay.⁶⁸⁵ The emperor needed the guard obligated to him to maintain control of Rome, after Gaius' mismanagement.⁶⁸⁶ In response to senatorial plots, economic unrest, and potential religious unrest, it is likely that Claudius increased Rome's garrison size by recruiting three additional urban cohorts from the city and Italy's population in 41.⁶⁸⁷ This would have doubled the force dedicated to preservation of public order in Rome to 3,000 men.

Militarily, Claudius faced ongoing revolt in Mauritania and renewed insurrection in Africa, which reduced Rome's grain supply from 41 through 46 when the African crisis was finally

⁶⁸³ Cassius Dio, 60.4.1-60.5.2; Levick, *Claudius*, 88.

⁶⁸⁴ Cassius Dio, 60.6.3; Levick, *Claudius*, 130-131.

⁶⁸⁵ Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army*, 81, 166-168, 171.

⁶⁸⁶ Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 151.

⁶⁸⁷ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 22.

resolved by military action and Roman colonization.⁶⁸⁸ Additionally, unrest in Syria and Judea in response to Gaius' attempt to erect his statue in the Jerusalem temple and simultaneous grain shortage due to crop failure, in portions of Tyre, Galilee and Judea, in protest or anticipation of Gaius' intentions, along with the vagaries of drought and famine increased threat of revolt in the east. The instability in Egypt between Judeans and Alexandrians was unresolved, threatening transport of Egyptian grain to feed Rome's population.⁶⁸⁹ The situations involving Judeans and Egyptians in Alexandria and Palestine were resolved by granting benefaction and warnings to each ethnicity.

2.6.1.2 The "Judean Crisis" of 41 in Context: The Restabilization of Rome: Reestablishment of Traditional Religion

Claudius quickly took steps to restore normal religious practice, especially in Rome. Gaius' statues disappeared from public venues to prevent his veneration. His name was removed from the imperial list recited in public oaths and prayers, in a sense, *damnatio memoriae*.⁶⁹⁰ Claudius avoided religious acclamation, worship, sacrifices, or games dedicated to him as a god, an action in contrast to Gaius' mania.⁶⁹¹

The new emperor ended abuse of religious festivals, which had occurred for a number of reasons under Gaius, including generation of crowds for Gaius' religious and political purposes and to create opportunities to sell goods for imperial benefit. Claudius followed with similar bans on repeats of equestrian contests, including races.⁶⁹² He engaged in reformation of public social morals, disbanding clubs, which may have been associated with racing, closed taverns, and banned sales of various products.⁶⁹³ It is doubtful his action was against all *collegia*, since many associations preserved community functions of value to maintaining order and the economy of Rome, including the compital *collegia* for each *vici*, or

⁶⁸⁸ On the fertility of Mauretania, Strabo, 17.3.1-11; Cassius Dio, 60.8.6-7, 60.9.1-6; Levick, *Claudius*, 149-150; Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines*, 117-118.

⁶⁸⁹ Philo, *Flaccus* 57; Lewis, *Life In Egypt*, 165-169. The best evidence of ongoing disruption is the shortage of grain in Rome when Claudius became emperor, which implies a disruption in shipment, likely in Alexandria as grain shipment point from Egypt, Seneca, *Moral Essays, Volume 2* (De Consolatione ad Marciam), John W. Basore (trans.), LCL, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1932), *De Brevitate Vitae*, 18.5; Suetonius, *Caligula* 19; also Orosius, 7.6.17 in Orosius, *Historiae adversum paganos* Carl Zangemeister (ed.), *CSEL* 5, (Wien 1882/ND Hildesheim 1967).

⁶⁹⁰ Cassius Dio, 60.4.6; Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines*, 108-109.

⁶⁹¹ Cassius Dio, 60.5.3-6.

⁶⁹² Cassius Dio, 60.6.4-5.

⁶⁹³ Cassius Dio, 60.6.7.

neighborhood, led by freedmen and slaves.⁶⁹⁴ Additionally, Claudius' reform included shaming the elite who had acted willingly in the theater under Gaius, and he returned the seating of various social classes to their proper order in the circus and other venues.⁶⁹⁵

2.6.1.3 The "Judean Crisis" of 41 in Context: The Restabilization of Rome: Reestablishment of Moral Values

Additionally, Claudius promoted moral values, which affects the interpretation of events of 41-42 concerning Rome, Judeans and Egyptians and Isis adherents. Claudius personally promoted *Constantia*, firmness or steadiness, on his coinage in 41. It was the core value which represented his early imperial actions. Peace (*Pax*) and Victory (*Victoria*) were hailed on coinage, with a legend claiming salvation of the citizens (*ob cives servatos*), most likely from the grain shortage of 41.⁶⁹⁶ Claudius also promoted *Clementia*, mercy, from 41 and through his reign. This virtue, important to contextually reading Romans, and in relation to Judean affairs was recognized even by Seneca, as one of Claudius' primary personal virtues.⁶⁹⁷ Claudian *Clementia* was demonstrated by acts of forgiveness towards many, including Alexandrians in 41, as Claudius warned them not to abuse his clemency in his letter to the city.⁶⁹⁸ Another Claudian virtue was *civilitas*, civility that captured his desire to avoid Gaius' self-glorification, and that he desired others to emulate.⁶⁹⁹ Claudius demonstrated this trait by showing deference in the Senate, and allowing others to share honors.⁷⁰⁰ Finally, Claudius desired to restore the freedom of the people and Senate, as long as public order was maintained. To affirm this public value, Claudius issued coinage bearing *Libertas Augusta*, or Augustan liberty, positioning himself as a champion of freedom.⁷⁰¹ Claudius' moral, religious, and political reforms were intended to restore Rome's traditional values.

⁶⁹⁴ Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 62-63; Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 199.

⁶⁹⁵ Cassius Dio, 60.6.8-9, 60.7.1-4.

⁶⁹⁶ Levick, *Claudius*, 88.

⁶⁹⁷ Seneca, *Moral Essays, Volume 2, De Consolatione ad Polybium*. 6.5, cf. 12.4; 13.2-4; Levick, *Claudius*, 89.

⁶⁹⁸ Doc. 370, 1.81 in E.M. Smallwood, ed., *Documents Illustrating the Principates of Gaius, Claudius, and Nero* (London: Cambridge University, 1967).

⁶⁹⁹ Suetonius, *Claudius* 35.1.

⁷⁰⁰ Suetonius, *Claudius* 12.1f, 35.1; Levick, *Claudius*, 93-94.

⁷⁰¹ Doc. 367, col. 3 ii. 10-23, in Smallwood, *Documents Illustrating the Principates*; Vincent M. Scramuzza, *The Emperor Claudius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1940), 63.

2.6.1.4 The “Judean Crisis” of 41 in Context: Restabilization of Rome’s Grain Supply

During Claudius’ first few months, Rome was food insecure. Given urban disorder in Rome, and Gaius’ economic depredations on the Roman elite, the ongoing situation between Judeans and Hellenistic Alexandrians in Alexandria, plus revolt in Mauritania caused by Gaius’ execution of Ptolemy, Rome’s traditional grain sources were inadequate to feed the population during winter 40/41.⁷⁰² It may be that Gaius’ bridge project and subsequent grain shortage during winter 39/40 prevented adequate re-supply for the following winter. Consequently, in early 41, the new emperor faced the fearful spectre of famine in Rome, a recurring concern for preceding emperors.⁷⁰³ Seneca related that when Claudius gained power, only an eight-day grain supply was available to feed Rome’s populace.⁷⁰⁴

Therefore, Claudius faced the possibility of major civil unrest in Rome due to severe grain shortage at his accession.⁷⁰⁵ He undertook almost unprecedented steps to have grain shipped to Rome by sea during January to March 41.⁷⁰⁶ Merchants were indemnified from shipping or material losses, and granted privileges to construct additional ships to increase the grain flow, an enormous financial risk to emperor, and imperial treasury.⁷⁰⁷ Even Claudius’ early coinage propagandistically promoted the certainty of grain supply, containing imagery of Ceres, the traditional Roman goddess of grain.⁷⁰⁸ Arrival of early grain shipments and later arrival of the Alexandrian fleet’s large freighters at Ostia or Puteoli were welcomed in summer, 41 with joy and relief.⁷⁰⁹ Honoring Egypt’s patron goddess would have been integral to Rome’s food crisis resolution.

2.6.1.5 March 41: The “Judean Crisis” of 41 in Context: Official Recognition of the Isis Cult

As goddess of Egyptian grain, the Nile, shipping, and sailors, Isis played an increasingly powerful and integral role in Rome’s religious and cultural life for its populace. It would

⁷⁰² Keith Hopkins, ‘Models, Ships and Staples’ in Peter Garnsey and C.R. Whittaker (eds.), *Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1983), 84-109, (100-102); For severity and duration of the Mauritanian revolt, Barrett, *Caligula*, 117-121.

⁷⁰³ Suetonius, *Claudius* 18.1f; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.43

⁷⁰⁴ Seneca, *De Brevit. Vitae* 18.5; Suetonius, *Caligula* 19; also, Orosius, 7.6.17.

⁷⁰⁵ Cassius Dio, 60.11.1.

⁷⁰⁶ Garnsey, ‘Famine in Rome’, 58-59.

⁷⁰⁷ Suetonius, *Claudius* 18.2-19.1; Kehoe, *Economics of Agriculture*, 2, n. 3; See Hopkins, “Models, Ships and Staples,” 100-102.

⁷⁰⁸ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 74-75.

⁷⁰⁹ On Alexandrian grain freighters, see Seneca, *Epistles* 77.1-2.

have been essential to honor the goddess deemed highly influential to ending Rome's grain shortage. Her worship would have attracted heightened interest during this period of grain instability, and been politically and "theologically" attractive to Rome's populace, given her characteristics detailed in Appendix 3. Every grain shipment from Egypt to Rome strengthened Isis's perceived role as Rome's savior and provider. Her veneration may have been driven as much by perceived divine displeasure, if her worship had been neglected, and Rome needed her to calm the seas, especially during January through March 41.

An artifact strengthens a conclusion that Claudius made Isis an official Roman goddess and highlights potential imperial patronage. The *mensa Isiaca*, a bronze table top, perhaps from the *Isis Campensis*, was dedicated by Tiberius Claudius Callistus in honor of his patron, the emperor Claudius. Callistus was an imperial freedman and an *aedituus templi Serapi*.⁷¹⁰ The temple of Isis on the Campus Martius was shared with Serapis. The bronze tables were used for sacred meals, possibly with initiates or congregants, eaten within the Isiac temple. At least one such table at Delos was dedicated to *Chrēstē Isis*.⁷¹¹ The *mensa Isiaca* dedication and use in Isis worship honored the goddess in her most important temple in Rome, and honored the emperor, perhaps as the goddess's temple's new patron.

It seems reasonable that in early spring 41, before commencement of the Mediterranean sailing season, with Rome's grain shortage most severe, Claudius' government still fragile, with the most urgent need to incentivize Alexandrian and Egyptian grain shippers and sailors in Rome, when economic incentives were being utilized to assume the risk of transport in winter, that Egypt's Isis cult was added to the public calendar as an official Roman religion in recognition of the importance of Egypt and Isis in feeding Rome, to preserve right relations with goddess, Egypt, Alexandria, and Rome's people.

Official recognition of Isis as official *religio* would have honored her patronage and benefaction as goddess of safe navigation, preserver of ships and sailors, of grain and harvests in Egypt as expanded in Appendix 3. Claudius' sponsorship and implementation of official Isis cult recognition would have potentially increased public support for the new emperor, given the cult's popularity in Rome, and added to his efforts of moral and religious

⁷¹⁰ Anne Rouillet, *The Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 143-144.

⁷¹¹ Pierre Roussel, *Les cultes égyptiens à Delos* (Paris: 1916), 20, 99.

stability, plus given something to Alexandria and Egypt in regards to stabilization of the unresolved situation.

Roman adoption of Isis may have occurred in conjunction with the *Navigium Isidis*, held March 5, 41. The celebration marked the beginning of the Mediterranean's official sailing season, as a highly significant festival in a food-insecure Rome, awaiting grain from Egypt. The adoption moved Isis worship from *superstitio* to recognized Roman *religio*.⁷¹² Worship in Isis's temples and cult was no longer "barbarian," but fully integrated into Rome's religious life. (See Appendix 3.4 for more about the Isis festivals incorporated into the Roman religious calendar.)

Isis's priests were integrated into imperial administration. Claudius had an Isiac priest, a Roman citizen, as a military tribune on his campaign to Britain in 43.⁷¹³ Tiberius Claudius Balbillus, an Alexandrian Greek was son of Thrasyllus and like his father – astrologer, philosopher, Isean priest, and long time friend of Claudius – held in high esteem and honor.⁷¹⁴ It is possible he was a priest at the *Isis Campensis* while in association with Claudius, and instrumental in Isis's inclusion in Rome's official religion. Even more influential were the Egyptian delegation members still resident in Rome awaiting resolution of the Alexandrian events of 38. Included were Apion, Isidorus, perhaps Lampon – the Alexandrian gymnasiarch, Dionysius and Theon who rounded out influential Alexandrians and Egyptians who may have pressed for the official Isis recognition as a Roman *religio*.⁷¹⁵

With the inclusion of Isis worship in the Roman calendar by March 5, the Egyptianization of Rome reached fruition. Official recognition of her adapted and adopted cult embedded it in Rome's religious experience, gaining status not granted to Judeanism, despite Claudius' favor toward Judeans and their way of life. Such an action, if implemented in conjunction with unresolved events in Alexandria, would have heightened inter-ethnic rivalry and religious tension between Egyptianized Isiac cult adherents, and Judeans, or adherents to

⁷¹² Barrett, *Caligula*, 220-221; see Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 90-91.

⁷¹³ C. Stertinius Xenophon, priest of Isis and Serapis, was a military tribune for Claudius in Britain, and likely served Isis in Rome. See R.E. Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), p.317, nn. 17, 22; S. Ladislav Vidman (ed.), *Sylloge Inscriptionum Religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae*, (VS), (Berlin, Berolini, 1969), VS 249.

⁷¹⁴ Tiberius Claudius Balbillus was son of Thrasyllus, Tiberius' astrologer. Levick, *Claudius*, 20; Howard Hayes Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: a history of Rome from 133 B.C. to A.D. 68*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 1988), 360; Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 20.

⁷¹⁵ Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 15-17.

Judean practice. Claudius was also pressed to honor Judeans and Judeanism in ways that corresponded to the recognition of the Isis cult in Rome and the perceived honor of Isis and Alexandrians in Egypt vs Alexandrian Judeans. In turn, the ethnic rivalry was heightened when the Judean Passover began on March 31st, no doubt creating ethnic tension between slighted Judeans and newly honored Isis adherents.⁷¹⁶

2.6.1.6 April 41: The “Judean Crisis” of 41 in Context: The Restabilization of Egypt and Reestablishment of Judean Rights in the Empire

Resolution of Judean problems, especially in Alexandria and Judea, was also imperative for Claudius. Restabilization in Syria and Judea, and abatement of provincial Judean concerns was initially accomplished by revocation of Gaius’ decree to install his likeness in Jerusalem’s Temple. Second, Claudius awarded an expanded kingdom to his lifelong friend, Agrippa I. The Judean kingship came with grant of consular rank, as recognition of one who aided Claudius’ imperial ascent in Rome.⁷¹⁷ Additionally Herod, Agrippa I’s brother, and long time member of Rome’s elite, was granted praetorship of Syrian Chalcis.⁷¹⁸

These developments certainly increased ethnic Judean pride in Rome. Both Roman Judeans were honored with privileged entrance into the Senate to render proper thanks for Claudian benefaction, to address the senators and Claudius in Greek in a venue in which Latin was usually the mandatory language.⁷¹⁹ Roman ceremony for such a treaty concluded by Fetial ritual and sacrifice, in which would be faith sworn between Claudius, the people of Rome and Herod, Agrippa I and the Judean nation as legal entities, a view strengthened by Claudius’ letter in 45 addressed to the magistrates of Jerusalem and “the entire Judean nation, *ethnos*.”⁷²⁰ Crowds of Rome’s Judeans, and the Judeans from Alexandria, including Philo, would have assembled to witness these events and celebrate actions that benefited Jerusalem, with Judea and Galilee under Agrippa I’s and Herod’s control, given Judean interest in motherland and mother city. Moreover, Claudius’ actions honored Judeans resident in Rome

⁷¹⁶ Perhaps April 29, but more likely, March 31, Stern, *Calendar and Community*, 60-61.

⁷¹⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.143; 156; 165; Cassius Dio, 60.8.2-3.

⁷¹⁸ Cassius Dio, 60.8.3.

⁷¹⁹ Cassius Dio, 60.8.3.

⁷²⁰ Faith swearing, see William Ramsay, ‘Fetiales’ in William Smith, *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (London: John Murray, 1875), 530-531; Eliezer Paltiel, *Vassals and Rebels in the Roman Empire: Julio-Claudian Policies in Judea and the Kingdoms of the East* (Bruxelles: Revue D’Etudes Latines, 1991), 261, 261 fn 1; Claudius’ letter, Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.1.2.

and in Judean territories placed under Herodian control, by those of their own ethnicity and religion.

Yet, the situation in Alexandria between its Judean and Greek populations remained unresolved. Rome had probably been home to Philo and the Alexandrian Judean delegation since 39, and also their Alexandrian Greek antagonists led by Apion. In the interim, second delegations arrived early in 41 with the Alexandrian Greeks led by Balbillus, a Roman Alexandrian Greek, and son of Thrasyllus, Tiberius' astrologer.⁷²¹ It is possible a record of rehearing the complaints by Claudius is preserved, which include mention of Agrippa seated with Claudius at the hearing.⁷²² After hearing Judean and Greek complaints, Claudius' final decree returned both ethnicities to their prior privileges and status as adroitly argued by Harker and Barclay.⁷²³ According to Josephus, Claudius, at the behest of Agrippa I and Herod, issued two decrees that ended conflict in Alexandria and restored the rights of Judeans, threatened by Gaius, throughout Egypt and Syria.⁷²⁴

As Levick argues, and I concur, it is doubtful Claudius considered Judeans a "general epidemic" or plague as often presumed.⁷²⁵ The imperial "epidemic" was not Semiticism, but civil disruption, instability, and open revolt afflicting many provincial regions including Africa, Mauritania, Alexandria, Judea, Galilee, Syria, Macedonia, and Achaea. Continuation of civil disorder by either Alexandrian Greeks or Judeans, or the host of other ethnicities and provinces was his "general plague upon the whole world," not ethnic Judeans or Judeanism.⁷²⁶ This conclusion is supported by Claudius' almost simultaneous edict to preserve, undisturbed, the Judean way of life and customs throughout the empire.⁷²⁷ Even if one takes the position that Claudius' reaction in the Alexandrian letter against further Judean recalcitrance as against a "general plague," it is balanced with threatened wrath and righteous indignation against Egyptians.⁷²⁸

⁷²¹ Tiberius Claudius Balbillus, Levick, *Claudius*, 20.

⁷²² CPJ 150 II in Victor A. Tcherikover and Alexander Fuks (eds.), *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, Vol. 2, (Cambridge: Magnes, 1957); Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 30-31.

⁷²³ Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 21-23; Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 56-72 (56-60).

⁷²⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.276-285.

⁷²⁵ As does Harker, in Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 22.

⁷²⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.280-291; Doc. 370, 1. 81f, in Smallwood, *Documents Illustrating the Principates*; A.S. Hunt and C.C. Edgar (trans.), 'P. Londis 1912' in *Select Papyri II*, *Loeb Classical Library* (London: Heinemann, 1934); Levick, *Claudius*, 184; Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines*, 121-122.

⁷²⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.280-285.

⁷²⁸ CPJ 153 II. 73-107 in Tcherikover and Fuks (eds.) *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*; translation, Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 22.

Thus, in light of a mix of military, economic, and ethnic pressures, Claudius' decision regarding Alexandrian Egypt, Judea and Galilee and Judean ethnic concerns is quite balanced, and mirrored his general efforts to restore public order throughout the empire with minimal change or through reciprocal honors, which urged all parties to return to the status quo, to end public disturbance and open hostility.⁷²⁹ Furthermore, the Alexandrian decree mirrors Claudius' personally proclaimed values by which he desired to rule Rome, and restore its status quo.

2.6.1.7 May 41: The "Judean Crisis" of 41 in Context: Recognition of Judeans in Rome and Imperial Defense of Judean Ethnicity and Religion in Rome

Of further interest is Claudius' action intimated in the Acts of the Pagan Martyrs. If the emperor had undertaken unprecedented steps to feed Rome in early 41, which I suggest included recognition of Isis as an official Roman religion, there is no doubt the Isis festival celebrated March 5 was a highly charged event for Rome's Isis followers. The events were imperial honoring of Egypt's goddess, of Alexandrian Greeks who worshipped her, and of Isis followers in Rome rejoicing at official status, and an opportunity to denigrate Judeans. It was religious leverage with apparent advantage to end Alexandrian unrest on terms favorable to Greeks and Egyptians, and to ethnic Judean detriment. A method to destroy one's opponents was by lawsuit, and given Rome's instability and Isis promotion, what better time for Alexandrian Greeks to argue that Judeans, especially its elite, were a threat to the emperor. Isidorus and Lampon, leaders of Greek Alexandrians, had previously charged Flaccus in 39, and successfully destroyed him.⁷³⁰

While there is debate over timing and historicity, if recorded events are accurate, Isidorus and Lampon brought charges against Agrippa I in Rome in 41.⁷³¹ They flaunted Claudius' insistence that they not bring charges against the Judean king that would harm him.⁷³² If Acts of the Pagan Martyrs is trusted, the suit was brought on 6 May 41, only two months after the recognition of Isis as official *religio*, while Rome was still short of grain. No doubt, the

⁷²⁹ Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 29.

⁷³⁰ Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 16-17; E.M. Smallwood, 'The Diaspora in the Roman Period Before CE 70' in Davies, Finklestein, Horbury, Sturdy, Katz, *Cambridge History of Judaism*, Vol. 3, 168-191, (183).

⁷³¹ H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954), 120-121; Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 23-24.

⁷³² Musurillo, *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, text IV B, 18-26, 25.

charges were influenced by disturbances in Alexandria during 38 and 41, and perhaps circumstances surrounding Claudius' assumption of power, with Agrippa I's assistance. Removing Agrippa from power and friendship with Claudius would have substantially changed outcomes in Alexandria, and Judea, and damaged the status of Judean ethnicity in Rome.

However, when prosecuting Agrippa I, Isidorus insulted Claudius as "the cast-off son of the Jewess Salome," a shameful insult toward the longstanding friendships of Claudius' parents and Agrippa I's forebearers.⁷³³ Agrippa I was exonerated. Isidorus, the Alexandrian gymnasiarch, was tried before Claudius, for insult to the majesty of the emperor, and executed along with Lampon.⁷³⁴

The Alexandrians' deaths would have strengthened Agrippa I's political and ethnic position in Rome, and improved Judean ethnic and religious standing in relation to Alexandrians, Egyptians, and Isis. The outcome stymied potential Alexandrian instigation of further unrest in Alexandria or Rome, and served as sober backdrop to reinforce Claudius' comments to Alexandrian Greeks about not abusing his clemency in his letter, sent mid-41, legislating return to the status quo between Alexandria's rival ethnicities.⁷³⁵

2.6.1.8 The "Judean Crisis" of 41: The "Repression" of Judeans in Rome in Context

With this context in mind, we revisit the presumed Judean "oppression" by Claudius in early 41. Dio noted an increase in Judeans, or Judean adherents prior to 49. He commented that banishment from Rome would have been difficult without a public disturbance, *ταραχή*, something Claudius needed to avoid. Perhaps this is an inference to Judean "banishment" during the Tiberian events during 19.⁷³⁶ Thus, Dio implies pursuit of a different policy by Claudius compared to Tiberius. Rome would survive without enforced military conscription, or Judean eviction from Rome. Judeans and Judeanism's followers increased, as did those of Isis, while Claudius' indemnification of shippers sped grain to Rome from Sardinia, a province perhaps still inhabited by Judean conscripted *auxilia* from 19 CE, and other provinces.

⁷³³ Musurillo, *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, text IV A, 18-26, 24-25.

⁷³⁴ Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 199-200.

⁷³⁵ Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 199-200; Musurillo, *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, text IV A, 18-26.

⁷³⁶ Cassius Dio, 57.17.5.

Dio further commented that Claudius allowed continuation of the traditional Judean way of life, but withdrew rights to hold meetings. Continuation of the Judean way of life would have included rights granted by decree under Augustus to meet in synagogues and send offerings to Jerusalem, which Claudius was well aware of, given his close friendship with Herod and Agrippa I, still present in Rome. Additionally, Judean Roman rights as Roman citizens to the grain dole were continued. Claudius not exiling Judeans makes sense because of Agrippa I's presence in the city and his probable involvement in Claudius' ascension to power. It would have been a terrible affront to the Judean Roman who had helped place Claudius on the throne to eject ethnically related residents, or to restrict their religious worship. It would have been opposite of Claudius' stated policy in 41, to return to the status quo on rights and privileges.

Most often, Dio's reference to not holding meetings (*συναθροίζεσθαι*) is assumed to entail prohibition of synagogue worship. Yet given unrest in Rome over taxes, worship of Gaius and before his images, resultant riot and destruction of his images after assassination, and established Roman Judean capabilities to influence and participate in political events, I surmise that public political meetings, riot and demonstrations are of more concern to Claudius than Judean religious actions. However, the proximity of the *Navigium Isidis* on March 5 and celebration of Passover on 31 March may have been too sensitive a religious moment in Egyptian-Judean rivalry.

Judean political and ethnic enthusiasm would have been apparent with Passover celebrated on 31 March, 41 and imperial honors and rulership granted Agrippa I, his brother Herod, and their presentation in the Senate during April, 41. The grant of rulership and subsequent treaty with Claudius, the Senate and the Roman people took place in the Forum, probably drawing many of Rome's Judeans and Judeanism's adherents as spectators.⁷³⁷ Exoneration of Agrippa I of charges by Isidorus and Lampon, and their subsequent execution in early May 41, would have heightened ethnic rivalry with Egyptians and the newly included Isis cult in Rome's official religions, an ethnic contention in relation to Judeanism remaining a *superstitio*.

⁷³⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.275.

These events and the Herodian brothers' departures for provincial Judea and Syria called for processions, meetings, and celebrations with participation of Rome's Judeans, a further rivalrous concern to Rome's Alexandrian Greek inhabitants and Isis adherents. Claudius greatly desired peace and to minimize further excitement of Roman or other ethnic sensitivities, especially those of Egyptians or Alexandrians after recent disturbances under Gaius, the trial and execution of Isidorus and Lampon, and the urgent need to feed Rome Egypt's grain.

Furthermore, Dio's very next comment alluded to Claudian "repression" of political groups (ἐταιρείαι) encouraged by Gaius, in addition to closing taverns and returning their regulation to the Prefect of Rome, points of public gathering with political potential catalyzed by alcohol, and organizations created by Gaius which were a threat to Claudian imperial policy.⁷³⁸

The enacted ban on public meetings is more plausible after the departure of the Herods, to calm Judean exuberance, and prevent further Alexandrian or Egyptian angst over events. Claudius wanted to avoid ethnic and religious conflict in Rome as had occurred in Alexandria. Banned Judean meetings were likely additional large public demonstrations of Judean political or perhaps religious practice, possibly focused on major Judean festivals, such as Pentecost, that may have caused obstruction to commerce or incited a disturbance in the city due to heightened religious rivalries, with recently honored Isis cult adherents.

Finally, to presume Claudius solely acted against Judeans in 41-42 would be for him to disavow treaty obligations for Judean assembly as *collegia*, or synagogues – counter to his public policy. Given the ethnic, religious, and economic stresses on Rome, I conclude that Claudius is not "anti-Semitic" in whatever action occurred. He actually benefited Judeans by return to the ethnic, religious, and legalized status quo of Roman life prior to Gaius' reign, by honoring the Herods by grant of rulership of Judea and oversight of Jerusalem's Temple. Any restriction on assembly was not likely extended to synagogue use as assumed, but dealt with public assemblies with potential to destabilize Rome.

⁷³⁸ Cassius Dio, 57.17; Suetonius, *Claudius* 38.2; Gruen, *Diaspora*, 36-38.

Finally, a Claudian decree that possibly curtailed Judean assembly in Rome is commonly presumed to have been long lasting – until 49. However, silence on termination of any restrictions can also mean the ban was short-lived. Either position is an argument from silence. However, given Claudius’ interest to stabilize the city, restrictions were more likely temporary, given Claudius’ promotion of a return to normalcy and his political campaign and message as one based upon public values of *civilitas*, *clementia*, *pax*, and *constantia*. Even his letter to the Alexandrians called for Judean-Greek relations based upon “gentleness and kindness.”⁷³⁹

2.6.2 Judeans in Early Claudian Rome: 42 to 49 CE

Post-41, Claudius commenced resolution of water and grain shortages by construction of massive public works projects from which Roman Judeans likely profited.⁷⁴⁰ Claudian construction of aqueducts, temples, and public buildings within Rome provided ongoing urban redevelopment and employment and supported the economy throughout his reign.⁷⁴¹

In 43, Claudius enacted further religious calendar reform, reduced the number of public and religious holidays, yet dedicated a day and altar to *Pietas Augusta* (Augustan Piety), as an all-embracing aspect of Roman life, to honor the gods who granted Rome victory and glory due to her populace’s piety. These actions drew renewed attention to Augustan deity and deified values, which Claudius used to stabilize Rome by appeal to moral and religious tradition. Certainly, Isis provided economic and religious benefit by adding several days’ celebrations in November and March as harbinger of Egyptian grain. Thus, the emperor commingled religion, political and social factors with economics in senatorial legislation, much to the presumed economic benefit, especially of Isis adherents.

In 44, the weekly market day was changed due to religious rites.⁷⁴² It is quite surmisable this alteration was due to Judean request to participate in business, and ease Sabbath observance – if the market had previously fallen on Sabbath. For other ethnic or religious groups, Saturday had been viewed as least auspicious for work or business. Thus, the entire

⁷³⁹ Translation in Harker, *Loyalty and Dissonance*, 22.

⁷⁴⁰ For initiation of the Ostia port construction, see Suetonius, *Claudius* 20; Cassius Dio, 60.11.1-5; for a description of construction and estimated time for completion of the port and supporting installations at Ostia, see Thornton and Thornton, *Julio-Claudian Building Programs*, 77-92.

⁷⁴¹ Suetonius, *Claudius* 20.1; Levick, *Claudius*, 108.

⁷⁴² Cassius Dio, 60.24.7.

population may have gained economic benefit from this modification, possibly a return to earlier Augustan action regarding Judean Sabbath observance in Rome, now made easier for non-Judean Roman adherents. If market timing and economics changed to enable the Judean Sabbath to be more easily celebrated, then it demonstrates the favor of the Senate and Claudius, and the political power of the Judean lobby, in conjunction with Agrippa I, to sway Rome's way of life.

Other events in 44 revealed Judean elite resident in Rome. While Agrippa I ruled Judea, his son remained in his father's or the imperial palace under tutelage of Claudius' court. Most likely, Herod Agrippa II had been resident since 39 when his father returned to Italy under Gaius.⁷⁴³ While receiving education among Rome's elite, Agrippa II's Judean education simultaneously continued. His Judean values and religion were demonstrated by his later practice of and piety in Judean law and life.⁷⁴⁴ Only sixteen or seventeen in 44, he was deemed too young to assume Judean kingship at his father's death and remained in Rome with Claudius.⁷⁴⁵

The emperor benefited Rome's 150,000 citizens on the public grain dole in 45, with a gift of 300 or more sesterces to each – Judean Romans included. Claudius and his sons-in-law were present at and oversaw the public *congiarium*, given in thanks to the gods for his triumph in Britain.⁷⁴⁶ Yet the generous gift may have served another purpose. From 45-47, Egypt suffered grain production shortfalls due to excessive Nile flooding, simultaneously with famine in Judea, Syria, and Greece, including Corinth.⁷⁴⁷ Rome too would have suffered high prices, since it drew a third of its grain from a hungry Egypt.⁷⁴⁸ Thus, Rome and her Judean population would have undergone suffering a precarious food supply for most of Claudius' early reign, from 41-45. To increase Rome's security, Claudius increased the Praetorian

⁷⁴³ Kokkinos, *Herodian Dynasty*, 318.

⁷⁴⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.360.

⁷⁴⁵ Paltiel, *Vassals and Rebels*, 261-262.

⁷⁴⁶ Cassius Dio, 60.25.7-8; The total cost, assuming 150,000 Roman citizens, would have been 45 million sesterces. Levick, *Claudius*, 131; Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army*, 183.

⁷⁴⁷ "Should it not have exceeded twelve cubits in its overflow, famine is the sure result; and this is equally the case if it should chance to exceed sixteen; for the higher it has risen, the more slowly it subsides, and, of course, the seedtime is impeded in proportion." Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 18.47; G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1961), 195; MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, 251-252.

⁷⁴⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.49-53, 100-102; Grain prices in Tebtunis in Roman Egypt doubled from 4.4 drachmas per arabata on 7 Sept, to 8 drachmas on October 1, 45, yet fell to 4.75 drachmas per arabata by 15 December, 47. Richard Duncan-Jones, 'The Price of Wheat in Roman Egypt' in *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990), 143-155, (145,151).

guard by three cohorts to total twelve, adding another 1,500-3,000 elite troops to Rome's garrison to maintain order.⁷⁴⁹

2.6.3 Claudian Re-establishment of Pax Deorum in 46-49 CE: The Roman "Judean Crisis" in Context

The uncertain circumstances of 41-45 highlighted Rome's need to renew and preserve right relationship with her traditional and official gods, for preservation of her greatness by strengthening ethnic Roman traditions and *mos maiorum*. In 46, Claudius began retrenchment of Roman identity, by establishing severe penalties for fraudulent citizenship claims by non-Latin speaking citizens in Rome, and pretenders to *eques* status. He legislated guidelines for appropriate relationship between former masters and freedmen, potentially impacting some Judeans.⁷⁵⁰

During 47, Claudius continued ethnic Roman revival by celebration of Rome's 800th anniversary, holding the *ludi Saeculares*, Secular Games, the first since Augustus, a milestone in Roman civil and religious life, and one of ethnic pride.⁷⁵¹ However, the games marked what some considered the last century of Rome's existence, fueling public speculation concerning Sibylline prophecy that Rome's end came after 900 years.⁷⁵²

At the start of 48, Claudius appealed to the Senate, to add Romanized senators from Gaul.⁷⁵³ Claudius' most convincing argument was "... that customs, culture, and the ties of marriage have blended them with ourselves..."⁷⁵⁴ Gauls, like Egyptians and Judeans, had acculturated to Roman ways – becoming Romanized. Claudius renewed the ranks of the empire's elite with those who met imperial standards of Roman virtue. The addition of non-ethnic Italians

⁷⁴⁹ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 21.

⁷⁵⁰ *Senatusconsultum Ostorianum*; Albino Garzetti, J.R. Foster (trans.), *From Tiberius to the Antonines: A History of the Roman Empire AD 14-192* (London: Methuen, 1974), 132, 136.

⁷⁵¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.11.1-4; Barbara Levick, *Claudius* (New Haven, RI: Yale University, 1990), 87; On the religious details of the Augustan event repeated by Claudius, see Denis Feeney, 'The *Ludi Saeculares* and the *Carmen Saeculare*' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 106-116, 107-108.

⁷⁵² Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 100.

⁷⁵³ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.23-24.

⁷⁵⁴ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.24.

to Roman privilege was positioned as *ius honorum*, a covenant of honor or faith between Rome and her newest elite.⁷⁵⁵

This elite expansion occurred during a census ending with a *lustrum*, during which all Roman Judeans had re-presented their credentials to prove citizenship and identify those who lived in each household by status.⁷⁵⁶ Unregistered Roman Judeans were added to tax rolls, citizen status changes noted, and in Rome, grain dole eligibility reconfirmed.⁷⁵⁷ We find no criticism or denigration of Roman Judeans maintaining their rights and privileges as Rome's populace. Judeans presented themselves for the census, produced their credentials, and swore an oath of faith with the emperor, like their fellow citizens.⁷⁵⁸

The October, 48 census counted 5.9 million Roman citizens, undoubtedly including Judeans, Alexandrians and Egyptians domiciled in Rome.⁷⁵⁹ As *lustrum* participants assembled with their tribes or *vici*, Roman Judeans would have attended the ritual purification, concluded with sacrifice of a bull, boar, and ram, which had been led around the assembled citizenry. The Claudian *lustrum* was for the preservation, protection, and legal and religious demarcation of Rome's citizens, an act also undertaken in *coloniae* that followed Rome's laws.⁷⁶⁰

After the senate's session in 48, Claudius journeyed to Ostia to check port construction and offer sacrifice.⁷⁶¹ Claudius' absence triggered a heinous attempt to seize imperial power. Messalina's public adultery and revolutionary marriage ceremony with imperial hopeful, Gaius Silius, triggered hasty imperial return to Rome. Claudius' appearance before the Praetorian Guard brought reaffirmation of their oath of faith at which they roared the offenders should be punished, which enabled quick death of the conspirators, including Messalina.⁷⁶² The events disturbed the city, especially the elite who risked Claudian wrath.⁷⁶³

⁷⁵⁵ Geza Alföldy and David Braund, *The Social History of Rome*, David Braund (trans.), (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1985), 118-119.

⁷⁵⁶ Roman census details are known from Egyptian village lists by household, updated annually. See Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 156-159.

⁷⁵⁷ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.25.

⁷⁵⁸ Imperial oath swearing will be further detailed in Chapter 3.

⁷⁵⁹ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.13.1; 11.25.8.

⁷⁶⁰ Gargola, *Lands, Laws, & Gods*, 75-80.

⁷⁶¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.26, also see n. 1; 11.31; Cassius Dio, 60[61].31.4.

⁷⁶² Tacitus, *Annals* 11.35; Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army*, 85-86.

⁷⁶³ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.5, 28-38; Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines*, 116.

Public discomfort increased in 49 when Claudius incestuously married Agrippina junior, his niece. The marriage was feared, even by the emperor, as a potential trigger for “national calamity,” a risk of divine anger, given the violation of Roman moral and religious law to marry a niece.⁷⁶⁴ A “promiscuous crowd” and an urging Senate, encouraged by his consular friend, Lucius Vitellius, led to amended marriage laws, and Claudius consummated the union.⁷⁶⁵

When the wedding occurred, Claudius sacrificed for forgiveness to Artemis/Diana of the Aventine, following traditional Roman religion. These rites for forgiveness went far beyond traditional ritual, prayers, and sacrifices. Claudius incorporated portions of the Campus Martius and Aventine into Rome’s *pomerium*, Rome’s sacred boundaries, as acknowledgement of the resident deities’ inviolacy and their inclusion in Rome’s pantheon.⁷⁶⁶ The *pomerium* was sacred space restricted to temples and places of worship that belonged to recognized official Roman deities. Extension of Rome’s *pomerium* was geographic piety, praise, and honor of Rome’s official gods, old and newly included. Only official Roman gods were publicly worshipped within the *pomerium*’s borders.⁷⁶⁷ The *pomerium* expansion incorporated Diana’s temple, and her cult and festivals were incorporated as an official Roman *religio*. Diana/Artemis had long regulated temple foundations and civic laws in Rome and her *coloniae*.⁷⁶⁸ Another *Iseum* on the Aventine may have been included in the newly designated sacred space.⁷⁶⁹

The *pomerium* extension would have imposed a ban and removal of “superstitions” and non-Roman deities from public worship within this enlarged sacred precinct. Thus, Claudius’ *pomerium* extension may have triggered removal or closure of non-official cult temples, and a number of synagogues, perhaps on the Campus Martius, given Judeanism’s status as a *superstitio*.

⁷⁶⁴ Anthony A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Mother of Nero* (London: Batsford, 1996), 100-102; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.5; Suetonius, *Claudius* 26.3; Cassius Dio, 60[61].31.8.

⁷⁶⁵ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.5-7; Cassius Dio, 60[61].31.8; Miriam T. Griffin, *Nero: The End of a Dynasty* (London: Batsford, 1984, repr. 2001), 29.

⁷⁶⁶ M. Andreussi, ‘Pomerium’ in *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae, (LTUR) IV*, (Rome: 1999), 96-105, (101-103); Clifford Ando, ‘A Religion for the Empire’ in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 220-243, (235-237).

⁷⁶⁷ Scramuzza, *Claudius*, 148-149.

⁷⁶⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.23.4f; Levick, *Claudius*, 107; Wissowa, ‘The Historical Development of Roman Religion,’ 331.

⁷⁶⁹ Rouillet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments*, 38.

Furthermore in 49, Claudius reaffirmed Rome's *pax deorum* by renewal of the Augury of Security (*Augurium Salutis*), a peacetime ceremony to ascertain if the gods were propitious to prayers for the safety of Rome, a ritual neglected for seventy-five years.⁷⁷⁰ The archaic ritual offered thanks for the traditional Roman gods' blessings, and requested continued prosperity for the city.⁷⁷¹ That Claudius' marriage coincided with the year the Vestal Virgin appointed by Tiberius in 19 retired and a new candidate was appointed in her place, as epitome of Roman chastity, added fertile satire to the circumstances.⁷⁷²

Later in 49, a Gallic orator, recently made an *eques*, dropped a Druid's snake egg, an object of power in lawsuits, from his toga during a speech, possibly during a trial before the Emperor.⁷⁷³ The act was an affront to Rome and her gods, and one that shamed Claudius in relation to Gallic inclusion in the Senate and Rome's elite. Claudius had the orator executed. He reacted against Gallic *religio* by abolishment of Gallic Druidism, perceived as a loathsome barbarian superstition.⁷⁷⁴ Thus, Judeans were not solely negatively affected by events in Rome in 49. Most certainly, neither Judeanism nor its leadership were abolished from the empire.

The broader context of Rome and Judean affairs has been somewhat neglected in consideration of events affecting Judeans in 49. Herod of Chalcis died that year and Claudius transferred his kingdom to his younger Judean friend, Agrippa II.⁷⁷⁵ Additionally, control over appointment of Jerusalem's Judean high priesthood, its vestments, and economic affairs involving the Temple were granted to Agrippa II.

Granting kingships and territories would have called for public demonstration of ongoing Claudian favor and friendship between the emperor and the Judean leadership and people. Thus this bestowal was accompanied by Senatorial approval, public oaths, a treaty, sacral rites, public sacrifice, treaty display, and grant of responsibilities in a public venue in Rome, likely the Forum. Praise, speeches, honors, and thanks would have been exchanged, Agrippa

⁷⁷⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.23.3f; Levick, *Claudius*, 87.

⁷⁷¹ Scramuzza, *Claudius*, 149.

⁷⁷² Tacitus, *Annals* 12.4.3, 12.8.2; Scramuzza, *Claudius*, 150.

⁷⁷³ Suetonius, *Claudius* 25 in C. Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, Alexander Thomson M.D. (trans.) (London: Bell & Sons, 1909), 318; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 29.52-54.

⁷⁷⁴ Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae, Attic Nights*, 3 Vols., John C. Rolfe (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1927), 13.14.7; Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.5; Levick, *Claudius*, 170; Benjamin H. Isaac, *The invention of racism in classical antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2006), 421-425; (422-423, 422 n. 63).

⁷⁷⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.104; *War* 2.223.

would have thanked the Roman people, Senate and Claudius, similar to his father's conferral in 41. Such an event would have drawn a crowd of Roman Judeans to the Forum to witness the proceedings. Given Agrippa II's eleven-year residence in Rome, he and his household no doubt had connections with the Judean community, based upon ethnicity, patronage, and benefaction and friendship reciprocity as their common cultural context. The grant of *imperium* of Chalcis, was reaffirmation of Claudian friendship with Roman and non-Roman Judeans, and a cause for Judean celebration.

Agrippa II did not immediately depart Rome for Chalcis. As Kokkinos convincingly argues, he remained in Rome, ruling Chalcis *in absentia*, while remaining present as an imperial friend, who influenced Judean affairs in 51/52 and until granted his enlarged kingdom in January, 53.⁷⁷⁶ Given this, Agrippa II was likely resident in Rome, along with his household, through the "anti-Judean" events of 49. It is highly unlikely Agrippa II, or the households of his attendants, were expelled in the crisis.

2.6.4 The "Judean Crisis" of 49 CE

Traditional argument to support a Judean expulsion from Rome in 49 has primarily been dependent on three sources; Suetonius, Orosius, and Luke. We will revisit all three in reconsideration of this key moment in Judean life in Rome.

2.6.4.1 The "Judean Crisis" of 49 CE: Suetonius

Suetonius is enigmatic and difficult to place in time or context for his brief statement: "He [Claudius] banished from Rome (all) the Jews, who were continually making disturbances at the instigation of (one) Chrestus," or "Chrestus was the instigator of it."⁷⁷⁷

The sentence is nebulous, difficult to interpret, and raises a number of questions, not all of which are resolvable. First: Who was Chrestus? Does Claudius have a freedman Chrestus who instigated Judean unrest? Is there a non-Roman non-Judean named Chrestus who instigated disturbances that persecuted Judeans and caused public disorder? Does a Roman

⁷⁷⁶ Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty*, 318-320.

⁷⁷⁷ "[Claudius] Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit." Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.4; Levick, *Claudius*, 121; Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 152-168.

Judean freedman leader named Chrestus instigate public disturbance in Rome?⁷⁷⁸ Might Chrestus be transposed Christus as often presumed, leading to a conclusion that civil tumult was due to Christ-following proselytism among Judeans that disrupted Rome?⁷⁷⁹ Might there be another alternative identification of Chrestus, as disguised reference to adherents of another deity?⁷⁸⁰ Finally, does “the Jews” mean the entire Judean population of Rome or is ejection restricted to those making disturbances?⁷⁸¹ Suetonius seems less a place to start and perhaps the source to end with in this case.

2.6.4.2 The “Judean Crisis” of 49 CE: Luke

The standard view combines Suetonius’ account with Luke’s narrative, and assumes the entire Judean population of Rome was ejected from the city in 49, based upon Luke’s statement in Acts 18:2.⁷⁸² Yet, a critique of Luke’s wide literary application of “all” throughout Luke-Acts reveals an interesting pattern. In circumstances regarding distribution of news, movement of people, decrees, and geographic description, Luke’s use of “all” or “whole” is very often a form of literary exaggeration for dramatic effect.⁷⁸³

For example, Luke 2:1 announces an Augustan decree to register either “the whole” empire or world for a census. It is certainly not the “whole world,” since Luke’s author is aware of peoples who reside outside the empire, such as Parthians.⁷⁸⁴ In Gerasa, “all” the people of the district are portrayed begging Jesus to depart, an obvious overstatement.⁷⁸⁵ The visualization of “all the tax collectors and sinners” appearing before Jesus in Luke 15:1, would be

⁷⁷⁸ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 75.

⁷⁷⁹ C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Vol. 1, *Romans 1-8*, J.A. Emerton, C.E.B. Cranfield, and G.N. Stanton, (eds.), *ICC*, 2 Vols. (London: T&T Clark, repr. 2004, c1975), 16; Tacitus is often cited as evidence for the dual, interchangeable use. Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44.

⁷⁸⁰ Isis was termed *Chrēstē Isis*, adherents of Serapis may have characterized him as Chrestus, thus Serapis or Isis adherents may have stirred trouble in relation to Judeans in Rome. Roussel, *Les cultes égyptiens à Delos*, 20, 99.

⁷⁸¹ Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 109, 117; Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 75-78; Stephen Spence, *The Parting of the Ways: The Roman Church as a Case Study*, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion (ISACR)* 5, (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 80-81.

⁷⁸² Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 116-117, 121-122, 210-214; Cappelletti, *The Jewish Community of Rome*, 70-74.

⁷⁸³ See Nanos for a similar argument but a different result, Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996), 374-379; Mikael Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and the State: Christians, Jews, and Civic Authorities in 1 Thessalonians, Romans, and Philippians*, *Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series* 34, (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wilsell, 2001), 154.

⁷⁸⁴ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην; For awareness of peoples, Acts 2: 9-11; 8:27.

⁷⁸⁵ ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος τῆς περιχώρου τῶν Γερασσηῶν, Luke 8:37.

realistically improbable. It implies that the entire imperial and provincial tax collection system of Roman Palestine suddenly stopped functioning.⁷⁸⁶

Luke's narrative tactic of dramatic exaggeration continues in Acts 1:1, which asserts his gospel told "all" that Jesus did and taught; an overstatement when compared to the other synoptics.⁷⁸⁷ The claimed worldwide famine of Acts 11:28 was widespread, but did not include all Roman provinces, let alone the "whole" world.⁷⁸⁸ Acts 19:10, 26, and 27 contain claims and counterclaims of Paul's gospel and Artemis' worship in "all Asia"⁷⁸⁹ Not "all Asia" worshipped Artemis as patron deity. Certainly the accusation that Paul stirred up trouble among "all the Jews throughout the world" in Acts 24:5 is as much dramatics as Paul's claim of preaching repentance to "all Judea," in Acts 26:20, where he hardly had stepped foot.⁷⁹⁰ It is clear Luke utilizes exaggeration as a literary tactic for dramatic effect. Consequently, it is very suspect to assume that in Acts 18:2, Luke's "all" is absolute – that Rome's total Judean population was expelled from the city.⁷⁹¹ Given Luke's pattern of "all," less than the total Judean population were expelled.

2.6.4.3 The "Judean Crisis" of 49 CE: Orosius

Acceptance of Orosius' later interpretation of Roman events centuries earlier is problematic at best, based on his dependence on Suetonius and a non-extant Josephan quote.⁷⁹² While he does helpfully point to events in 49, what is added is a loop back into Suetonius, becoming circuitous. Thus, perhaps Orosius' comment should be interpreted more narrowly, in line with Suetonius; Jews who were making disturbances at the instigation of a Chrestus were banished from Rome. In this, we are closer to Claudian application of banishment and legal action, and his own temperament noted by Suetonius. Further support for limited banishment

⁷⁸⁶ πάντες οἱ τελῶναι καὶ οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ, Luke 15:1.

⁷⁸⁷ Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποίησάμην περὶ πάντων, ὦ Θεόφιλε, ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν, Acts 1:1.

⁷⁸⁸ λιμὸν μεγάλην μέλλειν ἔσεσθαι ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην, Acts 11:28.

⁷⁸⁹ πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν, Acts 19:10; πάσης τῆς Ἀσίας, Acts 11:26; ἦν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία, Acts 11:27.

⁷⁹⁰ πᾶσιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην, Acts 24:5; πᾶσάν τε τὴν χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας, Acts 26:20.

⁷⁹¹ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 70, 74.

⁷⁹² Orosius 7.6.15; Slingerland, *Claudian Policymaking*, 123-129; Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and the State*, 152-153.

is absence of mention in Tacitus' *Annals*, Josephus' *War*, *Antiquities*, or *Vita* and Cassius Dio's silence. If something of significance happened, it would have gotten further coverage.

2.6.4.4 The "Judean Crisis" of 49 CE: Economics and Logistics

Again, if we presume a standard view, banishment of "all" Roman Judeans, or Judean adherents would have ejected presumably 25-50,000 people from Rome. An expulsion this size would cause massive disruption, with social and contractual relationships uprooted throughout the city. Economics, contracts, banking, suppliers, food distribution, and goods delivery would have suffered as well as those being evicted clogging the city's taxed transportation network. If expelled en masse, there is a logistical nightmare leaving Rome.⁷⁹³ Comparison with a single legion marching column of approximately 2 miles per legion, not including camp followers, would visualize a flow of refugees 10-20 miles long if channeled down the *Via Appia* upon such a Claudian order, not even considering the impact on shipping. Dio's comment that the Judean population was too large for expulsion makes very good sense given logistical considerations.⁷⁹⁴

2.6.4.7 The "Judean Crisis" of 49 CE: Social Disruption

Furthermore, Roman Judeans were already acculturated to life in Rome. It would have violated Claudius' own philosophy of Romanization, his personal proclaimed values, and undermined his long-standing friendship with Agrippa II, whom he had just honored by grant of Chalcis and Jerusalem temple oversight in 49. Mass exile would have shamed Judeans just valued and honored by Claudius. It would have reduced business revenue and tax receipts, in addition to damaging patron and business association networks across the city.

Furthermore, since many Judeans were also Roman citizens, mass exile without dire extremity in Rome would have caused a legal uproar. A mass expulsion would have included many Roman citizens with rights of appeal and access to patronage, which if Claudius had overturned, would have caused consequential havoc on legal governance and with the Senate.⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹³ Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and the State*, 153-154.

⁷⁹⁴ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 70.

⁷⁹⁵ Cappelletti, *Jewish Community of Rome*, 70.

2.6.4.8 The “Judean Crisis” of 49 CE: Shame on the Roman Military and Dishonor for Rome

The standard supposition that 25-50,000 Judeans were expelled would imply that civil disturbance by no more than approximately 5 percent of Rome’s population was beyond its military capabilities. The idea ignores the reality of the city’s internal security forces, the urban cohorts, *vigiles*, and Praetorian Guard, not including other military assets, available to manage disturbance in Rome. It would have demonstrated Rome’s garrison was too weak to maintain order. Additionally, large expulsion of a city’s own citizens was a disgrace. It would have dishonored Rome, and its garrison troops, and politically damaged Claudius. It is more a stretch to presume a full eviction took place, than that it did not. Dio’s statement that there were too many Judeans to expel carries the greater weight among those who comment.⁷⁹⁶

2.6.4.9 The “Judean Crisis” of 49 CE: Conclusions

Let us now return to events in Rome detailed above. Claudius’ policy was to maintain equilibrium and expand Roman inclusion in 48 and 49, at the same time reviving traditional Roman values. The events prior to and surrounding his marriage to Agrippina were the most sensitive in relation to Senate, people, gods and Roman *mos maiorum*. To ensure right relations with Rome’s deities required honorable actions towards the gods in relation to his marriage. Despite Claudius’ relationship with Agrippa II, still present in Rome, the preservation of relationship with Roman deities took precedence over other deities and *superstitiones* in light of the 800th anniversary of Rome’s founding, the adulterous actions of Messalina, and Claudius’ incestuous marriage to Agrippina, requiring divine forgiveness and ritual restoration.

Claudius’ *pomerium* expansion directly impacted synagogue existence as worship locations excluded from the *pomerium*. Closure of potential Aventine and Campus Martius synagogues would have triggered outrage among Judeans as much as other temples simultaneously closed were an affront to their ethnically related adherents. Resultant protest against closure was expected under Roman jurisdiction of *superstitiones*. It did no good in this case.

⁷⁹⁶ Rutgers, ‘Roman Policy Toward the Jews’, 105.

The tension around these closures is the best case for expulsions from Rome in 49, plausibly just prior to Claudius' marriage to Agrippina and after honoring Agrippa II. The *pomerium* expansion and resulting unrest shifted some Judeans closer to remaining synagogues. Some may have left Rome voluntarily, those most recalcitrant would have been expelled, perhaps Chrestus was included. Roman expulsion of Judeans would be minimal, given the process for legal banishment for Roman citizens.⁷⁹⁷ To interpret this event as "anti-Semitic" goes too far.⁷⁹⁸ Any synagogue closure must be considered in light of other simultaneous temple closures of other *superstitiones*. Most certainly, Judean consequences paled in comparison to Claudius' action in 49 against Druids and their Celtic adherents.

Finally, given the context, a conclusion that all Judean Christ-followers were evicted from Rome, and not allowed to return until 54, as a framework for hearing the Roman epistle in Rome, needs rethought.⁷⁹⁹ Many Judean Christ-followers never left.

2.6.5 Judean Life in Rome Under Claudius: 50-54 CE

Judean presence in Rome did not lapse from 49 until 54 as they were clearly present and resident in Rome in 52. Quadratus, the Syrian legate, intervened in a conflict between Galileans, Judeans, and Samaritans.⁸⁰⁰ He sent the Judean procurator Cumanus, Judean high priesthood, and delegations of the Samaritan and Jerusalem elite to Rome for Claudius to resolve the ethnically-rooted conflict.⁸⁰¹

Agrippa II *was not* summoned to Rome. He and his retinue were resident prior to arrival of the Judean delegation. He was not a Claudian guest, but inhabited Herodian residences owned by his family, existent since Herod the Great. Agrippa II's family and other Herodians had resided in Rome since 38, in households with Judean stewards, caretakers, slaves, and freedmen, who managed Herodian family affairs when they were absent, or resident with their entourages. Judeans associated with extended Herodian households were not likely

⁷⁹⁷ Spence, *The Parting of the Ways*, 82-88.

⁷⁹⁸ Spence, *The Parting of the Ways*, 93-95.

⁷⁹⁹ For a standard account of Judean expulsion from 49 to 54, see A. Katherine Grieb, *The Story of Romans: A Narrative Defense of God's Righteousness* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 6-7.

⁸⁰⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.118-130; *War* 2.232-240.

⁸⁰¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 20. 131-132; *War* 2.241-243; Tacitus' account of these incidents is garbled. Tacitus, *Annals* 12.54; See Levick, *Claudius*, 183, n. 37(36).

ejected from Rome in 49. Any such action would have insulted Claudius' Judean friends. Thus, the Judean Roman Agrippa II's presence prior to these events further undermines Wiefel's argument that an "anti-Semitic" Claudius refused Judeans return to Rome post-49. It adds credence to an argument that Roman Judeans were never banished en masse.

Judean delegations sent by Quadratus were granted residences and rights in Rome while preparing for the hearing. Agrippa II may have hosted the Judean high priesthood and their delegations, and looked after their needs while resident in Rome, given his responsibility for Jerusalem's Temple. It is likely they interacted with local Judean residents, who no doubt had an interest in meeting their religious and elite leadership from Jerusalem. The Judean delegations would have required synagogues for worship, and food that met Judean dietary requirements.

Agrippa II used his royal Judean influence with Claudius, as one responsible for Judean temple affairs to pressure the trial's outcome. While Judean, Samaritan, and Roman delegations were heard by Claudius, Agrippa II's petition and urging the emperor by proxy through Agrippina, whom he had known most of his life, carried the case for the Judeans.⁸⁰² Claudius exiled Cumanus, executed three Samaritan elite, and returned a Roman tribune for execution in Jerusalem for triggering the disturbance.⁸⁰³

Furthermore, Claudius granted another Judean petition presented by Jonathan, the Judean high priest, after resolution of events with Samaritans and Cumanus. Jonathan recommended Cumanus' replacement as Judean governor. Felix, Pallas' freedman brother, became procurator of Judea in 52 at the Judean high priest's behest. To make the request, Jonathan, as a member of the Judean elite, and possibly a Roman citizen, would likely have had an earlier friendship with Felix, or potentially worked a deal with Pallas while in Rome, preceding Cumanus' trial. It implies Jonathan made good use of his time in Rome, or had lived there for some time prior to return and appointment in Jerusalem. No doubt, the Judean population of Rome would have followed and observed these events with great interest.

Thus, favorable Claudian action towards Judeans occurred in close connection with negative results towards other external superstitions, including the imperial ruling against the

⁸⁰² Josephus, *War* 2.245; *Antiquities* 20.134-136.

⁸⁰³ Josephus, *War* 2.245-246.

Samaritans. During the same time, astrologers or “Chaldeans” were banished from Rome and Italy by Claudius, likely due to Vibia’s intrigue regarding the emperor’s reign and succession in relation to food insecurity in 51, and for speculation regarding imperial longevity.⁸⁰⁴ Tacitus related that the decree, while severe, was ineffective, harsh, and useless (*atrox et inritum*).⁸⁰⁵ Though perhaps enforceable in Rome, it was mixedly effective in Italy. Again, Judeans are honored at the expense of other *superstitiones* or ethnic groups.

In 54, Agrippina poisoned Claudius. With announcement of Claudius’ death, Nero was brought to the Praetorian camp, offered a donative as had Claudius, the oath of faith was sworn, and Nero was hailed *imperator*.⁸⁰⁶ In honor of his death, Claudius was deified.⁸⁰⁷

Judeans in Rome and the provinces would have taken the oath of faith to Nero, his mother, and others of the imperial house, as they had for previous emperors. The importance of the oath is apparent in Nero’s rationale in relation to the later assassination of his mother, Agrippina. He denounced her in the Senate, not only for a supposed attempt to murder him, but more importantly, due to her violation in desiring to directly receive oaths of faith from the praetorian cohorts, the Senate, and the people of Rome, not as his mother, but as ruler.⁸⁰⁸

2.7 Judean Life in Rome Under Nero: 54 – 58 CE

Seneca’s and Burrus’ shaping imperial policy that streamlined Roman regulation and enacted new laws in cooperation with the senate, provided a favorable impression of Nero’s first year as heralding a “golden age.”⁸⁰⁹ The Senate was restored to handling the affairs of state, hearing civil trials, quarrels between cities, and provincial disputes.⁸¹⁰ However, in celebration and honor of the avoidance of war with Parthia, the Senate voted that Rome’s New Year, with the appropriate swearing of faith with the emperor, would take place in

⁸⁰⁴ Scramuzza, *Claudius*, 98.

⁸⁰⁵ Cassius Dio, 60[61].33.3b; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.52; Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 175.

⁸⁰⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.69.

⁸⁰⁷ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.2.

⁸⁰⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.41.5; 14.10.5-11, 14.2; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 163-164.

⁸⁰⁹ Cassius Dio, 61.4.2; Calpurnius Siculus 1.42f in *Minor Latin Poets, Volume I, Publilius Syrus. Elegies on Maecenas. Grattius. Calpurnius Siculus. Laus Pisonis. Einsiedeln Eclogues. Aetna*, J. Wight Duff and Arnold M. Duff, (trans.) *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1934); Griffin, *Nero*, 37-38.

⁸¹⁰ Griffin, *Nero*, 51-56.

December 54, to honor Nero's birth instead of on January 1, when oaths of faith would also have been sworn by Rome's Judeans and Christ-followers.⁸¹¹

At the end of 55, Nero carried out a lustration of Rome in response to *haruspices* performed after the temples of Capitoline Jupiter and Minerva were struck by lightning – signals of divine wrath.⁸¹² This lustration was exceptional, not only as an act of Rome's sacrificial purification, but also as an act of propitiation to restore relationship with her gods. These communal religious activities to deal with divine wrath are part of recent public memory and context when the epistle to Rome is received by Christ-followers.

The reception context of the epistle was also shaped by senatorial debate which commenced in 56 in regard to the legal status of freedmen, especially the right of patrons to revoke freedom in cases where it was undeserved, given some freedmen's lack of honor, insolence, and *injuria*, injury inflicted on their former masters, who had granted their freedom.⁸¹³ The Senate voted that manumission was appropriate when former slaves remained obedient or compliant (*obsequium*) to their former masters, and a revocation of freedom and return to slavery was appropriate for notorious freedmen who dishonored their former masters or patrons.⁸¹⁴ Tacitus remarked that freedmen ranged widely in social status, as members of tribes, decuries, magistrate assistants, priests, and cohorts, and that most knights and many senators had slave ancestry.⁸¹⁵ This spread undercuts the view that freedmen were not socially mobile, a presumption in much NT scholarship. The result was that manumission law was left intact, and cases of dishonoring patrons were individually considered.⁸¹⁶ The Senate returned to slave law legislation in 57, ruling that the murder of any master by his slaves or manumitted freedmen would cause the slaughter of all slaves residing in the same household.⁸¹⁷

This Senatorial debate provides a rich context for hearing the epistle to Rome's Christ-followers in regard to disobedience and being "handed over" in Romans 1-3, and being enslaved to sin and the negotiation of slavery, manumission, and sonship in Romans 6-8.

⁸¹¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.10.

⁸¹² Tacitus, *Annals* 13.24.

⁸¹³ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.26.

⁸¹⁴ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.26.

⁸¹⁵ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.27.

⁸¹⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.27.

⁸¹⁷ Tacitus, *Annals* 13.32.

Judean ethnic negotiation with Rome's elite continued contemporaneously with the arrival of the Roman epistle. Josephus traveled to Rome in 57-58 and befriended Aliturus, an ethnic Judean actor, beloved by Nero. Through Aliturus' patronage, Josephus obtained a meeting with Poppea, Nero's paramour. The relationship was more than a single meeting, since Poppea gave Josephus gifts as symbols of personal patronage and gained freedom for Judean priests sent by Felix for trial.⁸¹⁸ Josephus calls Poppea "deeply religious," seemingly hinting she had interest in or perhaps practised Judean religious tenets, affirmed by her later retaining Ishmael and Helcias, Judean high priest and temple treasurer, presumably for instruction in Judean Law.⁸¹⁹

This mix of relationships shapes a final glimpse of Judean relations with Romans in Rome. Josephus, a member of a wealthy Judean Jerusalem family with Pharisiac beliefs befriended a non-practising Judean actor, to enter into a client relationship with Poppea, the unmarried consort of the emperor to gain release of ultraconservative Pharisees who were deeply concerned, during their transport, over defilement by unclean foods. A whole range of Judean and non-Judean ethnic perspectives and practice merge and collide in contrast and synthesis without presumed Judean Law requirements dictating the relationships.

From this review of Judean and Egyptian life in Rome, in conjunction with Appendices 2 and 3, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

2.8 Conclusions: Rethinking the Reality of Judean Life in Rome:

As demonstrated in this chapter, Judean and Egyptian life in Rome, from the 60s BCE until 57 CE, experienced a range of circumstances and relations with Rome's elite, culture, and Roman ethnicity. From this review the following conclusions are drawn:

2.8.1 The Judeanization of Rome

Given the influx of Judeans from the 60s BCE and through the mid-50s CE, it is apparent the Judean way of life impacted Rome. The city population interacted with Judeanism both

⁸¹⁸ Josephus, *Vita*, 16.

⁸¹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20.195.

negatively and positively. Accommodation of Judean ways occurred in Rome during these years.

2.8.1.1 The Absence of Anti-Semitism in Rome

Given the research, it is difficult to presume Rome was anti-Semitic in the mid-first century CE. What has traditionally been termed “anti-Semitism” has been isolated from the broader scope of Greco-Roman cultural conflict and Roman reaction. In addition to this research, work by Bohak,⁸²⁰ Barclay,⁸²¹ and other scholars, including Goodman’s recent work on relations between Rome and Jerusalem, demonstrate a far more nuanced world of ethnic identity construction, manipulation, negotiation, rivalry, and superiority claims, in which religion is a significant factor of debate over ethnicity and ways of life.⁸²² Wiefel’s, and other New Testament scholars’ arguments in favor of prevalent anti-Semitism seem to overlook the fundamental logic that if Judeans were so “persecuted,” then how would Judean beliefs and practices appeal to so many non-Judeans in Roman society?

2.8.1.2 Judeans Were Not Marginalized in Rome

Much has been made of Jews being marginalized in the Transtiber by some theologians. However, given the evidence of early imperial Roman life, I suggest these assumptions are challenged based upon the social and economic evidence presented in this chapter. As related in Appendix 2, the Transtiber was not a poor, isolated district as often depicted by New Testament commentators, since it, along with the Campus Martius, was the newest geographic area of Rome’s economic, urban, and residential development.

2.8.1.3 Judeans Were Involved in Multi-Ethnic Relations and Rivalry in Rome

Within Rome, certain foreign deities were legal, honored by Romans as foreign rites, but illegal for Roman citizen participation, such as the Magna Mater.⁸²³ If considered in relation

⁸²⁰ Gideon Bohak, ‘Ethnic Stereotypes in the Greco-Roman World: Egyptians, Phoenicians and Jews’ in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Division B* (Jerusalem), (World Union of Jewish Studies, 2000), 7-16.

⁸²¹ J.M.G. Barclay, ‘Diaspora Judaism’ in *Religious Diversity in the Graeco-Roman World*, Dan Cohn-Sherbok and John M. Court (eds.), (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 47-64.

⁸²² Martin Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (London: Allen Lane, 2007).

⁸²³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 2.19.5.

to the above, Judeanism was not forbidden to Roman citizens although it was regulated as a legal “foreign” cult, as were other cults. Nor was Judeanism slated for extermination as was Celtic Druidism by Tiberius or again by Claudius in 48 CE.⁸²⁴ Judean experiences were similar to those of the Egyptian Isis cult until the 40s CE. Both are popularized, legalized, adopted, or suppressed in a range of changing circumstances during the late Republic and early empire, and graphically depicted in Appendix 1.3. All this activity reflected Judean negotiation of ethnic identity and cult in Rome, experienced in relations and rivalry to other ethnicities and classes of population – from slave to elite.

2.8.2 *The Egyptianization of Rome*

Despite persecution, evictions, temple destructions, and a host of undesired events, Alexandrian and Egyptians influenced Rome, to the point of Isis and Serapis being included in Rome’s official *religio*. Rome adapted, adopted, and resisted Egyptian ideas and ways. However, Rome became Egyptianized in architecture, art, religion, and dress, and added deities with animal characteristics into her cults, as further detailed in Appendix 3, and perhaps denigrated in Romans 1.

2.8.3 *The Romanization of Judeans, Egyptians, and Christ-followers*

In turn, Rome culturally shaped her Judean and Egyptian inhabitants in ways that they became Roman. They may not have been citizens, but they still also adapted and adopted cultural aspects of being Romans, including participation in her affairs, and often to their advantage. Judeans were not an isolated ethnic minority, nor were Rome’s elite anti-Semitic, but Judeans, Egyptians and Romans continued to negotiate ethnic identity in relation to one another as they had in Rome since the 60s BCE. Being Romanized encompassed engagement with Rome’s law, business, religion and relationships. These were expressed in multiple languages, used in the socio-cultural life of Rome, and key to its social, cultural, religious, and business relationships. This social use of language and its ideas in Rome, that expressed its relationships and identity are its sociolect, which was used within the context of Rome, being Roman and its way of life. Key ideas expressed in Rome’s sociolect intersect those of the epistle of Romans as will be demonstrated in Chapter 3.

⁸²⁴ Tiberius’ ban, see Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 30.13; Claudius’ ban, see Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.5; Isaac, *Invention of racism*, 421-425; (422, n. 63, n. 65, n. 67).

Sometime in 57, Paul's letter was delivered to Rome's Christ-following inhabitants. For it to have impact on Rome's readers, it would have been shaped for their understanding, utilizing Rome's social language, and even if not, it would have been largely interpreted from the audience's experience of life in Rome. The letter extensively utilizes concepts of faith, honor, piety, righteousness, and dishonor, which were also core concepts in Rome's social identity. Chapter 3 traces the Roman social use of these concepts within Rome's cultural context. This will lay the foundation for exploration of how these key terms from Rome's sociolect reshape a rehearing the epistle of Romans in chapter 4, in relation to these key ideas, and primarily as someone who was not Judean, but a Christ-follower.

Reading Romans in Rome

CHAPTER 3:

Honor, Faith, Piety, Righteousness

and Ethnic Identity:

Social Conventions in the Roman Context

3.1 Introduction: Summarizing Ethnic Negotiation as a Foundation for Sociolect

The following briefly summarizes the thesis thus far to set the stage for this chapter.

3.1.1. Chapter 1: Greek and Roman Ethnic Construction, Superiority Claims, and Multi-Ethnic Negotiation

As argued in Chapter 1, ancient ethnic groups, such as Greeks and Romans, constructed identity based upon claims of geography, characteristics, behaviors, language, or ways of life as depicted in Appendix 1.1-2. Ancient debate over ethnic characteristics, priority, purity, and superiority was one of negotiation within and between groups, as circumstances shifted through time as described in regard to Rome, and depicted in Appendix 1.3. Both Romanization and Hellenization occurred simultaneously in the late Republic and early imperial world. Key components of Roman ethnic superiority claims were its morality, worship, and piety towards the gods.

Additionally, individuals or groups could consider themselves as having more than one homeland, or multi-ethnic hybrid identities that at times cooperated, and at others, conflicted in prioritization. Individual or group identities might dominate or be sublimated in different social settings, geographies, or in negotiation with others, and often in rapid succession, dependent on individual or group interests.

3.1.2 Chapter 2: Judean and Egyptian Ethnic Negotiation in Rome, and Re-thinking Roman Anti-Semitism

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, and Appendices 2-3, Judeans and Egyptians engaged in ethnic negotiation by adaptation, acculturation, assimilation, and resistance in relation to one

another and other ethnicities in Rome, through critique, competition, and cooperation with other ethnicities. The chapter concluded that anti-Semitism is too narrow a descriptor for the Roman perspective or treatment of Judeans in light of ethnic rivalry negotiation with other ethnicities, such as Alexandrians, Egyptians and Isis cult adherents. Given the continued presence of Judeans in Rome post-49, it is unlikely that Judean-Christ-follower absence was a key factor in the Roman epistle's reception and interpretation.

3.2 New Testament Semantics and the Sociolect of Romans: Ethnic "Homogeneity" vs. Multi-ethnic Hybrid Interpretation as Audience Reception

This chapter will consider how the social conventions and sociolect of Rome's residents potentially shaped interpretation of the Roman epistle – especially the social language and conventions of Roman honor, faith, piety, and righteousness. As Alexander so succinctly states, "The literary contexts that shaped the NT texts are those of the diverse cultural worlds in which their authors and first readers lived, and that means, among others, the cultural world of Greco-Roman literature."⁸²⁵ Wright helpfully notes the three worlds of the author of Romans: Judean, Greek and Roman, and that for Paul they are melded together, but presumes Rome was authorially viewed through an anti-imperial lens.⁸²⁶ However, this chapter views the world of Rome and its impact on the epistle differently. In this chapter, the focus is on Rome as the socio-cultural context of readers of Romans.

3.2.1 New Testament Interpretation: Rethinking Ethnic Homogeneity Approaches

New Testament interpretation has often utilized a focus of ethnic homogeneity for examining "Jewish/Judean" or "Greek" meanings in texts; a lens shaped by unique norms of ethnic identity based upon "authentic" characteristics, often considered non-negotiable, that form Judean or Greek ethnic constructions. Because groups or individuals often developed hybrid ethnicities, or lived in situations where what was "authentic," or who could determine what was ethnically "authentic" was in debate, as in Judean, Greek, Roman and Egyptian circumstances in Rome – modeling NT interpretation based upon ethnic homogeneity may leave a gap in our interpretive lens. The issues of ethnic homogeneity were also intermixed

⁸²⁵ Loveday C. A. Alexander, 'The Relevance of Greco-Roman Literature and Culture to New Testament Study' in Joel B. Green, (ed.), *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 109-126, (111).

⁸²⁶ N.T. Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives* (London: SPCK, 2005), 3-6.

with religious homogeneity, and inclusivity and exclusivity. Both concepts are suspect in the mix of Rome's ethnic and religious environments. However, certain cults worked to attain or sustain homogeneity and exclusivity with a range of varying success.⁸²⁷ Even Judeanism was not homogenous, but was a range of sects in the first century.⁸²⁸

3.2.1.1 New Testament Interpretation: Authorial Intention and Audience Reception

The interpretive lens shaped by ethnic homogeneity focuses not only on Judean or Greek meanings, but generally views interpretation from the perspective of authorial intent. This approach has often drawn potential meaning of NT Greek through a composite ethnic Greek, and more often, Judean lens for interpretation of what the author intended. However, even in author-focused interpretation, the spread of meaning can be much larger, drawing on other ethnic group imagery, or "way of life" semantics as depicted in Appendix 1.4.

3.2.1.2 New Testament Interpretation as Audience Reception: Reshaping the Lens

This complexity of authorial intent and in turn, audience reception, reveals a potential gap within New Testament ethnic semantic consideration. Swanson highlights the issue by citing Botha's critique of the Louw-Nida semantic categorizations and intimates future efforts may be necessary to more closely align current semantic categorizations with New Testament ethnic realities:

"It is indeed true that meaning, and the way meanings are ascribed are governed by culture and culturally conditioned perceptions of reality. The categories used by Louw and Nida are for the most part semantic domains westerners would use, and an ancient Mediterranean would probably construct semantic domains somewhat different... it is true that a Hebrew semantic domain dictionary should be somewhat different from a Greek one, *if both are based on mother tongue speakers from the ancient world* [Swanson's emphasis]."⁸²⁹

⁸²⁷ Price, 'Religions of Rome', 290-305.

⁸²⁸ Christopher Rowland, *Christian Origins: An Account of the Setting and Character of the Most Important Messianic Sect of Judaism* (London: SPCK, 1985), 65-80.

⁸²⁹ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament, electronic ed.)*, (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), Introduction.

Swanson and Botha utilized ethnic categorizations based upon “mother tongue speakers,” a more recent approach to New Testament ethnic-based interpretation. However, in these cases, ethnicity and ethnic semantics are substantially viewed as unique and homogeneous, and may not consider ethnically blended, or hybridized authors or readers, nor readers in the context of where they resided.

If textual interpretative methodologies gave greater weight to the ethnic semantics of the reception locale and audience, then in regard to Rome and Paul’s letter to the Romans, Latin ideas, expressions, and conventions need to be considered. Latin semantics are generally neglected or ignored on the presumption that they have little or no impact in relation to Greek translation, despite the New Testament world being dominated by Rome, and a recipient audience populated with Judeans and Greeks who not only knew Greek, but as residents or citizens of Rome, likely had familiarity with Latin, and Roman conventions and way of life, which shaped how they lived, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, and visualized in Appendix 1.3 and Appendix 4.

If ethnic hybridization shapes the interpretative lens for Romans, Rome’s sociolect conveys meaning drawn on particular understandings in relation to Rome’s environs and ways of life. This concept encompasses a mix of multi-lingual, ethnically hybridized recipients who may express thoughts and ideas multi-ethnically and multi-linguistically as depicted for recipient interpretation in Appendix 1.4.

3.3 Exploring Rome’s Ethnic Semantics: Honor and Faith

To test this “Rome-inclusive” sociolect, or its socio-cultural language and semantics used in daily life as a basis for interpreting Romans from the audience reception perspective, this chapter explores a small slice of terms lived and expressed in a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual Rome. First, is the recognition and pursuit of honor as Rome’s highest ideal. Second, and primarily, the chapter explores how “making and keeping” faith was the basis of attribution and demonstration of honor throughout Roman society, and in human-divine relationships, given, as Kuula suggests, “...faith is an ‘umbrella term’ that includes almost all

that being a Christian involves,” which in actuality was a reflection of Roman society.⁸³⁰ It also traces the behavioral and descriptive interaction of honor and faith in relation to piety and righteousness in the Roman experience.

3.3.1 Staking an Ethnic Claim: Ethnic and Social Superiority through Honor

The desire to be seen in Rome as honorable within the household or cosmopolis drove a person’s existence from birth till death.⁸³¹ Attaining and maintaining honor was core to being Roman, or resident in Rome, no matter one’s status, and not only in relation to ethnic rivalry and negotiation.⁸³² Gaining honor drove social, political, economic, religious, ethnic, and human and divine relationships across the spectrum of Roman society no matter one’s ethnicity.⁸³³ “By nature we yearn and hunger for honor, and once we have glimpsed, as it were, some part of its radiance, there is nothing we are not prepared to bear and suffer in order to secure it.”⁸³⁴

To demonstrate the sacred value of honor, Rome personified it as deity. That Rome honored virtues as gods is documented by Cicero’s acclamations of temples restored to Faith, Intellect, Virtue, and *Honos*. Honor’s temples were located on Rome’s Capitoline and outside the *Porta Collina*, or Colline Gate near the Quirinal Hill.⁸³⁵

Additionally, as argued in chapter 1, Roman piety was core to a life of honor. Valerius Maximus’ moral examples provided historical lessons categorized by Roman honor and virtues to teach moral superiority over Greeks and other cultures, or to laud ethnicities who acted in Roman ways. Piety towards the gods was the first virtue espoused.⁸³⁶ Thus, gaining

⁸³⁰ Kari Kuula, *The Law, The Covenant and God’s Plan: Volume 2. Paul’s Treatment of the Law and Israel in Romans*, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society in Helsinki 85 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 111.

⁸³¹ Carlin A. Barton, *Roman Honor: The Fire in the Bones* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2001), 11-12.

⁸³² Joshel, *Work, Identity and Legal Status*, 46, 56, 90-91, 117-118, 120-121.

⁸³³ Philip F. Esler, ‘Introduction: The Mediterranean Context of Early Christianity’ in *The Early Christian World*, 2 Vols., Philip F. Esler, (ed.) (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2000), Vol. 1, 3-25, (15-18); also, in regard to honor as core to imperial function, J.E. Lendon, *Empire of Honor: The Art of Government in the Roman World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997).

⁸³⁴ *Sumus enim natura...studioissimi appetentissimique honestatis, cuius si quasi lumen aliquod aspeximus, nihil est quod, ut eo potiamur, non parati sumus et ferre et perpeti*, Marcus Tullius Cicero, *XVIII Philosophical Treatises: Tusculanae Disputationes, Tusculan Disputations*, J.E. King (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1927), 2.24.58.

⁸³⁵ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.23.61; Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.58; Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 21.

⁸³⁶ Roman *pietas*, chapter 1.2.4.8; Valerius, chapter 1.2.4.9.

and granting honor was expressed by a matrix of inseparable honor and piety in daily life and inherent in its religious practice. “We Romans are far superior in *religio*, by which I mean the worship of the gods (*cultus deorum*).”⁸³⁷ *Cultus* may carry connotation of worship, but in connection with the verb, *colere*, it semantically conceptualized “to honor.”⁸³⁸ To honor the gods by worship was expression of superior Roman piety and ethnicity. “We have excelled every race and nation in piety, *pietas*, in respect for religious matters, *religio*, and in that singular wisdom which recognizes that everything is ruled and controlled by the will of the gods.”⁸³⁹

Human and divine interaction were not intrinsically based upon *do ut des* as commonly argued, as some form of divine bribery, but was an ongoing relational exchange of honor, gifting, obligation, and devotion that linked divine honor and human piety as faith in reciprocal action. This relationship was also often expressed as oaths or vowed offerings, thanks, and praise as an expression of loyalty, or faith in response to divine benefaction which portrays “the god actually *being* honored.”⁸⁴⁰

Intermingled honor, piety, and faith demonstrated not only religious propriety towards the gods, but towards humanity as well. As Festus would later relate: “To be *religiosus* means not only placing great value on the holiness of the gods, but also being dutiful towards humans.”⁸⁴¹ Similarly, those resident in Rome who claimed Jesus Christ as Lord, whether non-Judean or Judean, would have desired to be honorable towards humanity and God, both within and outside their community.⁸⁴²

⁸³⁷ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.8; Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 2.

⁸³⁸ Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 6.

⁸³⁹ Cicero, *On the Reply of the Haruspices* 19; Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 7.

⁸⁴⁰ Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, BZMW 130 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 110-115, (114-115).

⁸⁴¹ Sextus Pompeius Festus, *De uerborum significatu, On the Meaning of Words*, in W.M. Lindsay, *Sexti Pompei Festi. De uerborum significatu quae supersunt cum Pauli Epitome. Thewrewkianis copiis usus editit* (Leipzig, 1913), s.v. *religiosus* 348, translated in Clifford Ando, “Introduction to Part VI: Space and Time” in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 249; David J. Bloch, “*Res Sanctae* in Gaius and the Founding of the City” in Ernest Metzger, *Roman Legal Tradition*, Vol. 3, (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas School of Law, 2009), 48-64, (50-51).

⁸⁴² David deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 43-93, (73-78).

3.3.2 *The Way of Honor: Sworn, Modeled, and Reminiscent Faith*

Roman honor was expressed by making faith and being faithful. Additionally, honor and faith were intimately intertwined in Roman life and death. It could be questioned whether a semantic overlap exists for the meaning of *honor*, honor as τιμη. Similarly it might be questioned if *fides*, means the same as πίστις, when translated “faith.” In both cases, it would seem so since the two terms are at times interchangeably used by Greek or Roman authors to describe similar relationship transactions, especially within Roman life and history. Additionally there are circumstances in which the meanings of honor and faith overlap, when *fides* clearly included the semantics of honor, and times when honor carried connotations of faith.

A Roman example, penned in Greek, that demonstrated this honor and faith interaction is Tullius’ speech, which lauded his relationship with his deceased Roman father-in-law as one based upon “honor and love,” (τιμῶν καὶ φιλῶν).⁸⁴³ The basis of this relationship was reciprocal faith, for Tullius had sworn faith, πιστεῦω with Tarquinius to care for his grandchildren. It seems unlikely this should be translated “entrusted” since Tullius immediately refers to non-violation of piety towards the gods and righteousness towards men (πρὸς θεοὺς ὅσιον ἢ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους δίκαιον) as outcomes of maintenance of that faith (πίστις).⁸⁴⁴ The crowd confirmed faith was the basis of honorable relationship as they praised Tullius for being faithful and righteous (πιστὸς ἦν καὶ δίκαιος) toward his benefactors.⁸⁴⁵

Thus, the meaning of *fides* and πίστις overlaps in the creation and maintenance of honor, piety, and righteousness. As just noted, Dionysius demonstrated the overlap of *fides* and πίστις as Latin and Greek expressions of the conventions of faith, using Greek to describe Roman events. Crook argues this is most apparent from the Vulgate translation from Greek to Latin.⁸⁴⁶ The gap is that his evidence is generally far later than the first century. In what follows, Greek and Latin sources demonstrate that the contextual overlap of faith, honor, piety, righteousness, and other ethnic concepts is probable in the first century CE and as the sociolect of the epistle of Romans.

⁸⁴³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.9.1.

⁸⁴⁴ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.9.1-2.

⁸⁴⁵ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.10.1.

⁸⁴⁶ Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion*, 209-211.

To further appreciate the relationship between faith and honor, it is essential to comprehend what “faith” was within the life and culture of Rome. As Ando quips, “For what we need to urgently understand is what the Romans had, if not faith.”⁸⁴⁷ Like *pietas* (piety), it was not solely a religious term, but descriptive of the Roman way of life.⁸⁴⁸ Quite simply, faith, *fides* or πίστις was a core element of “being Roman,” that expressed multiple, simultaneous legal, religious, moral, and formal and informal social relationships, both human and divine. Romans lived life by faith. *Fides*, “was, in a sense, the keystone of Roman morality.”⁸⁴⁹ The following sections summarize the concept and practice of honorable faith within Roman culture, as deified god, in human-divine interaction, as morality, and “way of being” in Rome’s context.

3.4 Faith Personified and Deified: The Bedrock of Roman Ethnicity and Honor Relationships

3.4.1 Faith Personified and Deified: Faith as Romulus, Quirinus, and Quirites

Faith deified was core to Rome’s early cultural history. The Quirinal ridge was crowned with numerous ancient temples restored by Augustus, including two that bear upon the foundation of Rome and serve as an ethnic backdrop to Paul’s Romans. First was the *Aedes Quirinus*, the sanctuary of the ancient god Quirinus, depicted in Appendix 4.6.⁸⁵⁰

According to several Roman authors, Romulus, Rome’s founder, mysteriously disappeared during a communal gathering on the Campus Martius, during a solar eclipse and violent thunderstorm.⁸⁵¹ In Livy’s version, the crowd is convinced of Romulus’ living ascension into

⁸⁴⁷ Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge’, 10-11.

⁸⁴⁸ Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge’, 11, n. 30, 34.

⁸⁴⁹ Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 175-176.

⁸⁵⁰ Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.51; Lesley Adkins and Roy A. Adkins (eds.), ‘Quirinus, temple of’ in *Dictionary of Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1996), 188-189; Elisha Ann Dumser, ‘Quirinus, Aedes’ in Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 214.

⁸⁵¹ Quintus Ennius, *The Annals of Quintus Ennius*, Otto Skutsch (ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University, 1985), 1.65f and 110 ff (Vahlen); Cicero, *De Re Publica*, 2.10, 2.17, 2.20; cf. 1.16 and end of 1.25; Livy, 1.16; Ovid, (Publius Ovidius Naso), III, *Metamorphoses Books 1-VIII*, G.P. Goold (ed.), Frank Justus Miller (trans.), *LCL*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 3rd ed., 1984), 14.805 ff., and *Fasti*, 2.491 ff.; Plutarch. *Romulus*, 27.3 ff., 28.1ff, although he questions the story in 28.7ff.

the heavens by a whirlwind.⁸⁵² The throng recognized Romulus' divinity and immortality, proclaiming him "a god, the son of a god, the King and Father of the City of Rome."⁸⁵³ Livy supported the account, by citation of Proculus Julius' sworn testimony, that the deified Romulus reappeared, shortly after his disappearance, in the heavens as Quirinus, and had proclaimed Rome's destiny to rule the world by Jupiter's will.⁸⁵⁴

Cicero deemed the account historically true, that Romulus, after his death, met Proculus Julius as the god Quirinus and that a temple was to be erected where the epiphanal pronouncement took place.⁸⁵⁵ The temple and deity linked to Roman Sabine origins, and the epithet, Quirites, entwined Rome's deified first king as founding forefather, the renamed populace and defined ethnic origins.⁸⁵⁶

3.4.2 Faith Personified and Deified: *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius*

Further southwest on the Quirinal Hill, overlooking the later Judean-inhabited Subura, stood the *Aedes Dius Fidius*, or Temple of Divine Faith.⁸⁵⁷ The god, *Semo Sancus (Sanctus) Dius Fidius*, or "Holy Divine Good Faith," was the god of loyalty, honesty, and oaths or treaties in commerce, contracts, and civil ceremonies, whom Varro attested was of Sabine origin and avowed was Jupiter himself.⁸⁵⁸ Both Quirinus and *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius* had Sabine origins. Varro's claim was supported by evidence that the archaic triad of Roman gods was Jupiter, Quirinus, and Mars, but that Quirinus' characteristics were merged into Jupiter, on the Capitoline as Jupiter Feretrius, the oldest manifestation of Jupiter in Rome. The original Quirinal temple absorbed the identity of Romulus, and later was associated with the Julii.⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵² Livy, 1.16.

⁸⁵³ Livy, 1.16.

⁸⁵⁴ Livy, 1.16.

⁸⁵⁵ Cicero, *De Legibus* 1.3-5; Livy, 10.46.

⁸⁵⁶ Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 78-79.

⁸⁵⁷ Dionysius of Halicarnassus named the temple, ἱερον Διός Πίστιου, in 4.58, and the god, Ζεὺς Πίστιος in 9.60.

⁸⁵⁸ Mucial/Quirinal Hill temple of Dius Fidius and attestation of Jupiter, Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.52, also 50, n. d.; Quirinal temple association with Jupiter, Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.64-66; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 2.48.2, 2.49.2, 2.50.3, 4.58; Sabine deity, Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.74; Ovid, *Fasti* 6.213-218; Elisha Ann Dumser, 'Quirinalis, Collis' in Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 212-213; Elisha Ann Dumser, 'Dius Fidius, Aedes' in Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 103.

⁸⁵⁹ Ryberg, 'Capitoline Triad', 145-156; William W. Fowler, *The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic: An Introduction to the Study of the Religion of the Romans* (Boston, MA: Adamant Media, 1899, c 2004), 229-230.

Thus, for Romans, there was fluidity of roles and identities for Quirinus, Jupiter, and *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius* as highest deity and Faith.⁸⁶⁰

Roman oath-swearing was performed by inclusion of *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius* as invoked deity and used phrases such as, *Medius Fidius*, Mediatorial Faith, or “so help me Jupiter/god Faith,” or *me-Dius Fidius*, my Divine Faith or more fully, *ita me deus Fidius iuvet*, or perhaps *ita me Dios fidius iuvet*.⁸⁶¹ These oaths and sworn faith were expressed *sub divo*, that is, “in the open air or under the open sky,” appropriate for oaths invoking Jupiter or Quirinus as participant and witness from heaven.⁸⁶²

Furthermore, the cult priest of Quirinus officiated over the cult of Robigo, the goddess of wheat rust, and also Consus, the god of grain storage.⁸⁶³ Thus, Quirinus/Fidius/Romulus, through its cult priest, had particular authority over protection of grain production and the food supply of Rome. This linkage may add clarity to Paul’s aside on faith and fruit in Romans 1:13.

3.4.3 Faith Personified and Deified: *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius/Iupiter Iurarius*

Fidius was honored elsewhere in Rome pertinent to Judeans. *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius* also shared a shrine on the *Insula Tiberina* as depicted in Appendix 4.4.⁸⁶⁴ It was incorporated with a temple for *Iupiter Iurarius*, dedicated in 194 BCE.⁸⁶⁵ The cult was a personification of

⁸⁶⁰ Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Republic*, 136-141; Ovid, Anthony James Boyle and Roger D. Woodard, *Fasti*, Anthony James Boyle, Roger D. Woodard, (trans.), (London: Penguin Classics, 2000), 288.

⁸⁶¹ Sallust, *Cateline*, J.C. Rolfe (trans.), *LCL* (London: Harvard University, 1921), 177; *Semo Sancus*, Appendix in Ovid, *Fasti* 6.213 in J.G. Frazer, (trans.), Ovid *Fasti* in Six Volumes, *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1976), 429-430; Harry Thurston Peck, ‘Iusiurandum’ in *Harpers Dictionary of Classical Antiquities* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1898); George Long, ‘JusJurandum’ in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (London: John Murray, 1875) 659-663, (662-663).

⁸⁶² Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.66; Sallust, *Cateline* 177; Georges Dumézil, *Mitra-Varuna: An Essay on Two Indo-European Representations of Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 78-80; Raffaele Pettazoni, *The All-Knowing God* (London: Methuen, 1956, repr. 1978), 163-164.

⁸⁶³ Ovid, *Fasti*, 4.910-942; Tertullian, *De spectaculis*, 5 in Tertullian, *Apology and De Spectaculis*, Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, T.R. Glover, and Gerald H. Rendall (trans). *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1931).

⁸⁶⁴ SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO SACRUM, *CIL* VI 576; Livy, 34.53.7; Vitruvius 3.2.3; Lesley Adkins and Roy A. Adkins (eds.), ‘Dius Fidius’ and ‘Semo Sancus’ in *Dictionary of Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1996), 63, 201; Dumser, ‘Quirinalis, Collis’ in *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 212-213; Dumser, ‘Dius Fidius, Aedes’ in *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 103.

⁸⁶⁵ *Dius Fidus* as Jupiter, Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.66; Adkins and Adkins (eds.), ‘Dius Fidius’, ‘Semo Sancus’ in *Dictionary of Roman Religion*, 63, 201; Livy, 34.53.7; Dumser, ‘Dius Fidius, Aedes’ in, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 103; Varro, *de Lingua* 5.66; Samuel Ball Platner and Thomas Ashby (ed.), ‘Iuppiter Iurarius’ in *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 296; William Nolan

Jupiter as the god of the inviolability and indissolubility of oaths. *Iupiter Iurarius* was the Roman equivalent of Zeus πίστιος, (Faith), or ὄρκιος, (Oaths).⁸⁶⁶ This Iovian temple on Tiber Island was dedicated on January 1st, and perhaps rededicated or sacrificed at annually on that date to honor the god, the same day faith was later resworn annually with the emperor.⁸⁶⁷ The island shrine of *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius* and Jupiter Jurarius was presided over by the priests of Quirinus's temple who, according to statue base inscriptions and dedications, officiated at both.⁸⁶⁸ This manifestation of the sacredness of Faith, either as *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius* or *Iupiter Iurarius* was clearly visible to Judeans resident in the Transtiberum, and Christ-followers in Rome.⁸⁶⁹ They would have passed this temple of Faith on the way from the Transtiber to the Campus Martius, the Capitoline, or Palatine.

Additionally, a shrine of *Dius Fidius* was conjoined with the *Basilica Aemilia* on the Roman Forum, the heart of Roman justice and commerce.⁸⁷⁰ Those who did business in Rome's courts and markets would have used this temple to close transactions, make oaths, and swear faith. Rome's Judean and Christ-following inhabitants, among others, would have been familiar with these temples and their associated traditions. They could not miss them.⁸⁷¹

Association with these deities was very pertinent to mid-50s Rome. The Claudian emperors were descendants of Sabus, the son of the Sabine god *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius*.⁸⁷² Varro went further, deriving the name Quirites from the original Sabine city, Cures and argued that Sabines were noted for their piety, and that the name had linkage to Greek, *sebesthai*, "to be holy."⁸⁷³ Thus Claudius and Nero were perceived to have ancestral descent from forefathers descended from *Quirinus*, *Fidius*, or *Fides*, Faith himself, a lineage known for ethnic characteristics of piety and holiness.⁸⁷⁴

Bruce, M.A. Thesis, *Resurveying the Religious Topography of the Tiber Island* (University of Florida, 2004), 65, 68.

⁸⁶⁶ Ζεὺς πίστιος or Ζεὺς ὄρκιος; Platner and Ashby, 'Iuppiter Iurarius' in *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 296; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 2.49; Euripides, *Med.* 170, in Euripides, *I Cyclops, Alcestis, Medea*, David Kovacs (trans.), David Kovacs (ed.) *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1994); Bruce, *Resurveying Tiber Island*, 91.

⁸⁶⁷ Ovid, *Fasti*, 1.289-94.

⁸⁶⁸ Bruce, *Resurveying Tiber Island*, 96-97; Pettazoni, *The All-Knowing God*, 163-164.

⁸⁶⁹ See Appendix 4.4.

⁸⁷⁰ See Appendix 4.5; Walton Brooks McDaniel, "Basilica Aemilia" in *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Apr.- Jun., 1928), 155-178, (163-164, 176-177, 163 n. 12).

⁸⁷¹ See Appendices 4.1-4.

⁸⁷² Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 99; 99, n. 66.

⁸⁷³ Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 99-100, 100, n. 68.

⁸⁷⁴ Farney, *Ethnic Identity Republican Rome*, 99-100.

3.4.4 Faith Personified and Deified: *Fides Publica Populi Romani*

These temples and worship of *Fidius* must be considered in conjunction with that of *Fides*, or more fully, *Fides Publica Populi Romani* (Good Faith, or Honor) of the People of the Nation of the Romans) the goddess who dwelt upon the Capitoline, visualized in Appendix 4.2.⁸⁷⁵ Her temple housed the divine personification of Good Faith, or Faithfulness, and claimed to be older than Jupiter himself. "...Faith, than which there is nothing greater nor more sacred among men..." was also known as Public Faith, *Fides Publica*.⁸⁷⁶ The Capitoline *Aedes Fides* not only housed the goddess, who presided over and guaranteed verbal contracts, treaties of friendship and alliances, but held the laws of Rome and treaties between cities and peoples, as well as religious rites and laws publicly displayed on inscribed bronze tablets.⁸⁷⁷ Faith, *Fides* was upheld in the signed, sealed, and sworn oaths of individual Romans in daily life as guarantor of their actions in relation to one another.⁸⁷⁸ Plutarch further affirmed Faith's sacredness and its ancient source in oaths: "He [Numa] was also first, they say, to build temples to Faith and Terminus; and he taught the Romans their most solemn oath by Faith, which they still continue to use."⁸⁷⁹

The *flamen*, or cult priest of Quirinus, also officiated over the annual sacrifices at the Capitoline *Fides*, in which their right hand carried out the sacrifice, wrapped in white cloth since Faith's seat was "holy, *sacro*," which marked its place and act as sacred, and inviolable by consecration with divinity.⁸⁸⁰ At the core, Faith was symbolized in action since "...the right hand as seat of promise and contract should be preserved uncontaminated."⁸⁸¹

⁸⁷⁵ Lesley Adkins and Roy A. Adkins (eds.), 'Fides, Temple of' and 'Fides' in *Dictionary of Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1996), 78; A.G. Thein, 'Fides, Aedes' in Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 123-124.

⁸⁷⁶ Adkins and Adkins, 'Fides, Temple of' and 'Fides' in *Dictionary of Roman Religion*, 78; Silius Italicus, *Punica*, J. D. Duff, (trans.), *LCL*, 2 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1934), Vol. 2, 480-490; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 2.75.2-4; Georges Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, Philip Krapp (trans.), 2 Vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1966, 1970), Vol. 1, 199.

⁸⁷⁷ Adkins and Adkins, 'Fides, Temple of' and 'Fides' in *Dictionary of Roman Religion*, 78; Thein, 'Fides, Aedes', *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 123-124.

⁸⁷⁸ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 115-127, 156-164.

⁸⁷⁹ Plutarch, *Numa* 16.

⁸⁸⁰ 'sacratam,' Livy, 1.21.4; Livy, *The History of Rome, Vol. III*, Ernest Rhys (ed.), Rev. Canon Roberts (trans.), (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1912); Bloch, 'Res Sanctae in Gaius and the Founding of the City', *Roman Legal Tradition*, 48-51..

⁸⁸¹ Walter Burkert, 'Hesoid in Context: Abstractions and Divinities in an Aegean-Eastern *koine*' in Emma Stafford and Judith Herrin (eds.), *Personification in the Greek World: From Antiquity to Byzantium* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 3-20, (16-17).

Additionally, a temple of *Fides* may have stood upon the Palatine, from the earliest Roman period, but its evidence is more legendary.⁸⁸²

The treaties and agreements housed in the Temple of Faith included those sworn with Judea and Judeans.⁸⁸³ A Transtiber, Subura, or Campus Martius-dwelling Judean had visual knowledge of the Capitoline Temple of Faith, which towered over the Tiber and the Transtiber's main street and bridges of Rome.⁸⁸⁴ Rome's core practice of cult and life in relation to her immortal ascended forefather, Romulus, and the essence of proper relationships of faith with humanity and personified deity were in visible proximity to early Judean residences, synagogues, and catacombs.

Thus, *Romulus/Quirinus*, *Semo Sancus Dius Fidius*, *Iupiter Iurarius* and *Fides* presided over and guaranteed contracts, relationships, treaties of friendship, and alliances. These temples and associated deities served not only as places of religious ritual and sacrifice, but oversaw conventional moral, economic, and personal faith-making. They existed as centers of transaction with deities and humanity, for business, and the promotion of public and personal moral values.

3.5 Roman Faith: Sworn Oaths with Gods and Men

The personifications of Faith were conceptually inseparable from practical faith expressed by actions of ordinary Romans. Deified Faith permeated Rome's cultural fiber, powerfully present in its life experience.⁸⁸⁵ Publicly sworn and witnessed oaths of faith utilized a range of formulation to directly or indirectly invoke or swear to *Dius Fidius* – god as Faith.⁸⁸⁶ Both human and divine Faith coexisted in the oath-swearing, in the minds, the signed and sealed agreements, and right hands raised by involved parties.⁸⁸⁷ These manifestations of Faith participated in, mediated, and guarded the interactive human experiences by divine presence that created sanctity or holy faith in action. Raising one's right hand in swearing oaths of faith not only bound human transactions, but created or restored right relationship with the gods. This commingling of human and divine faith based on oath-swearing was

⁸⁸² See Appendix 4.5; Platner and Ashby, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 209.

⁸⁸³ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.144-148; 187-188; 196-198. 219-222; 16.161-165.

⁸⁸⁴ See Appendices 4.1-5, 4.7.

⁸⁸⁵ Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 4, 20-21.

⁸⁸⁶ See Chapter 3.4.2.

⁸⁸⁷ Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 176.

comprehended not only in Rome, or Roman *coloniae*, but also elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world.

Violation of a contract, covenant, or sworn relationship was not only a breach of faith between persons or peoples, but with *Fides* or *Fidius* themselves, a violation in which Jupiter punished offenders.⁸⁸⁸ For example, in Roman Asia when impurity, violation, theft, perjury, or neglect of a deity's instructions occurred, individuals proclaimed their breach with deity and are often depicted with raised right hands in confession and reconciliation. The act acknowledged one's sin, judgment by the god and reunion in right relationship.⁸⁸⁹

Similar actions were performed in Rome, where Roman gods participated in and encouraged human reconciliation. Valerius used the events of Scipio and Tiberius Gracchus at the Feast of Jupiter (*epulum Iouis*) to demonstrate how hatred and violence were overcome in the presence of the supreme god through reconciliation that resulted in friendship and kinship.⁸⁹⁰ The *Fetiales*, Rome's priests who promised and administered public faith with other peoples, when ending conflict, reestablished the formal covenant of the faith of peace (*fides pacis*) between peoples, often described in kinship terms.⁸⁹¹

This ethnic sociolect of Roman faith-making in interaction with the Hellenistic world was conveyed by Polybius. His Greek perspective affirmed that Rome's senators and emissaries embodied faith as the supreme characteristic of Roman religion and way of life in ethnic comparison to his Greek readers, who were also familiar with oaths of state:

“But the quality in which the Roman commonwealth is most distinctly superior is in my opinion the nature of their religious convictions... The consequence is that among the Greeks, apart from other things, members of the government, if they are entrusted, (πίστευω) with no more than a talent, though they have ten copyists and as many seals and twice as many witnesses, cannot keep their faith (πίστις); whereas among the Romans those

⁸⁸⁸ Plautus, *Rudens*, 14ff in Titus Maccius Plautus, *The Comedies*, 5 Vols., Paul Nixon, (trans.), LCL (London: Heinemann, 1916-1938), 4:287-435; Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 176.

⁸⁸⁹ Beate Dignas, *Economy of the Sacred in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 234-236.

⁸⁹⁰ Valerius 4.2.3; Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 72-74.

⁸⁹¹ *Fetiales, quod fidei publicae inter populos praeerant... ut foedere fides pacis constitueretur*. Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, 5.86.

who as magistrates and legates are dealing with large sums of money maintain correct conduct according to the *oath of faith* (ὄρκον πίστεως) they have pledged. . . .”⁸⁹²

Roman oaths of faith functioned simultaneously in the affairs of state, economics, and religion, carrying overtones of superior ethnic honor. While oaths of faith formulated treaties between cities or peoples, the oaths were personal faith statements of the involved individuals. The individual “made the oath concerning the covenant, whenever he swore for the state in faith,” but also swore a personal oath that invoked Jupiter and Quirinus, “if I abide by this my oath, may all good be mine.”⁸⁹³ Their personal oathed faith was intertwined with that of their ethnic homeland. These covenants and personal oaths of faith were preserved for posterity on publicly displayed bronze tablets.

Sworn oaths were matters not only of ritual, but of the heart. Silius Italicus later depicted Faith (*Fides*), as the internalized goddess in oath-sworn faith-making. “Goddess (*Fides*), more ancient than Jupiter, glory of gods and men, without whom neither sea nor land finds peace, sister of Justice, (*Iustitia*), silent divinity in the heart of man. . . .”⁸⁹⁴ He lyricized *Fides* indwelling within residents of non-Roman Saguntum, who embodied their oath-sworn faith with Rome, “Taking possession of their minds and pervading their hearts, her familiar habitation, she instilled her divine power into their spirit,” as intimate divine passion and inherent pursuit of honor powered by the indwelling goddess, who enabled their living and dying for their oath-sworn faithfulness.⁸⁹⁵ Roman ethnicity and religion taught that oath-sworn faith formed the undergirding of social and human-divine relationships. It was not just ritualistic ceremony, but a covenantal basis of core values, inner conscience, the heart, and the Roman way of life. In summary, oath-sworn faith was the foundation of righteousness and piety, including towards the gods.

⁸⁹² Polybius, 6.56.13-15; for Greek familiarity with oath-swearing as loyalty/faith in cities, see Tet-Lim N. Yee, *Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians*, SNTS130 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2005), 193-194.

⁸⁹³ Polybius, 3.25.6-9.

⁸⁹⁴ Silius Italicus, *Punica*, Vol. 2, 480-490.

⁸⁹⁵ Silius Italicus, *Punica*, Vol. 2, 513-525, (515), as translated in Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 176.

3.6 Honor, Faith, Faithfulness and Righteousness with God/the gods: Demonstrated Pietas

The core Roman principle of “following the gods” was expressed by faith lived as piety. As deSilva notes, “Piety was indispensable to an individual’s good reputation, especially since reverence towards the gods was interwoven so deeply into the domestic, social, civic, and political aspects of Greco-Roman life.”⁸⁹⁶

Dumezil suggests that Roman piety (*pius* or *pietas*) had its conceptual origins in *piare* and *piaculum*, “to atone for the violation of natural duty,” in this case towards the gods.⁸⁹⁷ Furthermore, he argues, while *pius* has semantic roots in *ius* or law, it is only quasi-legal or religious, encompassing a broad range of human and divine relationships, with a moral rather than juridical blush.⁸⁹⁸ Rome originally recorded her religious laws (νόμοι) and ordinances (ἱερῶν διαγραφαί) on oaken boards and later on bronze pillars, and copies were disseminated for public use.⁸⁹⁹

A person was expected to honor relational obligations with divinities, especially by worship based upon the actions of *pietas*, as an expression of *fides* with the gods. Thus gods and humans were related to through *ius* (law), and the deities’ willingness to relate to Rome and her peoples by oath and law was highest expression of the deity’s *fides* (faith) and goodwill toward the city of Rome and her people, whose reciprocal oathed-faith and honoring the laws represented piety in action.⁹⁰⁰

Furthermore, as Fowler points out, the concept of Latin *pietas* and Greek εὐσεβεία or other σεβ- derived words deal with the broader “way of life,” not just “religion” as we perceive it.⁹⁰¹ Fowler shifts our perspective from considering these as solely theological ideas, to descriptive of aspects of Roman and perhaps, Greek ways of life. This suggests both *fides* and *pietas* were considered aspects of Roman ethnicity as it may have been for some Greeks. Crook similarly argues that linguistic overlap exists between *fides* and εὐσεβεία, expressed

⁸⁹⁶ deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 46.

⁸⁹⁷ Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, Vol. 1, 132-133.

⁸⁹⁸ Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, Vol. 1, 132-133.

⁸⁹⁹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 3.36.4.

⁹⁰⁰ Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge,’ 11.

⁹⁰¹ James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995), 54, 246 n. 4.

as faithful or loyal piety towards emperors, similarly as to deity.⁹⁰² Roman voices related these interrelationships.

Livy succinctly summarized the Roman ethnic perspective of interrelated piety and faith: "...The gods show favor, or are well disposed (*favere*) to piety (*pietas*) and faith (*fides*), through which the Roman people arrived at so great a peak."⁹⁰³ Livy builds upon Plautus's earlier dramatization of Jupiter's interest in the deeds of men, their customs (*mores*), piety (*pietas*), and their faith (*fides*), lived in daily life.⁹⁰⁴ Dumézil suggests the purity and dignity or *maiestas* of the gods called a Roman into the faithful and devoted relationship of which a contractual faith (*fides*) was the foundation of reciprocity favor (*uenia*) and ultimately *pax* (peace) with a god.⁹⁰⁵ Valerius Maximus termed the relationship between gods and men as a *condicio*, a set of mutual obligations or a contract.⁹⁰⁶ I suggest this describes a "covenant."

Additionally, Roman faith as piety was not only public, or intellectual, but as suggested, a matter of the heart. Despite Gradel's strong caution against "Christianizing" Cicero's "philosophical" works as descriptors of Roman religious practice, it is clear Cicero perceived temples, sacrifice, and ritual as having individual and collective impact on how a Roman should live:

"It is a good thing that Intellect, Piety, Virtue, and Faith should be arbitrarily deified; and in Rome temples have been dedicated by the State to all these qualities, the purpose being that those who possess them ...should believe that the gods themselves are established within their souls."⁹⁰⁷

⁹⁰² Claudius in F.G. Kenyon, H.I. Bell, W.E. Crum, T.C. Skeat (eds.), *P. London, Greek Papyri in the British Museum, 7 vols.* (London: British Museum, 1893-1974), 3.1178.14; Nero in SIG², 814.2 in W. Dittenberger (ed.), *SYLLOGE INSCRIPTIONUM GRAECARUM (SIG2)*, 4 Vols. (Leipzig: Teubner; 1915-1924); Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion*, 209-210.

⁹⁰³ "*favere enim pietati fideque deos, per quae populus Romanus ad tantum fastigii venerit...*" Livy 44.1.11; Koch, 'Roman State Religion', 299.

⁹⁰⁴ Plautus, *Rudens* 90.

⁹⁰⁵ Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, Vol. 1, 124-125.

⁹⁰⁶ Valerius Maximus, *praef.*

⁹⁰⁷ Gradel perceives Cicero's treatises as philosophy, which shapes his perception that Greco-Roman religion was based upon sacrifice and ritual unconcerned with personal virtue. While I agree with concerns over Christianizing Cicero, the ancients themselves, including Augustus, demonstrate interest and concern with personal virtue often associated with deities or internalized deified personifications. See Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 3-8; Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.27-28.

Livy further noted divine involvement in faith-based Roman relationships: “Because heavenly power seemed so involved in human affairs, the continual attention to *pietas* (piety) of the gods imbued the hearts of all with such reverence that loyalty (*fides*) and oath-taking (*ius iurandum*, law of oaths), governed the state, instead of excessive fear of laws and punishments.”⁹⁰⁸ His remarks clarify that the presence of the gods and their involvement in *fides* supported demonstration of human *pietas* and *fides* in personal agreements, oaths, contracts, and treaties, and continued to mark Rome’s way of life in the early empire.

For the recipients of Romans, this commingling of faith and piety would have been the predominant context for Judeans and non-Judeans, as participants in Rome’s daily life. Perceiving honor, faith, and piety as the basis of human-divine relationship would have placed them solidly within the societal norms of Rome.

3.7 Honor, Faith, Faithfulness, and Piety with God/the gods: Lived Morality

For Romans, the religious experience of personifications, including Faith, was not only just worship of “those who have always lived in heaven,” but as “those qualities through which an ascent to heaven is granted to man: Intellect, Virtue, Piety, Faith.”⁹⁰⁹ “*Fides* was by its nature pure morality,” and in Cicero’s view, a divinity that enabled Rome’s peoples heavenly ascent to dwell with the gods, and not descent to the underworld.⁹¹⁰ This interrelationship of faith, piety, and morality in relation to gods and humanity is apparent in Valerius’ account of the Etruscan, Spurrina, whose good looks attracted the lustful gaze of upper-class women. He ended their lust to preserve virtue: “He disfigured with gashes his gorgeous face, and preferred that his repulsiveness demonstrate his sanctified faith (*sanctitatis suae fidem*) than his ravishing beauty allure another woman’s lust.”⁹¹¹

Piety and chastity were moral honor towards the gods, and gods honoring these as expressions of human faithfulness are apparent in answered prayer. The Vestal priestess, Tuccia was accused of incestuous unchastity. To demonstrate her moral piety in relation to the goddess, she prayed ...”O Vesta, if I have always brought chaste hands to your rites,

⁹⁰⁸ “*deorum assidua cura, cum interesse rebus humanis caeleste numen videretur, ea pietate omnium pectora imbuerat, ut fides et ius iurandum pro nimio – Mss. proximo – legum ac poenarum metu civitatem regerent.*” Livy 1.21.1; Koch, ‘Roman State Religion’, 303-304.

⁹⁰⁹ Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.19.9.

⁹¹⁰ Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 178.

⁹¹¹ Valerius 4.5.ext.1, translated by Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 172.

grant that I may with this sieve fetch water from the Tiber and carry it back to your shrine.”⁹¹² Answered prayer demonstrated Vesta was a living goddess, who by her intervention honored those faithful to her. “The situation of this anecdote thus brings together in the midst of crisis a god, the state, an individual, outward conduct, inner conscience, human prayer, divine obligation, nature, and a miracle.”⁹¹³ Intercessory prayer honored by a miraculous act was a demonstration, not only of confirmed human piety, but that Vesta, and by inference other gods, honored lived faith as moral piety by divine intervention.

Thus, faith and piety expressed as morality were aspects of Rome’s perceived ethnic superiority and shaped her relationship with the gods, integral to Roman ethnic expression, divine relationship, and religious experience. This linkage suggests that not only Judeans, but also non-Judean Romans, were deeply concerned with maintaining “right relations” with God/the gods. Additionally, Roman conceptualization of righteousness was closely intertwined with honor and faith towards the gods as demonstrated piety.

3.8 Honor, Faith, Faithfulness, and Piety with God/the gods: Righteousness and Ongoing Right Relationships

Insight into this interaction of human piety, righteousness and faith was of concern to Cicero, who in *De Natura Deorum* further argued that piety towards the gods, based in oath-sworn faith, was essential for righteousness to exist in divine and human relationships, “...if piety towards the gods disappears, also *fides* (faith) and the *societas generis humani* (community of the human race) and that particularly excellent virtue, righteousness (*iustitia*), will disappear.”⁹¹⁴ As Dyck states it, “The unspoken link is that *fides* was reinforced by the swearing of oaths by the gods (esp. *Dius Fidius*), so that it could not be guaranteed without *pietas*. Cicero could have delineated the relations among the three terms instead of merely placing them on the same level: *fides*, standing by one’s given word is the foundation of the virtue justice and holds together organized society.”⁹¹⁵

⁹¹² Valerius 8.1.*abs.5*, translation by Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 51.

⁹¹³ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 51-52.

⁹¹⁴ ... *atque haud scio an pietate adversus deos sublata fides etiam et societas generis humani et una excellentissima virtus, iustitia, tollatur. De Natura Deorum* 1.2.3-4; translation excerpted from H. Wagenvoort, *PIETAS: Selected Studies in Roman Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1980).

⁹¹⁵ Cicero, *Deo Natura Deorum*, Dyck (ed.), 60-61.

The Romans were not alone in honoring righteousness and piety. Greeks also deified and worshipped Righteousness and Piety in Roman imperial Asia, Phrygia, and perhaps in Athens.⁹¹⁶ Greek practice perhaps influenced Roman concepts of righteousness, and in turn Roman concepts impacted Greek ideals and practice. Cicero's well documented Greek source in *De Finibus* was his contemporary Posidonius, “ἔστιν ἡ ὀσιότης δικαιοσύνη τις πρὸς θεοῦς.”⁹¹⁷ Cicero and another local Greek philosopher argued alike on these concepts. In *On Piety*, the Epicurian philosopher Philodemus, Italian resident and Cicero's contemporary, similarly stated that the wicked, (κακῶν) “did not consider that righteousness, (δίκαιος) and piety, (ὀσιότης) are virtually the same thing.”⁹¹⁸ Again, ethnic Roman and Greek ideas expressed in Greek and Latin are fertile ground for the recipients of Romans to hear the interplay of righteousness, faith and piety, and particularly, divine condemnation in Romans 1:18.

From Cicero's idealized perspective, it seems Roman *pietas* and *iustitia* are practically synonymous expressions in relation with the gods, as similarly espoused by Posidonius and Philodemus. Yet since *iustitia* is divinized and deemed “the most excellent virtue,” it seems reasonable to conclude the gods were “just” or “righteous” themselves, since these virtues were divine personifications and representations of divine characteristics to be embodied by humanity. Wagenvoort argues Cicero's piety expressed humanity's faith in the deity's call to relationship, which he suggests was manifest in human and divine exercise of “that particularly excellent virtue, righteousness.”⁹¹⁹ Cicero is straightforward, “...for *pietas*, (piety) is *iustitia*, (righteousness) towards the gods.”⁹²⁰

Cicero's perceptions of piety not only encompassed relationships with the gods and Romans, but their impact on ethnic interaction. He was convinced the lack of pious righteousness

⁹¹⁶ “Ὀσιος και Δίκαιος”, H.S. Versnel, ‘Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer’ in H.S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 1-64 (12).

⁹¹⁷ “Piety (holiness) is righteousness towards the gods.” Posidonius, *Adv. Phys.* 1.124 in Posidonius of Apaemea, L. Edelstein, and I.G. Kidd, *Fragments, 2 Vols.*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1st ed, 1972, 2004); Cicero, *De Finibus*, 3.22.73; Wagenvoort, *PIETAS*, 10.

⁹¹⁸ “καὶ μὴ θεωρήσαντες ὅτι σχεδὸν ταῦτ[ο φαίν]εται τὸ ὀσι[ον] καὶ δί[καιον]...” Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 78.2261-2265 in Philodemus, *De pietate, On Piety*, Dirk Obbink, (ed.), 2 Vols., (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); Philodemus was Virgil's instructor, see Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 260-261, 592.

⁹¹⁹ Wagenvoort, *PIETAS*, 11.

⁹²⁰ *Est enim pietas iustitia adversus deos.* Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.41.116 in translation by Wagenvoort, *PIETAS*, 9-10; Yves Bonnefoy, Wendy Doniger, *Roman and European Mythologies*, Wendy Doniger, Gerald Honigsblum (trans.), (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 59-60.

towards the gods brought about destruction of social relations among all humanity, and more importantly, between ethnicities.

“Those, however, who say that we must respect our fellow-citizens but need not respect people of foreign nationality thereby destroy the universal community of mankind, and when this vanishes, kindness and generosity, goodness and righteousness, (*iustitia*) will totally perish. Those who effect this destruction must be regarded as lacking all piety towards the immortal gods, for it is the gods who have established the community of mankind....”⁹²¹

Here Cicero’s concepts of piety or righteousness towards the gods are interwoven with respect for other ethnicities, in pursuit of common *humanitas*, and righteousness, despite his arguments elsewhere for Roman ethnic superiority. It formed a social construct in which lack of *pietas* destroyed human community, and interplays with the social norms and outcomes of the Roman letter, especially Romans 13-15:14.

Righteousness by non-Romans was also exemplified in Valerius’ virtues. In 6.5.1, the Falisci surrender their city because of Roman benefaction and unexpected justice – the lack of deserved punishment.⁹²² After a revolt, they surrendered a second time, “not to Roman power, but to Roman faith.”⁹²³ The Roman victors laid aside anger, hatred, and presumably warranted vengeance to preserve the righteousness of their own act of sworn faith. Finally, Valerius trumpeted the city of Rome as the state superior in morality to all the nations of the earth, in that it embodied deified Justice or Righteousness.⁹²⁴

The commingling of faith, piety and righteousness continued post-Valerius. In *Punica*, Silius Italicus presented *fides* as the foundation of *iustitia* (righteousness) with the gods. For Silius, *Fides* was a heavenly inhabitant, “an embodiment of light, law, and peace.”⁹²⁵ *Fides*, like *Iustitia*, was venerated, not only as a god, but as divinized virtue that dwelt in a person’s

⁹²¹ Cicero, *De Officiis*, 3.6.28; translation from Wagenvoort, *PIETAS*, 10.

⁹²² “By such justice the hearts of those whose walls could not be stormed were taken captive. Vanquished by benefaction rather than by arms, the Falisci opened their gates to the Romans.” translation in Valerius Maximus, 6.5.1; in Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings*.

⁹²³ Valerius Maximus 6.5.1; translation in Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings*.

⁹²⁴ “The most conspicuous and surest example of Justice among all the nations of the earth is, of course, our own state.” Valerius 6.5.*init.* translated in Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 162.

⁹²⁵ David Vessey, ‘Silius Italicus on the Fall of Saguntum,’ in *Classical Philology*, Vol. 69, No. 1. (Jan., 1974), 28-36, (32).

heart, as noted by Cicero.⁹²⁶ Silius depicted Hannibal's assault on Saguntum as a breach of *fides* with Rome and unrighteous since it demolished *ius*, not only towards Saguntum and Rome, but towards the gods as "sin against Jove (Jupiter)."

This combination of Roman *fides* and *pietas* with *iustitia* provides a continued contextual framework for clarification of δικαιοσύνη, the quality of being δίκαιος (righteous) or in right relationship in reference to fulfillment of obligations to the gods and humanity from the early imperial period to post-epistle Neronian Rome. This interaction, based upon faith-making by oath-honoring towards the gods, underpinned piety and its outcome of honorable righteousness or right relationship with divinity and humanity, even in ethnic contexts.

In *Punica*, Faith does not save Saguntum's populace from death and destruction. Honoring *Fides* by oath-keeping resulted in everlasting glory and rest in Elysium.⁹²⁷ For Romans, faithful honor came from living faith's obligations, even unto death. Piety was the glue of faith and righteousness in relationships with deity and people across all boundaries of class and culture.

3.9 Faith as Honor in Daily Roman Life

Faith was the basis of relationships, among not only Rome's elite, but also her general populace. The matter of one's faith (πίστις or *fides*) being known and attested to by others was the core of social relationships, friendship, and basis for honor. *Fides* was expressed in signed, sealed, and sworn oaths of individual Romans as a guarantor of relations with one another.⁹²⁸ As in public temple transactions, interpersonal faith was sworn verbally and with witnesses. Entrance into binding social, legal, or relational transactions entailed giving or demanding (*fide rogavit*) and promising faith (*fide promisit*) between the parties.⁹²⁹ That Latin *fides* meant the same as Greek πίστις in this social context is apparent in stipulatory, or "verbal obligation" agreements as previously described by Polybius.⁹³⁰ Furthermore,

⁹²⁶ "Goddess (*Fides*), more ancient than Jupiter, glory of gods and men, without whom neither sea nor land finds peace, sister of Justice, *Iustitia*, silent divinity in the heart of man...", Silius Italicus, *Punica*, Vol. 2, 480-490; Edward L. Bassett, 'Regulus and the Serpent in the *Punica*,' *Classical Philology*, Vol. 50, No. 1. (Jan., 1955), 1-20, (3, 12 n.20).

⁹²⁷ Silius Italicus, *Punica*, Vol. 2, 696-707.

⁹²⁸ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 115-127, 156-164.

⁹²⁹ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 56-57.

⁹³⁰ Polybius, 6.56.13-15.

Gaius records both the Latin and Greek covenantal exchange of *fides*/πίστις. The “*Dabis? Dabo. Promittis? Promitto, Fidepromittis? Fidepromitto. Fideubes? Fideubeo. Facies? Facio.*” was directly translated into δώσεις; δώσω· ὁμολογεῖς; ὁμολογῶ· πίσται κελεύεις; πίσται κελεύω· ποιήσεις; ποιήσω. “Will you give?” “I will give”; “Do you promise?” “I promise”; “Do you promise your faith/honor”? “I promise my faith/honor”; “Will you do?” “I will do.”⁹³¹ For a stipulation to be legal, both parties had to be able to speak and hear this immediate and binding question and answer exchange of sworn faith.⁹³² This gives hints at a very contextual reinterpretation of Romans 10:6-13, which falls outside this thesis.

The faith promised was recorded as future evidence of the transactions that bound parties and was sealed by witnesses, human and divine, to make it legally and socially binding. They were most often recorded on *tabulae* as private unofficial or official documents, or bronze tablets, if public documents.⁹³³ Dionysius related how Tarquinius secured his position over Rome by faith (πίστιν) with “righteous friends” (δικαίους φίλοι), a relationship sealed by an oath sworn over a sacrificed ox. The treaty was written on the oxhide, and publicly displayed in the temple of *Jupiter/Dius Fidius*, or *Sancus* on the Quirinal as a memorial of the oaths sworn and the faith made between the parties.⁹³⁴ Again, public display of faith’s sacrifice fulfilled and sealed in Roman terms hints at a contextual interpretation of Christ “publicly displayed” as a divinely promised faith act in Romans 3:24-26.

Daily documents called *acta* recorded actions of *fides* depending on the nature of the agreement, gifting, or obligation. *Acta* were recorded in *tabulae* or accounts, at every level of Roman society.⁹³⁵ One Latin *tabula* from 43 CE Campania noted an informal cash account entry, in which after being asked the promissory question, the Athenian acquaintance involved “promised faithfully, (*fide sua esse iusit*)” to deliver the cash.⁹³⁶ The *acta* marked what one gave and promised in faith and was written embodiment of the faith act itself.⁹³⁷

⁹³¹ Gaius, *Institutes* 3.92-93; Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 115-116.

⁹³² Ulpian and Alan Watson, *The Digest of Justinian*, 2 Vols., Alan Watson, (ed.), (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1998), 45.1.praef.

⁹³³ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 25-27.

⁹³⁴ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.58.3-4.

⁹³⁵ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 30-34.

⁹³⁶ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 137-138.

⁹³⁷ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 91-92.

The relation of faith, action, and piety is apparent in Valerius' description of Decimus Laelius and Marcus Agrippa as 'holy men' which can be construed as "saints" (*sancti*), because they "obtained their status by performing the duties (*acta*) of unblemished faith (*sincerae fidei*)." Furthermore, Mueller portrays Valerius' attribution of this religious status to the "rich harvest of their works."⁹³⁸ Additionally, faith was founded on friendship, as a comingling of a divine attribute with human life: "...the temples of friendship are the faithful hearts of human beings, brimming as it were, with a holy spirit."⁹³⁹ Finally, from my perspective, Valerius' view of personal faith is most telling in the "present faith" (*praesenti fide*) he proclaimed exemplified in the living Tiberian divinity, equivalent to that of Julius and Augustus, already ascended into the heavens.⁹⁴⁰

These examples depict how faith transactions formed the basis of friendship and relationship, expressed in covenant, sealed as contract, or promised obligation in daily Roman experience. Transactions of faith became demonstrated faithfulness by honoring ongoing obligations to which one was bound. Faithfulness was claimed by recitation of one's own acts of faith or meeting faith-sworn obligations. Retelling others' deeds or *acta* demonstrated their faith/faithfulness in human or divine interaction, as Dionysius did in *Roman Antiquities*.⁹⁴¹ The compilation of *acta* to record faith or unfaithfulness provides fertile ground for reconsideration of God's judgment, wrath, and reward heard in Romans 2:5-11, and indirectly ties to vows and oaths made to deities as covenant and promises, at times tied to the image of a deity, to demonstrate human vows fulfilled and deities' answered prayers.⁹⁴²

Thus, faith and honor in daily life commonly commingled promises, oath-swearing, faith, and *acta*.⁹⁴³ The intertwined relationship of *fides*, πίστις and honor was based upon the act of sealing a *tabula* and public display of records. The inviolability of a *fides* or faith agreement was strengthened by witnesses who externally ring-sealed a *tabula* that recorded the *acta*. The rings and seals expressed an individual's *fides* (faith) attached to the document. As Cicero indicated to Quintus, his (Quintus') ring was not a utensil, but "your very self, not

⁹³⁸ Valerius Maximus 4.7.7, translated in Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 135-136.

⁹³⁹ Valerius Maximus 4.7.ext.1, translated in Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 137.

⁹⁴⁰ Valerius, *praef.*, Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 116.

⁹⁴¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 4.58.3-4.

⁹⁴² Ogilvie, *The Romans and Their Gods*, 37-81.

⁹⁴³ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 158-163.

the minister of another's will, but the witness-judge (*testis*) of your own."⁹⁴⁴ If one's ring and acts of sealing and witnessing represented *fides* as self-expression, then one's reputation and honor were intertwined in the symbols and actions as well. Hence, documentary acts of swearing, recording, sealing and being a witness were symbolically and literally *fides* and honor in agreements or relationships.⁹⁴⁵

From this it is clear that for Romans, "faith" was far more than "belief" as often translated by New Testament commentators, for *fides* and πίστις represented the entirety of a group or individual evidenced in sworn or oathed relationships. As Meyer notes, "Your *fides* and your reputation were deeply intertwined and your alacrity in defending these would hold you to your side of the agreement."⁹⁴⁶ Honor, faith, faithfulness, piety, and righteousness in divine and human relationships did not just bind citizens and freedmen. Slaves also lived faith-formed honorable relationships in Rome.

3.10 Honor and Faith in Daily Life: Swearing Faith as Freedmen in Rome

The pursuit of honor was not elitist. Exemplified slave honor was inscribed upon the Statilii *columbarium* in Rome. Iucundus, freedman litter bearer of Statilius, was commemorated by Callista, his own *vicaria*, (slave of a slave), and Philologus, perhaps another slave of the *familia*: "As long as he lived, he was a man and acted on behalf of himself and others. As long as he lived, he lived honorably."⁹⁴⁷ This tribute in death preserved one's *memoria*, (memory), social status, and honor, and "attempt[ed] to secure the social survival of the dead in the world of the living," and in this case, a freed slave that lived honorably, perhaps the basis of his manumission.⁹⁴⁸

Once freed, a former slave's patronal relationship of honor was based upon faith. As Treggiari states, "...the concept of *fides* was relevant to the law's attitude to freedmen, as to clients in general. It was the basis of right relationship between freedmen and patron."⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴⁴ "...non minister alienae voluntatis, sed testis tuae." Cicero, *Quintus fr.* 1.1.13; Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 155.

⁹⁴⁵ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 160, 162-164, 167; Cicero, *Quintus fr.* 1.1.13.

⁹⁴⁶ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 151; Polybius, 6.56.14-15.

⁹⁴⁷ *Iucundus Tauri / lecticarius quandi/us vixit vir fuit et se et / alios vindicavi [sic] quan/dius vixit honeste vixit / Callista et Philologus dant.* CIL 6.6308; Joshel, *Work, Identity and Legal Status*, 90.

⁹⁴⁸ Keith Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1983), 217, 233-234.

⁹⁴⁹ Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 80; F. Schulz, *Principles of Roman Law* (Oxford: Oxford, 1936), 231 f.

Fides was formed by *stipulatio* with the patron. The freedmen's oath included obligatory performance of *operae* or service after manumission.⁹⁵⁰ A freedmen's *operae* were an outgrowth, not of the supreme gift of becoming freed, but of the oath the freed took after manumission.⁹⁵¹ Since oaths sworn by slaves were not valid, it was the practice for a slave to promise *operae*, which he was obligated to perform, once manumitted, by his post-manumission oath of faith.⁹⁵² In post-manumitted relationships, the *paterfamilias*, now *patronus* and benefactor, was honored by worship of his *genius*, the divine spirit of the *familia*, by expression of gratitude and thanks as an expression of *fides*.⁹⁵³ Thus, freedmen were still bound to former masters by reciprocal bonds of *fides*. In the social conventions of faith-sworn manumission, we encounter additional context which interrelates with the imagery of Romans 6-8. Further exploration falls outside this thesis, but this note points to hints of the rich cultural affinities available to Rome's residents to interpret the letter to Rome.

Violation of the manumission oath was a desecration of *fides* which could lead to revocation of freedom and return to slavery.⁹⁵⁴ Augustus' *Lex Aelia Sentia* of 4 CE permitted punishment for unfaithful freedmen. Claudius went further, legislating that unfaithful or ungrateful freedmen had their manumission revoked and returned to slavery.⁹⁵⁵ The Senate continued the debate under Nero, determining that the re-enslavement of ungrateful or unfaithful freedmen was at the discretion of their patron, or former master.⁹⁵⁶ That deity was included in the oath swearing at manumission was attested by inscriptions of gratitude for manumission to various deities offered *ex voto* by freedmen that formulaically contained '*liber vovit*,' a free man vowed or '*servus vovit*,' a slave vowed it.⁹⁵⁷

Honor and *fides* were evident in the freedmen's *obsequium*, of not transgressing against the former master and showing them reverence.⁹⁵⁸ But *obsequium* was more than *operae* or

⁹⁵⁰ Alan Watson, *The Law of Persons in the later Roman Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 228 f.; Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 70, 74.

⁹⁵¹ Ulpian, *Digest* 38.1.31 (Modestinus).

⁹⁵² Susan Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 75.

⁹⁵³ Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 37-39, 42-44; Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion*, 228.

⁹⁵⁴ Cicero, *Atticus* 7.2.8.

⁹⁵⁵ Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.

⁹⁵⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 26-27.

⁹⁵⁷ *CIL* 1.972, 1617.

⁹⁵⁸ Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 70.

work, and often encompassed genuine affection for the patron.⁹⁵⁹ Freedmen were praised for not only *fides* or *fidelitas*, but also *officium* and *benevolentia* towards former masters.⁹⁶⁰ Appreciation of a freedman by patrons could be expressed as praise of their faithfulness.⁹⁶¹ While a freedman demonstrated sworn relational *fides* to a patron by *operae* or *officia*, the patron also was obligated to protect and aid his freedman on the “extra-legal principle of *fides*.”⁹⁶² Furthermore, for freedmen and patron, *honor* and *reverentia* were core aspects that delineated the moral reciprocity of *fides*. Not only the freedmen, but also their sons remained in cliental obligation to descendants of those who manumitted their fathers. Their obligations and relationship were maintained on the basis of *fides*.⁹⁶³

3.11 Roman Honor, Faith, and Piety in Military Life

Roman military culture operated similarly to general religious and socio-cultural practice. As Le Bohec aptly summarizes Roman military experience, “War cannot be divorced from religion.”⁹⁶⁴ The core focus and desired outcome of military life was stated in relation to the deified personified *Honos* (Honor). Both individual soldier and military units venerated Honor as the essence of the highest achievement, associated with emperors, and deity. How a soldier lived and achieved *Honos*, was by fulfillment of sworn obligations, especially the *sacramentum* which carried personal, interpersonal, public and sacred significance for the Roman military.

Swearing the *sacramentum*, a sacred and legal oath, was one’s first act in Roman military service. The oath, (*ius iurandum*) sworn in the presence of the gods, bound oneself to commander and emperor.⁹⁶⁵ To swear this oath was more than a military act – it was a religious one. Julius Caesar defined the *sacramentum* as *religio*, a religious sanction which if

⁹⁵⁹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares*, 2 Vols., D.R. Shackleton Bailey, (ed). D.R. Shackleton Bailey, (trans.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1977), 4.9.1; 3.6.1; 13.21.2.

⁹⁶⁰ Cicero, *ad Familiares*, 13.21.2; 4.9.1.

⁹⁶¹ Cicero, *ad Familiares* 16.16.2; 13.21.

⁹⁶² Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 211, 80.

⁹⁶³ Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 235.

⁹⁶⁴ Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 236.

⁹⁶⁵ Sextus Julius Frontinus, *Strategems, Aqueducts of Rome*, C.E. Bennett, Mary B. McElwain (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1925), *Strategems* 4.1.4; Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 239.

abrogated resulted in perjury, not toward a commander or emperor, but the gods.⁹⁶⁶ Piety towards the gods was the strength of the Roman army.⁹⁶⁷

That the *sacramentum* or oath was perceived as part of faith is apparent in Appian's comment that Roman soldiers swore an oath together to not cease having a good relationship and faith with Antony.⁹⁶⁸ Augustus initiated military swearing of the *sacramentum* as faith with him as emperor – renewed annually.⁹⁶⁹ He highlighted its importance and prevalence by claiming 500,000 Romans swore the *sacramentum* or the *ius iurandum* with him.⁹⁷⁰

This oath was core to military honor and faith-making when Claudius became emperor. When addressing the Praetorian Guard in January 41, they swore the *sacramentum* to establish faith with him, which Suetonius derisively equated with bribery, since a donative was offered in reciprocatory honor of their sworn faith.⁹⁷¹ Yet neither Claudius nor the praetorians considered it corruption. To commemorate their support, the donative of new gold and silver coinage celebrated Claudius' admission into the Praetorium (IMPER[ator] RECEP[us] and the oath of faith sworn by the guard, PRAETOR[iani] RECEP[i in fidem]).⁹⁷²

Later in 41, Scribonius' revolt was undone by legionary re-oathed faith with Claudius. In turn, the emperor granted the legions the honorary title, *Claudia Pia Fidelis* (Claudian, Pious, Faithful).⁹⁷³ The designations memorialized the legion's faithfulness to Claudius by marking the return to interrelationship of piety towards the gods and their re-sworn imperial faith with the emperor.

⁹⁶⁶ Julius Caesar, *Vol. 2, Civil Wars*, A.G. Peskett, (trans.), *LCL* (London: Heinemann, 1914), *Bel Caes.* 2.32.8 f; Julius Caesar, *Civil Wars*, 1.76.5; Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army*, 22-23.

⁹⁶⁷ Onasander (Onasandros), *Strategicus* IV, in Aneaus Tacitus, Asclepiodotus, Onasander, Aneaus *Tacitus, Asclepiodotus, Onasander*, Illinois Greek Club (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1925); Bohec, *Roman Imperial Army*, 236.

⁹⁶⁸ συνώμνυον ἔκοντες οὐκ ἐκλείψειν τὴν ἐς Ἀντώνιον εὐνοίαν τε καὶ πίστιν. Appian, *Civil Wars*, 3.241; P. Hermann, *Der römische Kaisereid* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1968), 61.

⁹⁶⁹ Kate Gilliver, 'The Augustan Reform and the Structure of the Imperial Army', in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, Paul Edrkamp, (ed.), (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 183-200, (187); Tacitus, *Histories* 1.55.

⁹⁷⁰ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 3.

⁹⁷¹ Suetonius, *Claudius* 10.1-4.

⁹⁷² Harold Mattingly, R.A.G. Carson, and Philip V. Hill, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, BMC* Vol. 1, (London: Trustees, 1923-64), 165-166, nos. 5, 8; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 151.

⁹⁷³ Suetonius, *Claudius*, 36.2; Cassius Dio, 55.23.4; 60.15.4, Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army*, 90.

Additionally, Claudius' reign provided the first bronze *tabula* granting Roman citizenship to auxiliary soldiers who completed 25 years of service. The *diplomata* bestowing citizenship were handed out in the Temple of *Fides* in Rome.⁹⁷⁴ The *diplomata* bound bestowal of their citizenship with their lifelong act of faithfulness to Rome and her people, in the presence of the deified personification of Faith. That sacred military oaths of faith were commonly understood in mid-50s CE Rome is adduced from Epictetus, who urged his followers to swear a sacramental oath to God “just like the soldiers to the emperor.”⁹⁷⁵

3.12. Honor and Faith in Public Life: Oath-sworn Faith with the Emperor

Swearing faith framed the relationship between emperor, the populace of Rome, and the empire. During the civil wars, Augustus declared that, prior to Actium, the whole of Italy voluntarily verbally swore an oath of faith to him along with Gaul, Spain, Africa, Sicily and Sardinia.⁹⁷⁶ This oath was renewed annually by community leadership, at minimum, across the empire and probably by entire populations.⁹⁷⁷ This faith-swearing was practised in the Roman east as evident in the swearing of faith by Romans and non-Romans at the cult altar to Augustus and Rome in Paphlagonia in 3 BCE.⁹⁷⁸ That Roman Asia's imperial cult and faith-swearing were linked directly to practice in Rome is clear in the actions of the citizens of Assos and her resident Romans, who “were quick to swear a delighted oath of loyalty (faith) to Gaius Caligula” in Assos, commemorated by inscription, and then sent Greek and Roman community leaders to Rome to sacrifice to Jupiter Capitolinus on behalf of their city, to cement their faith with Rome and her patron deity.⁹⁷⁹ Pliny later documented continuation of annual swearing of faith by army and populace with the emperor in Bithynia, an act acknowledged by Trajan.⁹⁸⁰

⁹⁷⁴ ILS, 1986; Grant, *Army of the Caesars*, 155-156.

⁹⁷⁵ Epictetus, *Discourses*, 1.14.15; Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army* 24; Gilliver, ‘The Augustan Reform and the Structure of the Imperial Army’, 189.

⁹⁷⁶ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 25.

⁹⁷⁷ For texts of general imperial oaths of faith, Hermann, *Der römische Kaisereid*, 122ff.; Campbell, *Emperor and the Roman Army*, 25.

⁹⁷⁸ Purcell, ‘Romans in the Roman World’, 102-103.

⁹⁷⁹ R. Cagnat, J. Toutain, P. Jouguet et G. Lafaye (eds.), *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes*, (IGRR), 4 volumes in three, (Paris: 1911-1927, Ares Publishers, 1995), *IGRR IV* 249-251, Purcell, ‘Romans in the Roman World’, 103.

⁹⁸⁰ Pliny the Younger, *Letters, Pangyricus*, 2 Vols., Betty Radice (trans), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1969), 6.44, 6.45; 6.60, 7.61; 11.101, 11.102; 11.103, 11.104.

However, faith-swearing invoked not only the living emperor, but also those previously deified. Julius Caesar was lauded as the focus of religious ritual, transformed by his removal from among men, and “added to the council of gods.”⁹⁸¹ The power and reality of deification and imperial cult worship was apparent in Valerius’ addressing Julius: “Worshipping your altars and your most holy temple, divine Julius, I pray with propitious and favoring deity you may....”⁹⁸² Moreover, in 4.5.6, an *exemplum* on modesty was expanded to laud the death of Julius Caesar as “an epiphany of the divine.” Julius’ divine epiphany was strengthened in 1.8.8, where Valerius called him “god Julius,” and describes him as a “majestic” (*augustus*) epiphany to Cassius at the battle of Philippi; an incarnate deity “using a human body.”⁹⁸³ For Valerius, “his (Caesar’s) divine soul was separated from the mortal body... in this manner men do not die, but the immortal gods return to their home.”⁹⁸⁴ Augustus had enacted worship of Julius and Rome as gods in provincial Asia and Bithynia, legislating for Romans to establish temples, sacred precincts and festivals in key cities, such as Ephesus so that “the non-Romans who knew themselves as Hellenes” might worship Julius.⁹⁸⁵

Valerius carried the same views and values for Augustus. Minerva identified Augustus as a god who is granted divine protection, due to his future immortality and “heavenly spirit (*caelesti spiritu*).”⁹⁸⁶ “Between father (Julius) and son (Augustus) no sort of comparison is to be made, especially as they are joined together on the summit of divinity; but the one had already raised for himself an access to heaven by his works, while a lengthy round of earthly achievements still remained for the other.”⁹⁸⁷ The result of the divinization by “the immortal gods” of Julius and Augustus is that “one glory might be given to heaven.” This glory is proclaimed, “The most glorious part of heaven, the god Caesars shown.”⁹⁸⁸

The worship of Caesar and Augustus were intimately linked with the virtues of Rome, to strengthen the majesty of emperor and virtue, and the attractiveness of their emulation. Personifications included virtue, clemency, justice, and piety. These virtues were not only deified for emulation, but linked in divine worship to Augustus’ divinity, renamed such as

⁹⁸¹ Valerius Maximus, 1.6.13.

⁹⁸² Valerius 1.6.13, Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings*, 77.

⁹⁸³ Valerius 1.8.8, also, 2.10.7, 3.2.23, 5.1.0, 9.2.4, 9.15; Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 262-263.

⁹⁸⁴ Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 214, 210-211.

⁹⁸⁵ Cassius Dio, 51.20.7-9; Purcell, ‘Romans in the Roman World, 102.

⁹⁸⁶ Valerius 1.7.1, translated by Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 219.

⁹⁸⁷ Valerius 1.7.2, in Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings, Vol. I*, 83. Also, Valerius 6.2.11, in Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and New Nobility*, 212.

⁹⁸⁸ Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 221.

Virtus Augusta, Clementia Augusta, Iustitia Augusta, and Pietas Augusta as divine elements of *Pax Augusta*.⁹⁸⁹

Thus, swearing faith with the emperor brought together the living, the deified and personified virtues of Roman life. However, it was personal practice as well. Augustus' interaction with Cinna exemplified oath-sworn faith as singular event and lifelong relationship. Confronting his sedition, the emperor interjected, "You are not keeping faith, Cinna" in regard to his breach of sworn silence during Augustus' presentation of Cinna's assassination plot.⁹⁹⁰ Augustus pardoned him and redefined their relationship from enmity to friendship based upon renewed faith: "From this day let there be a beginning of friendship between us; let us put to the test which one of us acts in better faith – I in granting you your life, or you in owing it to me."⁹⁹¹ Seneca confirmed this relational faith as reciprocal honor. Augustus promoted Cinna to consulship, and Cinna being "most friendly and most faithful (*amicissimum fidelissimumque*)" named Augustus his sole heir.⁹⁹² Augustus and Cinna depicted reciprocal honor inherent in sworn imperial faith as lived friendship.

When Tiberius succeeded Augustus in 14 CE, the population of Rome assembled to swear oathed faith with the new emperor. "The first to swear the oath (*iuravere*) to Tiberius Caesar were the Consuls of the year, Sextus Pompeius and Sextus Appuleius; then in their presence, the praetorian prefect, Lucius Seius Strabo, and the prefect of the corn supply, Gaius Turranius; next the senate, the army, and the people (*populus*)."⁹⁹³ Each group swore a verbal oath considered binding before Jupiter and the people who witnessed each declaration. Moreover, it is the people (*populus*) of Rome who swore faith with Tiberius. Neither Tacitus nor other contemporary writers delineate oath-swearing by ethnicity, but include the entire population of Rome. Roman Judeans and non-Judeans, citizens and non-citizens, would have sworn faith with the emperor.

⁹⁸⁹ Wissowa, 'The Historical Development of Roman Religion', 350-351.

⁹⁹⁰ "Non praestas," inquit, "fidem Cinna," Seneca, *De Clementia*, 1.9.9, in John W. Brasore, (trans.) *Seneca: Moral Essays Vol. I, LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1970).

⁹⁹¹ "Ex hodierno die inter nos amicitia incipiat; contendamus, utrum ego meliore fide tibi vitam dederim an tu debeas." Seneca, *De Clementia*, 1.9.11, in Brasore, (1970).

⁹⁹² Seneca, *De Clementia*, 1.9.12 in Brasore, (1970).

⁹⁹³ Tacitus, *Annals* 1.7.3.

Annual re-swearing of the oath of faith with Tiberius was proposed and approved by the Roman Senate the very next day – the first day in session after Augustus’ death.⁹⁹⁴ That it was a *sacramentum* made it an act of *religio* or piety towards the gods – not just a military or civil proclamation. This annualized imperial oath of faith was legislated for all who had sworn it a day earlier – the whole population of Rome, Judeans included.

Tiberian divinity was confirmed from the tangible proof of his deified father and grandfather; Augustus and Julius who lived and ascended into the heavens. Their stars in the heavens created a “manifest faith” (*praesenti fide*) for Valerius and his readers.⁹⁹⁵ Additionally, in the climax of examples of vice in 9.11, with invective presumably directed against Sejanus, Valerius returns to describing Tiberius, as “our Princeps and Parent” who holds the reins of the Roman Empire “in his saving right hand,” symbolic of sworn faith. In summary, Valerius’ piety expressed towards the gods, including Tiberius was heart-felt. As Mueller concludes, “To Valerius, Tiberius is a manifest god” and manifest faith.⁹⁹⁶

Upon Tiberius’ death, a similar oath of faith sworn with Gaius was administered by Vitellius to the multitudes in Jerusalem at Tiberius’ death, “ὄρκισεν τὴν πλῆθὺν ἐπ’ εὐνοίᾳ τῆ Γαΐου,” substantiated by Philo’s claim of Jerusalem’s offering 100 bulls to honor his imperial accession.⁹⁹⁷ Similarly, at Nero’s accession in 54, Rome’s garrison and population swore the oath of faith.⁹⁹⁸ Again, this event occurs not once but annually, as voted by the Roman Senate.⁹⁹⁹ Thus on January 3 each year, the sacramental oath with the emperor was re-sworn.¹⁰⁰⁰ Thus, annual faithful oath-swearing by Rome’s populace, as the rest of the empire, with the emperor, was protocol when the Roman epistle arrived in Rome.

3.13 Roman Faith as Honor in Hardship, Suffering, and Death

Suffering hardship or even death for honoring what one had covenanted confirmed one’s *fides*. Both Valerius Maximus and Silius Italicus used Saguntum’s destruction as an example

⁹⁹⁴ “*addebat Messalla Valerius renovandum per annos sacramentum in nomen Tiberii...*” Tacitus, *Annals* 1.8.

⁹⁹⁵ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 16-17.

⁹⁹⁶ Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 13.

⁹⁹⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.124; Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 356.

⁹⁹⁸ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.69; Dio Cassius, *Histories* 61.3.

⁹⁹⁹ Pliny, *Letters* 6.44, 6.45; 6.60, 7.61; 11.101, 11.102; 11.103, 11.104.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Campbell, *Emperor and Roman Army*, 27-28.

of not breaking faith by undergoing honorable suffering and death.¹⁰⁰¹ Ovid was clearer, “Just as gold is tested in the flames, so faith, (*fides*) must be tried in duress.”¹⁰⁰² In *Callirhoe*’s closing scenes, Chaereas publicly praised Polycharmus for the terrible trials and struggle endured, and lauded him for showing devotion (εὐνοία) and faith (πίστις) in undergoing shared trials. The crowd roared agreement, proclaiming him a faithful friend, or a friend in faith, φίλῳ πιστῷ.¹⁰⁰³ The basis of faith was their mutual encounters of endurance, trial, and hardship, through which the “trueness” of relationship was demonstrated.

A further example of faith during hardship is Valerius’ acclamation of pious reverence towards the gods by the Senate. He cited the cessation of mourning for the Roman defeat at Cannae, and commencement of the proper rituals for the goddess Ceres, “to wear white clothing and offer incense on the altars,” as an example of this care in honoring the gods. Valerius interpreted Cannae’s horrific moment as one of faithfulness: “Indeed because of this faithfulness in maintaining worship the heavenly beings were greatly ashamed to vent their anger further upon that nation which could not be deterred from worship of them even by the harshest of its sufferings.”¹⁰⁰⁴

One of the highest honors one gained in death was public proclamation of one’s faithfulness during life. Grave stones preserved the memory of one’s faith and honor for future generations. In one epitaph, Castricius, a retired legionary-farmer from Rome, was honored by the inscribed values of his agriculture success, “...Who wishes to live in truth well and freely, let him hold these true precepts: First to be pious (*pious*), wish your patron well and respect your parents...Keep good faith (*fides*)... Do not speak ill lest ill be spoken of you. Whoever shall be harmless and faithful will lead decently and cheerfully a pleasant life without trouble.”¹⁰⁰⁵ Castricius’ maxims for living well included demonstrated piety towards the gods and faithfulness, even in rural Roman life.

¹⁰⁰¹ Valerius Maximus, 6.6.ext. 1; Silius Italicus, *Punica*, Vol. 2, 460-525, 650-664.

¹⁰⁰² *Scilicet ut fulvum spectatur in ignibus aurum, / tempore sic duro est inspicienda fides*, Ovid, *Tristia* 1.5.25.

¹⁰⁰³ Chariton, *Callirhoe*, 8.8.12, in Chariton, *Callirhoe*, G. P. Goold, (ed.), (trans.), (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1995), 412-413.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Valerius Maximus, 1.1.15, in Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Book 1*, 34.

¹⁰⁰⁵ “*Praecepta vera, qui volt ver[e] bene et libere v[ivere], haec habeto:] Primum est pium esse; [domino bene] cupias, ver[ere] parentes ... f]idem bonam [praestes, ... noli maledicere ne male] audias. Inn[ocens et fidus qui erit,] suavem vitam [et offense carentam] hon[este] l]ae[teque] peraget.” CIL 11.600; Nicholas Horsfall, *The Culture of the Roman Plebs* (London: Duckworth, 2003), 122-124.*

Similarly, Seneca, in consideration of faithfulness unto death commented that one should “steel his courage to this end, that he may not surrender his pledged faith (*fides*) to torture.”¹⁰⁰⁶ One was faithful and pious in life, even unto death. This is even more apparent in the proclamation of *devotio*, one devoted to death for the saving of one’s people. In Decius’ act to bring atonement with the gods, both Jupiter and Quirinus were prayerfully called as witnesses of the act of giving his life to invoke the gods as participants and witnesses of victory based upon atonement of sin by his self-sacrifice for the Roman people.¹⁰⁰⁷ Faith and piety were not separated ideas in life – or in death.

3.14 Judean Faith, Oaths, Piety, and Righteousness: Perspectives of Josephus and Philo

Much has been written on Judean understandings of faith in relation to the Pauline epistles. For example, Campbell and Lindsay examine Josephus’s and Philo’s use of faith to address concerns about the semantics, meaning, and translation of faith, in Pauline use.¹⁰⁰⁸ Their work is helpful, as they recognize the differences between modern conceptualization and ancient semantic use. However, Campbell’s interpretive focus is on an ancient Greek “reader accustomed to the OT and to Jewish custom, but not yet afflicted by specifically Christian theological disputes,” as is similar for Lindsay who concludes that “distinction should be properly seen between the biblical kind of faith and the secular Greek kind of faith.”¹⁰⁰⁹ However in connection with Romans, neither has considered that Greek-speaking readers less grounded in Judean customs and concepts, who did not read LXX passages similarly to Judeans, immersed in Roman culture, yet were Christ-followers, may have understood faith through the lens of their socio-cultural environment.

Campbell primarily considered Josephus and Philo in relation to the LXX and Paul’s use of “faith.” Much of his work is based upon research by Lindsay. The shortfall is that Campbell has not engaged in semantic range comparison between these sources and the use of “faith” language and social convention within general Greco-Roman society, and Roman culture as briefly examined above. Josephus and Philo wrote not only to engage Judean audiences, but non-Judeans as well, and in Josephus’ case – Romans, who may have had less interest in

¹⁰⁰⁶ *sed in hoc duratur, ut tormentis non summittat fidem*, Seneca. *Moral Epistles*, Vol. 1, 4.36.9.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Livy, 8.9.6

¹⁰⁰⁸ Douglas A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel A Suggested Strategy*, JSNTSS 274 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 178-207; Dennis R. Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 113-163.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Campbell, *Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 178; Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith*, 188.

Judean custom and little exposure to the LXX as a basis for conceptualizing “faith” and built their interpretive lens from their own cultural perspective – one in which they lived.

Campbell correctly notes up to 90 percent of LXX readings represent a social relationship use of faith-making and keeping between parties, and only 2 percent could be translated as belief.¹⁰¹⁰ Additionally, Campbell rightly recognizes that in Philo and Josephus, the term πίστις primarily functioned in fundamental social relationships between two parties, representing both oath or transaction and ongoing relationships based upon faith, at times used simultaneously to intend faith and faithfulness.¹⁰¹¹ This understanding compares quite closely with general Roman culture as demonstrated in the preceding sections.

Given that Campbell explores how Philo and Josephus used “faith” in comparison to Paul, the question of how they, and perhaps other Judeans from Rome, Syria, Egypt, and other provincial areas outside Rome may have understood oath-based faith-swearing in a more socially composite, including a “Roman” manner, is left open for consideration. Of special interest is how the whole social convention of oath, promise, piety, and faith were intertwined in human and divine relationships in Philo and Josephus and broadens how “faith” relationships functioned, including the use of Abraham as a model/motif. What follows is a brief perusal of how Josephus and Philo inter-related faith and oaths in human-divine relationships, and Philo’s use of Abraham as example of oath-sworn faith with God and God’s faith sworn with Abraham, in interaction with Judean and non-Judean audiences.

3.14.1 Judean Faith Initiated by Sworn Oaths – Josephus

Josephus provided numerous examples of faith-swearing by oath. While it might be argued that Josephus “Romanized” his text, the elements of oath-swearing as founding faith occurred in circumstances contemporary with his readers, that if exaggerated or misrepresented, would have destroyed the veracity of his account for Romans or Judeans. As Campbell argues, Josephus’ use of πίστις mirrors social conventions of oath-sworn faith or faithfulness in 77 percent of its occurrences, and concludes that πίστις is perhaps translated

¹⁰¹⁰ Campbell, *Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 181-182.

¹⁰¹¹ Campbell, *Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 179.

“belief” in only 12 percent.¹⁰¹² The dominant use occurs primarily in Greek and Roman situations, often involving Judeans.

In regard to Judean international relations with Alexander and the Ptolemies, Josephus argued that “the people of Jerusalem were most faithful in the observation of oath and covenants,” and that Judeans took oaths to preserve faith (πίστις) with Alexander’s posterity.¹⁰¹³ In this vignette, Josephus portrayed ethnic Judeans keeping faith by oaths, implying these oaths created faith that invoked deity, and involved Judean leadership, including Jerusalem’s elite. This is far more than “political loyalty” as argued by Lindsay, since each situation would have involved invocation of deity as party to the treaties, alliances, and personal relationships between allies.¹⁰¹⁴

In *War*, Sepphoris, unwilling to revolt against Rome, approached Cestius Gallus, the Roman governor of Syria, and “had given their faith to him, and received the security of his right hand.”¹⁰¹⁵ The population of a prominent, ethnically Judean city practised faith-swearing by offering the right hand and giving their oath-sworn faith as was done in Rome and with Romans. Not just Sepphoris’ leadership swore faith in a Roman manner and accepted the faith of Rome in return, but her entire population. Moreover, deity would have been invoked in mutual oath swearing, to create and preserve its sanctity.¹⁰¹⁶

More than just the Judean elite or individual cities practised faith-swearing like or with Romans. During 37 CE the Roman governor Vitellius, present in Jerusalem on the fourth day of Pentecost, received word of Tiberius’ death and Gaius’ becoming emperor. Josephus related that “he obliged the multitude to swear an oath of *devotion* to Caius.”¹⁰¹⁷ This is the same oath swearing practised in Rome at imperial accession to established faith with the new emperor. Vitellius does not threaten force, his legions are not present. Neither is it solely

¹⁰¹² Campbell, *Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 181.

¹⁰¹³ ἐπεγνώκως δὲ τοὺς ἀπο τῶν Ἱεροσολυμῶν περὶ τὴν τῶν ὀρκῶν φυλακὴν καὶ τὰς πίστεις βεβαιωτάτους ὑπάρχοντας ἐξ ὧν ἀπεκρίναντο Ἀλεξάνδρῳ πρεσβευσαμένῳ πρὸς αὐτοὺς μετὰ τὸ κρατῆσαι Δαρείου τῆ μάχῃ, πολλοὺς αὐτῶν εἰς τὰ φρούρια καταλοχίσας καὶ τοῖς Μακεδόσιν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ποίησας ἰσοπολίτας ὄρκους ἔλαβεν παρ’ αὐτῶν, ὅπως τοῖς ἐγγόνιοις τοῦ παραθεμένου τὴν πίστιν διαφυλάξωσιν. Josephus, *Antiquities* 12.8.

¹⁰¹⁴ Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith*, 78-80.

¹⁰¹⁵ “Γάλλῳ πίστεις τε ἔδοσαν καὶ δεξιάς ἔλαβον καὶ παρεδέξαντο φρουράν.” Josephus, *War* 3.31.

¹⁰¹⁶ “...διὰ τὴν πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἐκείνων φιλίαν καὶ ὅτι Κεστίῳ Γάλλῳ τῷ τῆς Συρίας ηγεμονεούντι δεξιάν τε καὶ πίστιν προτείνεϊαν.” Josephus, *Life* 1.30.

¹⁰¹⁷ “ὥρκισεν τὴν πληθὺν ἐπ’ εὐνοίᾳ τῆ Γαίου.” Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.124.

with Jerusalem's Sanhedrin or Roman citizens. It is the multitude attending the feast, including Judeans, both Roman citizens and non-citizens, who swear faith by oath.

Josephus records further treaties made between Rome and Judeans. At least one and possibly more of these decrees are posted on bronze tablets that adorn the Roman temples of Augustus, Julius Caesar, Fides, Concord or others as public pronouncements – likely in Latin as Rome's official language, and possibly in Greek.¹⁰¹⁸ It is further evidence that Judeans were seen and known in Rome at all levels of society as people who made faith in Roman ways and conventions, and lived in honorable relationships with Rome's peoples, including her Judean citizens. From Josephus' accounts, it seems reasonable to conclude that Judeans, from Jerusalem to Rome, were quite familiar with relationships created by sworn oaths of faith, in Greek and Roman contexts. Judeans practised making faith by spoken oaths between parties, the offering or clasping of the right hand, and most likely, the invocation of deities, including God, as witnesses and enforcers of these oaths of faith, as Philo attested.

3.14.2 Judean and Divine Faith Initiated by Sworn Oath – Philo

Philo provided further insight into how promise, oaths, faith, and honor were perceived and practised by Judeans and Romans, especially in consideration of Abraham and God. Campbell helpfully notes that Philo used πίστις as signifier of social relationships in about a third of his usage.¹⁰¹⁹ Additionally, Philo further used πίστις as an overarching virtue which Campbell and Lindsay suggest, and I concur, is best rendered Faith, given its integration of virtue, divine essence, and faith in action.¹⁰²⁰ Philo's construct is similar to the Roman deified personification, yet the difference is a singular attestation to God Most High, and not a range of deified symbolism.

What is neglected by Campbell and Lindsay is consideration of Philo's discussion of God, Faith, and Abraham in *Allegorical Interpretation*, which illuminates his explanation of God's Faith as promise, oath, and faith and God's and Abraham's faithfulness. Philo's Faith

¹⁰¹⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities* 16.162-173 (165).

¹⁰¹⁹ Campbell, *Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 181.

¹⁰²⁰ Philo, *Heres.* 91, 94, 95 in Philo, *Quis rerum divinarum heres, Who is the Heir of Divine Things?*, Vol. 4, F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1932); Philo, *De Abrahamo, On Abraham*, Vol. 6, F.H. Colson (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1935), 268, 270, 273; Philo, *De Praemiis et Poenis, On Rewards and Punishments*, Vol. 8, F.H. Colson (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1939), 31; Campbell, *Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 180; Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith*, 61.

embodied the essence of God's nature, and I suggest God's relationship with humanity, including Abraham.¹⁰²¹ For Philo, Abraham had been faithful in his relationship with God, and God was faithful with Abraham, based upon God's sworn promises as oaths. God had made a promise to Abraham in Gen. 22:16, confirmed as an oath sworn upon himself as authentication of his stated promise, and the future actions which God performed demonstrated his divine Faith/faithfulness.

“He (God) says this, and having confirmed his promise solemnly and by an oath, and by an oath, too, such as could alone become God. For you see that God does not swear by any other being than himself, for there is nothing more powerful than he is; but he swears by himself, because he is the greatest of all things”.... “And it is a proof of his exceeding power, that whatever he says is sure to take place; and this is the most especial characteristic of an oath. So that it would be quite natural to say that all the words of God are oaths confirmed by the accomplishment of the acts to which they relate.”¹⁰²²

Philo argued it was appropriate for God to swear the oath of faith (ὁ ὄρκος πίστεως) upon himself since “the mere words of God are the most sacred and holy of oaths, laws, and institutions.”¹⁰²³ Philo further claimed that “God is the only faithful (πιστός) being,” in regard to oaths, stating that only God is ultimately capable of faithfully honoring what is sworn, because God alone was truly honorable, as God's promises were fulfilled by his actions, ἔργον.¹⁰²⁴ The social conventions in Philo between humanity and deity follow Roman conventions as seen in oath-swearing faith in previous sections. It adds a Roman hue to the interpretive lens in consideration of Philo's Abraham, Romans 4, and their use of Genesis 15.

¹⁰²¹ Philo of Alexandria, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, Charles Duke Yonge, (trans.), (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996, c1993), *Allegorical Interpretation*, 3.203-204.

¹⁰²² εὖ καὶ τὸ ὄρκω βεβαιῶσαι τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν καὶ ὄρκω θεοπρεπεῖ ὄραξ γὰρ ὅτι οὐ καθ' ἑτέρου ὁμνύει θεός, οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτοῦ κρείττον, ἀλλὰ καθ' ἑαυτοῦ, ὅς ἐστι πάντων ἄριστος. Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.203; ὁ ἄν εἶπη γίνεται, ὅπερ ἦν οἰκειότατον ὄρκω· ὡστ' ἀκόλουθον ἄν εἶη λέγειν, ὅτι πάντες οἱ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγοι εἰσὶν ὄρκοι βεβαιούμενοι ἔργων ἀποτελέσμασι., *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.204 ; Greek text from Philo, *The Works of Philo: Greek Text With Morphology*, Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten (eds.), (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2005), *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.203-204; English translation: Philo, in Yonge, (trans.), *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.203-204.

¹⁰²³ ἄλλως τε καὶ οἱ λόγοι τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσὶν ὄρκοι καὶ νόμοι τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ θεσμοὶ ἱεροπρεπέστατοι τεκμήριον. Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, Allegorical Interpretation* 3.204; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.204.

¹⁰²⁴ Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.204-205; Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith*, 58.

In regard to human oaths, Philo clearly linked oath-swearing as an essential element of having or making faith with another person or with God. In regard to deliverables in professional and personal agreements, Philo stated, “for this reason it is most appropriate to state an oath, being the most certain sign of faith, comprehending also the testimony of God: for as he who swears, calls God to be a witness to a matter concerning which a question is raised...”¹⁰²⁵

Philo remarked that oaths and resultant faith-making were fully binding if guaranteed with the name of God. “Now it is for the sake of obtaining *faith* (πιστεύω) that those men who are *unfaithful* (ἀπιστέω) have recourse to an oath, (ὄρκος). But *God’s words are faithful* (πιστός); so that, as far as certainty goes, his words do in no respect differ from oaths, ὄρκος. And it happens, indeed, that our opinions are confirmed by an oath; but that an oath itself is confirmed by the addition of the name of God. God, therefore, does not become faithful (πιστός) because of an oath (ὄρκος), but even an oath is confirmed by God (ἀλλὰ δι’ αὐτὸν καὶ ὁ ὄρκος βέβαιος).”¹⁰²⁶

For Philo, the participation of God in oath-swearing brought inviolacy to the faith being made. “For an oath is the calling of God to give his testimony concerning the matters which are in doubt; and it is a most impious thing to invoke God to be witness to a lie.”¹⁰²⁷ These concepts shape interpretation of Philo’s citation of Gen. 15:6 in *Allegorical Interpretation*, which concluded that Abraham’s oath-formed faith relationship with God was sworn by and upon God himself, and that God was faithful in what he promised to Abraham.

“It is best, therefore, to *have faith with God*, and not in uncertain reasonings, or unsure conjectures. ‘Abraham *had faith with the Lord*, and it was counted to him for righteousness.’”¹⁰²⁸ Again we have fertile ground for consideration of Romans 4 and its

¹⁰²⁵ διὰ τοῦθ’ ὄρκος ὠνομάσθη προσφύεστατα τὸ πίστεως βεβαιοτάτης σύμβολον μαρτυρίαν θεοῦ περιεχούσης ὡς γὰρ ὁ ὄμνυς τῶν ἀμφισβητουμένων καλεῖ θεὸν μάρτυρα, ἐπ’ οὐδενὶ οὕτως ἔστιν εὐορκῆσαι. Greek text: Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, De plantatione, Concerning Noah’s Work as a Planter*, 82; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Concerning Noah’s Work as a Planter*, 82.

¹⁰²⁶ Greek Text: Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, The Sacrifices of Abel and Cain*, 93; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *The Sacrifices of Abel and Cain*, 93.

¹⁰²⁷ μαρτυρία γὰρ ἔστι θεοῦ περὶ πραγμάτων ἀμφισβητουμένων ὄρκος μάρτυρα δὲ καλεῖν ἐπὶ ψεύδει θεὸν ἀνοσιώτατον ἴθι. Greek text: Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, On the Decalogue*, 86; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *On the Decalogue*, 86.

¹⁰²⁸ ἄριστον οὖν τῷ θεῷ πεπιστευκέναι καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἀσαφέσι λογισμοῖς καὶ ταῖς ἀβεβαίαις εἰκασίαις Ἀβραάμ γε τοι ἐπίστευσε τῷ θεῷ, καὶ δίκαιος ἐνομήσθη. Greek text: Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, Allegorical Interpretation* 3.228; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Allegorical Interpretation*, 3.228.

utilization of Abraham as an example of faith-making with God, who was the active partner in promised faithfulness.

As noted, Philo viewed direct or indirect breach of an oath as impiety caused by perjuring God, similar to general Roman conceptualization. The act left the individual open to the punishment of God, which Philo concluded was most severe, “for God shows no mercy to men who commit such impiety;” God left them “forever unpurified,” a state, in some contemporary Judean contexts, synonymous with condemnation to eternal destruction.¹⁰²⁹

Here Philo and Cicero are close in intent, “Sacrilege which cannot be expiated shall be held to be impiously committed....”¹⁰³⁰ For Cicero, sacrilege involved an impious breach of relationship with deity. Philo intensifies the level of unfaithfulness when he termed someone who would call upon God to witness an “unjust oath” a “faithless enemy.” He argued that God, “merciful by nature,” would not release such a person so “thoroughly defiled and infamous from guilt” from impiety, perjury and contempt toward the name of God.¹⁰³¹ Here Philo provides an interesting contrast to Romans 5:6-11.

Philo further allegorized that “faith with God,” was the only true good, asserting that faith (πίστις) was “queen of all the virtues,” similarly to Cicero’s Roman conventions of virtue.¹⁰³² Philo further held that faith with God was based upon promise, and expectant hope that accepted the promise as future reality in an oathed transaction of faith with God.¹⁰³³ Philo also held that God was honored by human intimacy achieved through piety (εὐσέβεια) and faith (πίστις), which Philo supported by rough citation, “For Abraham also, when he had faith (πιστεύω) drew near to God.”¹⁰³⁴

Finally, Philo claimed that God honored the faith of Abraham, and (God) gave him “faith” in return, “namely a confirmation by an oath of the gifts which he (God) had promised him

¹⁰²⁹ θεῶ μὲν αἱ ἀνωτάτω καὶ μέγιστα ἴλεως γὰρ οὐ γίνεται τοῖς οὕτως ἀσεβοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ μένειν εἰς αἰὶ δυσκαθάρτους, Greek text: Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, Special Laws II*, 26-27; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Special Laws II*, 26-27.

¹⁰³⁰ *Sacrum commissum, quod neque expiari poterit, impie commissum esto.* Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.9.22.

¹⁰³¹ Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Special Laws*, 253-254.

¹⁰³² Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Abraham* 270.

¹⁰³³ Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *On the Migration of Abraham*, 43-44; Gen. 15:5-6; Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith*, 61-62.

¹⁰³⁴ Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *On Migration* 131-132; Gen. 18:23.

(Abraham).”¹⁰³⁵ That Philo could transfer an understanding of oath-based faith associated with Abraham’s actions into a Roman context is apparent in his remarks that an individual should not refuse to enter into oaths “well knowing that he will have his name inscribed on pillars among those who are faithful to their oaths.”¹⁰³⁶ Roman conventions of oath-sworn faith entailed their inscription on bronze plates, displayed on temple pillars to make the oath and its faithful honoring publicly known, as practised in Rome’s temples of Faith, and other locations in the city and empire. Philo’s use of faith in these texts and contextually in regard to Abraham, embody the elements of not only presumed Judean social conventions of faith, but the faith-swearing and faith-keeping of his contemporary Roman social environment.

3.15 The Social Conventions of Faith in Rome: Some Conclusions

As argued in this chapter, faith was created by sworn oath based upon promises made between parties in the Roman world, a transaction and relationship witnessed by others. Fulfillment of oathed promises demonstrated faith-lived relationships as the basis of honor. Faith-based social conventions were utilized across the spectrum of Roman society and circumstances. That this conceptualization of faith was known or practised by Judeans as well as Greeks or Romans is clear from Josephus and Philo. That promise or oath-based faith was the convention of relationship between humanity and God is apparent through Philo’s application of oath-sworn faith and promise fulfillment in action as the basis of relationship between God and Abraham, and as a basis for faith-making in Judean and non-Judean contexts.

3.15.1 Faith is not Primarily Belief

As has been suggested in this chapter, by Campbell and other scholars, there is a difference between belief and faith in the first century.¹⁰³⁷ As Ando notes, Roman conviction and ritual were not codified and did not correspond to an “act of faith” in a “Christian sense”. However, his concept of “Christian sense” is based on the generally presumed Christian concept that “faith” means “belief,” which Ando notes was, in Roman thought, “an inferior form of

¹⁰³⁵ ὅς τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν πίστεως ἀγάμενος τὸν ἄνδρα πίστιν ἀντιδίδωσιν αὐτῷ, τὴν δι’ ὄρκου βεβαίωσιν ὧν ὑπέσχετο δωρεῶν, οὐκέτι μόνον ὡς ἀνθρώπῳ θεός, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς φίλος γνωρίμῳ διαλεγόμενος φησὶ γὰρ “κατ’ ἑμαυτοῦ ὥμοσα”, παρ’ ᾧ ὁ λόγος ὄρκος ἐστίν. Greek Text: Philo, *Greek Text With Morphology, Abraham 273*; English translation: Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *Abraham 273*.

¹⁰³⁶ Philo, in Yonge (trans.), *On Dreams*, 1.13.

¹⁰³⁷ Campbell, *Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 178-182.

knowledge.”¹⁰³⁸ This is a substantially different position than much of Christian theology, which presumes that faith equals belief, of which Douglas Campbell provides an example.¹⁰³⁹

Smith’s research supports Ando’s conclusion. Smith points out that even as late as the 4th century, faith was not perceived as “belief,” and concludes that the conceptualization of faith *primarily as “belief”* develops later.¹⁰⁴⁰ For Smith, a Christian “swore an oath of allegiance to God and Christ, and was beholden to remain faithful to that oath.”¹⁰⁴¹ Given this, the classical dynamic of faith, leans more to transactional and relational alignment of the heart or the way one’s life was lived out in faithfulness to an oath-based covenant.¹⁰⁴²

What emerges from this brief overview is that the predominant Greek and Latin expression of Roman *fides* was not primarily “belief” or “trust” in Roman interpersonal, social, economic, political, or religious contexts. Use of πίστις in Philo and Josephus leaned more towards the social conventions of sworn faith, not belief, an observation supported by LXX’s use of πίστις. Approximately 70 to 90 percent of LXX uses referred to social relationships. Campbell concludes, and I concur, given its scattered use, that “the LXX is not really that interested in *pistis*.”¹⁰⁴³ Furthermore, as demonstrated by Latin and Greek understanding and writings on Roman life and events, many semantic aspects of faith termed πίστις or *fides* were similar in sociolect and application. From this I suggest that expression of “faith” envelops two conceptual conventions in faith-based relationships.

The first is faith as a singular transaction of covenant, oath, or obligation. Human and divine relationships were expressed in business, social, and cultural transactional terms that carried a sacred element as well as one of honor. Faith described transactions of oath-made obligation and commitment, based upon sworn promise fulfillment. Second, the term faith also expressed faithfulness, the ongoing recognition and honoring of transactional obligations into which one entered. Faithfulness was ongoing heartfelt alignment of parties evident in acts that met the sworn obligations, which one fulfilled under hardship or even death.

¹⁰³⁸ Ando, ‘Introduction: Religion, Law and Knowledge’, 10-11, 11 nn. 30, 34.

¹⁰³⁹ Douglas A. Campbell, ‘The Meaning of Faith in Paul’s Gospel’ in *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel: A Suggested Strategy* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 178-207, (182-184).

¹⁰⁴⁰ Smith, *Faith and Belief*, 69-127; 74; 250-252 nn 16-17; 115-118.

¹⁰⁴¹ Smith, *Faith and Belief*: 250, n. 16.

¹⁰⁴² Smith, *Faith and Belief*: 251, n. 17.

¹⁰⁴³ Campbell, *Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 181-182.

Given this section's findings, I suggest Campbell, Ando, and Smith are correct in asserting that the modern Christian theological assumption that "faith" primarily means "belief" misses the richness of the Roman practice of faith which formed the interpretive context for the hearers of the epistle of Romans. What underlies the reception of Romans lies closer to the secular ethnic semantics of daily Roman and Judean life in Rome, applied to a relationship with Jesus Christ and one another. Faith, honor, piety, and righteousness formed an interconnected matrix of transaction and relationship for human and divine interaction.

The ancients used "faith" or πίστις- terminology in social relations, that are translated into English, such as trust, loyalty, reliability, fidelity, or belief. This does not mean that these aspects were included in the behaviors and intentions, thought and emotions of those who used "faith" terminology in the past in the same way. While use of these terms may be helpful for translation into English, and are often used in translation of the Roman epistle, the full first-century social convention of faith-making and faith-keeping may be masked by their use in interpretation.¹⁰⁴⁴

Finally meeting obligations of faith was the way of Roman honor. Honor, faith, piety, and righteousness commingled in expression and practice of human relations, and also with deities. It is this contextual "way of life" within which Rome's Christ-followers were immersed, no matter their ethnicity, making this context pertinent to the audience of Paul's epistle to Rome. To make this clearer, it is helpful to consider the opposite of an honor-based or faith-based existence, that of dishonor. Unfortunately, the exploration of dishonor, unfaithfulness, impiety, and unrighteousness falls outside the scope of this work.

3.16 Conclusion: Honor, Piety, Faith, Faithfulness, and Righteousness: Core Values of being Roman

In summary, this chapter has argued that ethnic negotiation in Rome was shaped by its social conventions and sociolect were based in its ethnic semantics, shaped by its multi-ethnic environment. Rome's social language and ethnic semantics are often ignored in the interpretation of the letter to Rome. The cosmopolis's social conventions and language were

¹⁰⁴⁴ Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 179-181, 189-190.

shaped by its predominant ethnic identity – that of being Roman. Thus, Rome’s social conventions were a dominant influence shaping the experience and social language of the audience recipients of the epistle to the Romans.

To demonstrate this argument, this chapter explored a narrow segment of Rome’s social conventions and language that intersected with that of the key terminology of the epistle of Romans. These included honor, faith, piety and righteousness, and their inter-relationships in use and social interaction in Rome’s daily life.

It has shown that one’s ethnic or social position in first-century Rome was substantially negotiated by one’s honor. Gaining and maintaining honor was core to Roman life, from elites to slaves, and shaped human and divine relationships. Claims, counter-claims, actions, characteristics, descriptions, and behaviors of honor propelled individuals and ethnicities in adjusting relations with one another, and within themselves.

One aspect of being honorable was making faith by oath-swearing, which entailed making promises and oaths in which deities were participants, or in relations with the deities. The gods guarded the sanctity of oaths and faith. Faith was a foundational convention which substantially defined honor. Faith and honor towards the gods, was expressed through piety. Not only Romans and Greeks, but Judeans understood and participated in the social conventions of making and keeping faith oath-sworn promises as evident through a brief examination of Josephus and Philo, including their applications similar to those in the Roman world, and in the Roman epistle.

Righteousness was descriptive of continuing a faith-founded relationship with another party, including the gods. Ongoing expression of righteousness as right relationship was the foundation of piety with deity. Righteousness and piety were acted out through conventions of faith-making and faith-keeping. These descriptors and behaviors were social conventions used in negotiating individual, communal, or ethnic characterizations and status. They form the sociolect, semantics, and way of life that shaped the audience hearing Romans read in Rome. Chapter 4 will apply this constructed matrix of ethnic identity negotiation and Roman sociolect sampled in this chapter to a Christ-following audience in Rome.

Reading Romans in Rome

CHAPTER 4:

Christ-Follower Ethnic Negotiation and Rome's Sociolect as Audience Reception Lens in Romans 1:1-17

4.1 Chapters 1-3: Integrating the Framework of Ethnicity and Sociolect

Thus far, the thesis has examined three issues in chapters 1-3.

4.1.1 Chapter 1: How Greeks and Romans Formed and Negotiated Ethnic Identity

The first chapter considered how Greeks and Romans created ethnic identity composites, drawn from other groups, and constructed their identities within the Greco-Roman world. The chapter examined how Greeks engaged in negotiation of ethnic superiority claims and were influenced by other ethnicities. It briefly examined how Greek ethnic dominance was propagated through Hellenization. This interaction was portrayed in Appendix 1.1.

Next, the chapter portrayed how Rome similarly developed a composite ethnic identity, and claimed superiority for its way of life in comparison to other groups, despite adaptation and adoption of Hellenistic and other ethnicities' aspects. This ethnic negotiation was depicted in Appendix 1.2. Rome's multi-ethnic populace debated and negotiated ethnic preeminence by assimilation, adaptation, acculturation or resistance of aspects of competing ways of life, within a constantly changing environment impacted by actions, events, and policies within the city and across the empire, depicted in Appendix 1.3.

Rome's ethnic characteristics were imprinted throughout the empire by Romanization, the adaptation or adoption of the Roman social conventions and ways of life. Rome's values, culture, and social convention were well known from her diaspora, similar to Greek or Judean settlement across the Mediterranean world.¹⁰⁴⁵ Both Greek and Roman influences and dominance claims shaped listener perceptions when the epistle to Rome was read.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Nicholas Purcell, 'Romans in the Roman World,' 85-105.

4.1.2 Chapter 2: Judean and Egyptian Ethnic Interaction within Rome, 64 BCE to 57 CE

The second chapter added a new matrix element, which demonstrated inter-ethnic rivalry, negotiation, and identity construction in Rome by Romans, Judeans, and Egyptians, from 64 BCE to approximately 57 CE. Chapter 2 and Appendices 2 and 3 challenged Wiefel's hypothesis by historically tracing inter-ethnic relations of Judean and Egyptian ways of life within the Roman ethnic cultural context. Roman and Greek assimilation, acculturation, and adaptation of Judean and Egyptian cultural characteristics have been termed Judeanization and Egyptianization in this research.¹⁰⁴⁶ In turn, the chapter argued that Judeans and Egyptians were also Romanized as residents of Rome.

Chapter 2 not only addressed the question, "Who does what with ethnicity and why?" but also, "Why is it so difficult to imagine that someone can cluster two or three ethnic identities in his or her world?"¹⁰⁴⁷ The chapter demonstrates that Rome's multiethnic and multicultural identities were not clearly delineated, and reflect an ongoing process of construction, negotiation, and prioritization within and between multiple ethnic identities, including Judeans. Both Judeans and Egyptians in Rome assimilated, acculturated, adapted and resisted Roman practice and concepts in their sociolect and ethnic experience, often in competition with one another. For each ethnicity, there was a constant dynamic reorganization of their "authentic" cultural identity, a negotiation of who had the right to define their ethnic identity, and who was "allowed" to be that ethnicity as illustrated by Appendix 1.3. The results of chapters 1 & 2 are that Romanization, Hellenization, Egyptianization, and Judeanization simultaneously occurred to varying degrees in Rome from 63 BCE through the mid-50s CE.

The chapter's conclusion rejects the common assumption that Rome was anti-Semitic as postulated in Wiefel's hypothesis. Specific events, such as those of 19, 41, and 49 CE were not undertaken as anti-Judean actions driven by presumed Roman hatred. Each situation was more complex when placed within the broader scope of Roman and non-Roman ethnic relations, and pressures driving change in Rome's demographic, economic, political, and religious circumstances. The presumed eviction of all Judeans or Judean Christ-followers

¹⁰⁴⁶ The concepts of assimilation and acculturation are drawn from Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 92-98.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Tschernokoshewa, 'Blending worlds,' 144, 146.

from Rome in 49 was historically, logistically, and legally unlikely. Judean Christ-followers were not banished en masse and remained resident and in ethnic debate with other Christ-followers until the epistle's receipt.

4.1.3 Chapter 3: Ethnic Negotiation Expressed through Rome's Social Conventions

Chapter 3 examined the social language or sociolect of Roman ethnicity that aligned with key words or ideas of the Roman epistle. It demonstrated that Rome's culture was a social system of honor founded on oath-sworn faith and faithfulness – key to maintaining righteousness, and piety across the spectrum of Roman life. These social conventions and sociolect expressed core elements of Rome's way of life, and the interaction of humanity and deity within this cultural context. It demonstrated that Judeans in Rome possibly utilized these conventions and semantics, as deduced from Philo's and Josephus' use of the social conventions of oaths and faith in human and divine relationships, and their immersion in Rome's culture.

Thus, the first three chapters shape a composite-matrix lens through which an audience might have heard Romans read in Rome, in interaction with its multiple ways of life as depicted in Appendix 1.4. This chapter uses this interpretive framework to address the question: "To what extent can Romans be heard and understood by a readership in Rome within its religio-economic, socio-political, and ethnic context, especially by non-Judeans?"

4.2 Introduction: Reading Romans by "Sitting in the Audience"

Interpretation of Romans has generally fallen into two general approaches normative for most commentators. This section adds a new approach to interpret the samples of Romans addressed in this chapter, based upon the thesis argued thus far.

4.2.1 Reading Romans: Normative Alternatives

Consideration of audience reception of Romans usually traces authorial intent. It presumes the audience interpreted the epistle from the same "location" or perspective as the author, placing interpretive weight on the writer's thought. This normative framework for Romans is often primarily shaped by Judean/Hebrew and Greek influence to comprehend and interpret

Paul's intended meaning.¹⁰⁴⁸ A second approach has been discourse analysis and examination of the rhetoric of Romans. Heil's helpful reader-response commentary comes closest to this thesis, yet primarily traces reader reaction to argumentation, rhetoric, and discourse of the writer, which is a substantially different path than that of this chapter.¹⁰⁴⁹

Both approaches neglect the potentially rich environment of ethnic reception and semantic nuances resonant from the audience perspective, especially for non-Judeans and others Romanized by the city's cultural context and its social conventions. From this "location" a range of outcomes become possible that are primarily author-independent, but within the purview of recipient listeners or readers.

4.2.2 Reading Romans: A First Reader-Listener Perspective

A first reader-listener immersed in Rome's *mos maiorum*, would have interpreted the epistle's contents in relation to events and circumstances influenced and shaped by their locale and life in Rome. Stuhlmacher's perspective strengthens imagery of Romans passed from house church to house church, or group to group to be read aloud.¹⁰⁵⁰ Each location and group may have had different dynamics that impacted audience reception and interpretation.

"Hearing" the epistle read while "sitting in the audience," and primarily with non-Judean Christ-following listeners focuses the letter's interpretation on hearing its reading, not just from the usually presumed "location" of Judean Christ-followers, but also the oft-neglected non-Judean Christ-followers. This chapter demonstrates how Romans was plausibly heard by non-Judeans not necessarily immersed in the nuances of the LXX often presumed resonant for Judean Christ-followers by commentators on Romans.

This listening location of non-Judean Christ-followers will be tested by focus upon two aspects of the epistle. First is the ethnic negotiation in Romans that presented its hearers with an approach to resolution of ethnic rivalry and competition for social superiority within

¹⁰⁴⁸ For example, Watson's recent and important work on faith does not contain reference to Greco-Roman sources in regard to the hermeneutics of faith, other than Philo and Josephus, who debatedly would be considered Greco-Roman. Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

¹⁰⁴⁹ John Paul Heil, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Reader-Response Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1987, repr. 2002), 1.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Stuhlmacher, *Romans: A Commentary*, Scott J. Hafemann (trans.), (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1989, 1994), 18-19.

Rome's Christ-following community. This reception is filtered through Rome's Judean and non-Judean social conventions that shaped human relations – of how relationships were formed and lived between people of different ethnicities.

Second, is consideration of the daily language, of honor, faith, piety, and righteousness that structured human and divine relationships within Rome's context and social conventions for Judeans and non-Judeans – the sociolect of how the letter and its theology were shaped by ethnic understandings, and the cultural context of the hearers.

This method of exegetical listening follows the epistle's narrative flow as initially presented and plausibly heard within Rome. It does not presume certain verses or chapters should be 'blocked' together, but that the presentation was an ongoing shifting ebb and flow through the epistle, drawing on what was previously stated to build arguments and conclusions revealed later in the letter.

Assessing the entirety of Romans falls outside the scope of this dissertation, as does consideration of other social conventions such as how law and faith related in this matrix. Thus this chapter considers a narrow set of aspects of Romans 1:1-17 as a test case of Roman socio-contextual audience reception primarily as non-Judeans and Romans.

4.3 Hearing Romans Read: Multi-ethnic Listening for Honor and Faith Claims

In Romans 1:1-17, the interlaced matrix of human and divine relationships is expressed through reciprocated obligation and gifting, faith, righteousness, and honor. One strand is the author's self-proclaimed honor expected to be recognized by the letter's listeners. On the other hand, the author honors his listeners, in hopes that honoring them will create willing obligation in response to the gifts of instruction he provides his audience in Rome, first through his correspondence, and later by his planned presence.

Another strand is the audience's ethnic segmentation. The initial authorial segmentation becomes a basis for negotiation of their honor and status in relation to one another, ethnically, individually and in relation to God. This ethnic negotiation is expressed through Rome's social language and conventions. Honor, faith, promise, piety, and righteousness are

only a sample of the conceptual language heard by the audience in terms of life lived in Rome's environs and in relation to God.

4.3.1 *Romans 1:1: Authorial Kinship and Honor Claims*

The author is immediately self-identified as Paul. The use of a known Roman *cognomen* marked the honor of citizenship and placed the writer not only in the Diaspora as noted by Dunn, but as one linked with those of Roman citizenship being addressed in Rome. "Paul" instead of "Saul," linked the author with his hearers by using a name associated with Roman experience.¹⁰⁵¹ Another of the same *familia cognomen*, L. Sergius Paulus of Pisidian Antioch, potentially a member of the *familia* which bestowed the author's inherited citizenship, was a senator and resident of Rome before becoming pro-consul of Cyprus. His residence in Rome was likely still owned by his family when this epistle was read.¹⁰⁵² Thus self-identification in Romans 1:1 placed the writer, from the listener perspective, among those honored by being Romans, and in potential friendship or "kinship" with a Roman elite family. For Judean and non-Judean listeners, it was a recognized honor claim that marked the writer's place among the recipients.

4.3.2 *Romans 1:2: Prophetic Faith-Promise Fulfilled*

The audience hears no pause in presentation, but listens to an unfolding of the 'good news of God,' a terminological epitome of Jesus, 'which he (God) promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy writings.'¹⁰⁵³

4.3.2.1 *Romans 1:2: Judean-listener Interaction*

That God had "promised beforehand" begins the listener interaction with the sociolect of faith in Romans. It is oft-assumed the text alludes to Judean prophets and the Septuagint

¹⁰⁵¹ Paul is portrayed as using "Saul" in Jerusalem and prior to Acts 13:9, but as Paul after his meeting with proconsul Sergius Paulus in Paphos in Acts 13:6-12, and thereafter except in presumed self-reference in Acts 22:7,13, 26:14. Additionally Paul claims citizenship and citizens rights in Acts 16:37-39; James D.G. Dunn, *Word Biblical Commentary: Romans 1-8, Vol. 38a*, (Dallas: Word, 2002), 6; Colin Hemer, 'The Name of Paul,' *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985), 179-183; H.R. Balz & G. Schneider, 'Παῦλος' in *The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament (EDNT)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990-1993), Vol. 3, 59.

¹⁰⁵² Acts 13:7, 12; Barbara Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 112.

¹⁰⁵³ "Christ is not the author of the gospel; ...he is its decisive content." Käsemann, *Romans*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley (trans.), (London: SCM Press, 1980), 10.

which foretold God’s “good news.” Divine actions pronounced in advance by deity similar to the divine announcement in Isaiah 45:21 was a familiar motif to ethnic Judean listeners, or those familiar with the LXX.

4.3.2.2 Romans 1:2: Non-Judean-listener Interaction

While the social convention of divine promise-making was familiar to ethnic Judeans, it was an element of faith-making, and promise fulfillment that was a core component of faithfulness – immediately recognized by Judeans and non-Judeans alike as an aspect of Rome’s socio-cultural conventions of faith. As described in chapters 3.4, 3.9 and 1.2.4.8, promise-making and promise-fulfillment, and divine prophetic fulfillment were core elements of oathed faith-swearing, which also involved a deity in covenant-making in the Roman experience.

4.3.3 Romans 1:3: Royal Son of David – Judean Honor

Romans 1:3 continued without break to ensure the hearers recognized the preceding and following are descriptive and attributive of Jesus Christ as the “good news.”¹⁰⁵⁴ What God promised in the Holy Scriptures about His Son, was evident in his earthly and divine origins, “who was born of the seed of David in relation to the flesh” and in Romans 1:4, “who was appointed Son-of-God-in-power in relation to the Spirit of holiness.”¹⁰⁵⁵ Both elements are related as parts of God’s promise fulfillment and in Roman contextual terms – as God’s promised faithfulness. That Christ is Son implied God was His Father, who has initiated Christ’s presence, role and function in the world. God as Father placed him comparatively and competitively with Zeus or Jupiter in the Greek and Roman pantheons, an equivalence non-Judeans expressed about the Judean God.¹⁰⁵⁶

¹⁰⁵⁴ Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 57.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Rom. 1:3 NASB; Rom 1:3 NET; for translation of κατὰ as ‘in relation to’ see W. Arndt, F. W. Danker, & W. Bauer, (eds.), *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed.), (*BDAG*), (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1957, 1979, 2000), 513.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion*, 110.

4.3.3.1 Romans 1:3: Judean-listener Interaction

This passage marks the first ethnic reference which directly impacted its hearers. To mark Jesus as a “descendant of David according to the flesh,” linked him with ethnic Judeans among the listeners. Since Jesus was presented in superior terms, of Davidic royal lineage, it positioned those considered Judeans in an elevated status by relation to Jesus through kinship of ethnic origins versus non-Judeans. Ethnic Judean kinship was enhanced because the phrase symbolically and prophetically anticipated Messianic royalty, with potential apocalyptic overtones. It implied the rulership and royal authority of Jesus over ethnic Judeans, and perhaps perceived by some as a Judean dominance claim. Thus, Judean ethnic affinity with Jesus would have been important to Judean listeners marked by their common human heritage and a sense of their ethnically superior status in implied kinship with the divinely ascended Son of God.

4.3.3.2 Romans 1:3: Non-Judean-listener Interaction

This use of ethnic lineage to establish divine rulership claims would not have been unusual to Judeans or non-Judeans in Rome. Both were immersed in the divine, ethnic, and familial lineage claims of Julius Caesar, Augustus and imperial descent from Rome’s royal founders, Aeneas and Romulus, that undergirded the mythic, royal legitimacy of imperial status which surrounded the audience, marked by the Lupercal cavern, Romulus’ hut on the Palatine, Quirinus’ temple on the Quirinal among other imagery of Rome’s foundation history.¹⁰⁵⁷ The “Son of David” imagery would have resonated in similitude to Roman roots linked to the divinely ascended Romulus/Quirinus, or Julius, or Augustus in Roman heritage, as described in chapter 3.4.1.¹⁰⁵⁸

4.3.4 Romans 1:4: Son-of-God-With-Power

Continuing, the audience hears a paired assertion to Jesus’ Judean royal heritage with his divine “appointment” as “Son-of-God-with-power.”

¹⁰⁵⁷ Taylor, *Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, 58-59, 157-159; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.79.11.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Especially Livy 1.16.

4.3.4.1 Romans 1:4: Judean-listener Interaction

If this divine appointment is perceived as Judean honor by Rome's Christ-honoring Judeans, it perhaps was implicitly linked through prophetic interpretation to Ps 2:7, as reused in Acts 13:33, or a reinterpretation of 2 Sam. 7:12-14.¹⁰⁵⁹ If Roman Christ-following Judeans were familiar, though less likely, with the Dead Sea Scrolls, then they might more tenuously recall use of "son of YHWH," if read positively in 4Q 174:10-12, or 4Q 246 as the divine "Son of God."¹⁰⁶⁰

4.3.4.2 Romans 1:4: Non-Judean-listener Interaction:

But for Judean and non-Judean alike in Rome, the use of ὀρισθέντος as descriptive of divine appointment was close in function to Roman coinage, ivories, cups, temples, and literature depicting Augustus granted *imperium*, rulership and power by the divine will of Jupiter as his vice-regent on earth and later, in heaven.¹⁰⁶¹ This overlapping imagery of divine appointment was applied to Nero, by political and prophetic poet, Calpurnius Siculus who penned his *Eclogues* in Rome about 57-58 CE, contemporary literature to the Roman epistle.¹⁰⁶² Calpurnius' poetic political prophecy pronounced widespread peace and rebirth of a new Golden Age, inaugurated by Nero, who received *imperium* from Jupiter. Nero was poeticized as being "the god in disguise."¹⁰⁶³

The use of "spirit of holiness" denoted an aspect characteristic of Roman ethnic and religious conventions.¹⁰⁶⁴ If considered as a characteristic of Christ, in Rom. 1:4, then κατὰ πνεῦμα

¹⁰⁵⁹ Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 47-48, n. 41; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Anchor Bible: Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 235-236.

¹⁰⁶⁰ "He will be called the son of God (ברה די אל יתאמר), and they will call him son of the Most High." 4Q 246, *4Q Aramaic Apocalypse*, in Martínez F. García & E. J. C. Tigchelaar, (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition (translations)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997-1998).

¹⁰⁶¹ J. Rufus Fears, *Princeps a Diis Electus: The Divine Election of the Emperor as a Political Concept at Rome* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1977), 123-129, 205-215.

¹⁰⁶² Calpurnius wrote of the comet that told of Claudius' death and Nero's accession which occurred in 54. The text as divine pronouncement or 'written by a god' is clear in Calpurnius' *First Eclogue* 28-30, see Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, (eds.), *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1996), 281; Calpurnius Siculus, *Minor Latin Poets, I, Publius Syrus, Elegies on Maecenas, Grattius, Calpurnius Siculus, Laus Pisonis, Einsiedeln Eclogues, Aetna*, J.W. Duff and A.M. Duff (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1934).

¹⁰⁶³ Calpurnius, *Fourth Eclogue* 92-94, 142-144.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Arndt, *BDAG*, 513.

ἀγιωσύνης may have been another oblique similarity to the *Genius Augusti*, the Roman imperial “spirit of holiness.” The *Genius Augusti* was the divine guiding spirit of the living and later ascended and deified, Augustus. A mingling of the ever present *genius* or divine spirit and later deified human god would also have created an underlying motif for the Roman Christ-believers. Ovid’s *Fasti* details a libational salute to *lares* and Augustus: “Hail to you! Hail to thee, Father of the Country, Caesar the Good!”¹⁰⁶⁵ A compital altar of 7 BCE refers to the “Genius of the Caesars,” and the *Ara Augusta* from 1 CE which prayerfully addresses the “Genius of Augustus.” In Augustus’ case, his *genius* continued to linger in Rome after his death as divine guide of those who ruled and lived thereafter, an ever-present “spirit of holiness.”¹⁰⁶⁶ Even before his death, the Roman conviction of future Augustan ascent into the heavens was worshipfully inscribed as dedicatory poetry: “...for when time shall demand you as a god, Caesar (Augustus), and you shall return to your seat in heaven, whence you will rule the world...”¹⁰⁶⁷ One must recall that the term god, *divus* had been defined by Varro as eternal gods, so Augustus, as Julius before him were recognized as eternal gods, and had always been so.¹⁰⁶⁸

In this passage, Christ’s power exercised in all three realms was paramount in the Greco-Roman world and core to the superiority of a Christ-follower’s message of salvation. The powerful “good news of God” was a Lord physically raised from the underworld in a glorified body who ascended corporeally into the heavens as eternal Savior. The resurrected “Jesus Christ Our Lord” added supernatural power, force, and legitimacy to the impetus of the letter as a message of divine commission and revelation to all listeners in Rome, no matter their ethnic categorization.¹⁰⁶⁹ Both Judeans and non-Judeans would have found honor in following Jesus Christ in relation to his imperium or power over the realms of human existence.

If we consider competing claims of the deity of Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, or Claudius, or Apollo, Isis, and a host of gods divinely titled ‘Lord,’ then the author is making a competing claim – not only in regard to deity, but also about Christ as Lord and God, previously a living

¹⁰⁶⁵ Ovid, *Fasti* 2.633ff.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 112-113, 140, 146.

¹⁰⁶⁷ *CIL* 10.3757 (Acerrae) = *ILS* 137 with Taylor, *Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, 224; Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 268-269.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, 65-67.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Stephen Westerholm, *Understanding Paul: The Early Christian Worldview of the Letter to the Romans*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1997, 2004), 17-18, 22-23.

Lord on earth and now Lord reigning in the heavens, with power over death, potentially intimating Lord with power over the underworld for some listeners.¹⁰⁷⁰ Christ's residence in the heavens would not have surprised the Roman non-Judean hearers, but that Christ did not dwell in a physical temple on earth, while resident in heavenly places would have been profound, since all gods, including God in Jerusalem, were usually visualized physically and spiritually inhabiting their temples or other locales in addition to placement in the heavens.¹⁰⁷¹

Christ is honored not only in relation to Judean and non-Judean ethnic characterizations, but also comparatively to Rome and her emperors in a competitive and subsumed, yet not an "anti-imperial" sense. The most powerful contemporary language and imagery places Christ within the full range of human and divine context, as Lord of the realms, and in power in the heavens with the Father. The use of "good news," divinely "appointed," "Son of God with power," "Spirit of holiness," and "Lord" was certainly a comparative and competitive description drawn from the imperial and religious sociolect of Rome to give Christ honor through proclamation utilizing the highest values and divine concepts of Roman life – familiar to the listeners.

4.3.5 *Romans 1:5: "Obedience of Faith Among All the Nations"*

Through Romans 1:1-4, the audience heard the author intertwine his personal standing with discussion of Jesus, subtly unfolding his position of honor and authority, as an apostle set apart for the "good news of God." This continued into Romans 1:5. The audience heard no break in presentation, but an immediate assertion that the writer and Roman listeners received grace and apostleship to bring about "the obedience of faith among all the nations on behalf of his (Christ's) name." What the audience hears is a summation of their mutually shared benefaction embodied in Christ and the purpose of their lives with Him.

¹⁰⁷⁰ In comparison, Musurillo suggests the emperor Tiberius is addressed as "Lord of the world, Savior and Benefactor" in the *Gerousia Acta* in Musurillo, *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, 107.

¹⁰⁷¹ Sabine McCormack, 'Loca Sancta' in Clifford Ando, (ed.), *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2003), 252-272, (258).

4.3.5.1 Romans 1:5: Obedience of Faith: Samples of Current Interpretation

How “obedience of faith” should be interpreted has been considerably debated. Käsemann perceives that it relates to the author’s revelation of Christ, and his hearers’ acceptance of salvation, in an eschatological sense. He presumes that when the revelation of Christ is accepted, “a rebellious world submits to its Lord.”¹⁰⁷² Davies helpfully notes that “obedience of faith” brackets Romans as one of the author’s succinctly stated goals, reiterated in Romans 16:26, as an overarching theme.¹⁰⁷³ However, from Davies’ perspective, the emphasis in the phrase is placed upon “obedience” rather than “faith.” Given this, Davies interprets the phrase “the obedience which is of faith”¹⁰⁷⁴ Minear perceives this phrase as the initial point of negotiation and refutation of competition between ethnic groups postulated from Romans 14-15’s “strong” and “weak.”¹⁰⁷⁵ This seems suspect since the introduction or resolution of ethnic competition, nor strong and weak categorizations have yet been heard by the audience.

Keck sees a fusion which ably demonstrates “Paul’s insistence that faith is the obedient response to the gospel with his equal insistence that this faith must be actualized in a new moral life under Christ,” and determines it should be read “the obedience that is faith.”¹⁰⁷⁶ Keck’s view comes close to Cranfield’s “the obedience which consists in faith,” as a genitive of definition.¹⁰⁷⁷ Miller presumes it is an objective genitive, understood as “obedience to God’s faithfulness.”¹⁰⁷⁸ He helps add clarity by noting that obedience and faith are inextricably intertwined, in agreement with Moo.¹⁰⁷⁹ Miller further argues that “obedience” ὑπακοή was not a common term in the NT era, and was popularized through Christian usage. Citing Dunn, he links ὑπακοή to its roots in verb “to hear,” based upon use in the LXX.¹⁰⁸⁰ However, Dunn goes a step further and argues the entire phrase should be understood as

¹⁰⁷² Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley (trans.), (London: SCM Press, 1980, Bungay, Suffolk, UK: Chaucer, 1982), 14-15.

¹⁰⁷³ Glenn N. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans: A Study in Romans 1-4*, JSNTS 39 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990), 25.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 28.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Minear, *Obedience of Faith*, 37-41.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 45-46.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 66-67.

¹⁰⁷⁸ James C. Miller, *The Obedience of Faith, the Eschatological People of God, and the Purpose of Romans*, SBL 177 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 42.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Miller, *The Obedience of Faith*, 45-46; Moo, *Romans*, 52-53.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Miller, *The Obedience of Faith*, 50-51; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 17.

“response of faith,” bringing together both hearing and heeding.¹⁰⁸¹ This comes closer to Roman conceptualization, but perhaps not as Dunn envisioned.

4.3.5.2 Romans 1:5: Obedience of Faith: Sitting in the Audience

As demonstrated in swearing faith with deity in chapter 3.4.2, in living out *acta* as the obligation of sworn faith in 3.9, and the *operae* or *obsequium*, inherent in the oath-sworn faith of Roman freedmen when manumitted as argued in 3.10, Judean and non-Judean Christ-followers would have had solid basis in hearing and responding to promises sworn as the basis of faith-making, and lived out in actions of obligation common in Roman tradition. Response by word and action bends the semantics of “obedience” to convey the concept of ongoing agreeable actions that honorably fulfill obligations of Romanized relationships. In this case, relations initiated by an oath-sworn transaction established continuing association in action and obligation of a relationship of faith. Both Judeans and non-Judeans would have been immersed in this practice as freed persons, and the entire issue of freedmen’s *obsequium* was under legislative discussion in Rome in 56 and 57 CE as noted in chapter 2.7.

In other words, the obedience of faith in Romans 1:5 is honoring the transactional obligation entered into on the basis of sworn faith foundational to a relationship with God. As Wright summarizes it, “This faith is actually the human faithfulness that answers to God’s faithfulness.”¹⁰⁸² Yet, as has been demonstrated, the obedience of faith was a response of actions or doings that correspond to the obligation of faith, deeply engrained into Roman culture, ethnicity, and way of life as *mos maiorum* practised by much of the epistle’s audience, no matter their ethnicity.¹⁰⁸³ Perhaps the Jerusalem Bible comes closest: “the obedience implicit in the virtue of faith.”¹⁰⁸⁴

4.3.5.3 Romans 1:5: Among All the Nations: Current Interpretation

Numerous commentators interpret “ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν” as “among all the Gentiles,” almost insisting there is no other interpretation for the phrase since it was used of foreign

¹⁰⁸¹ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 17.

¹⁰⁸² Wright, *Romans*, 420.

¹⁰⁸³ While Davies does not focus on Greco-Roman understandings, his concepts of the relationship of faith and the “doing” aspects of obedience are insightfully helpful. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 28-30.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Seemingly as a subjective genitive, Romans 1:6 *JB*.

groups in the LXX and presumably based upon later use in Romans.¹⁰⁸⁵ Further argument for this view is garnered from interpretation of “Gentiles” in Galatians.¹⁰⁸⁶ The presumption from Galatians is that in Romans 1:5, the writer seems to be marking his recipients as non-Judeans or “Gentiles” in comparison to Judeans, indicating the letter is written to or for a predominantly non-Judean audience.¹⁰⁸⁷

This position is problematic. First, there is no distinguishment between ethnic groups at this moment in the prologue as most commentators presume. I agree with Esler, that generally the interpretation of ἔθνη as “Gentiles” in Romans 1:5 and later in 1:13 is “seriously flawed.”¹⁰⁸⁸ Esler’s argument nuances the social, religious, and geographic interpretation of ἔθνη by Judeans, noting it would carry negative connotations for Judeans who would perceive in its use a term for “foreigners,” and by implication stating self-proclaimed Judean ethnic superiority.¹⁰⁸⁹ The implication of Esler’s argument in regard to Romans 1:5 is that the author is not excluding the Judean Christ-following portion of the audience resident in Rome, nor is he slighting his non-Judean hearers, but intends more a general concept of “foreigners” with use of ἔθνη.¹⁰⁹⁰ Though it is an improvement, there are weaknesses in Esler’s position. The author has not sent Galatians or Corinthians to influence Roman interpretation of ἔθνη.

4.3.5.4 Romans 1:5: Among All the Nations: Judean and non-Judean-listener Interaction

Since the audience included Judeans and non-Judeans, that ἔθνη would be comprehended as “Gentiles” rather than “nations” or “peoples” in describing specifically non-Judeans seems unlikely. If one was a Judean in the audience, it may have been possible to hear ἔθνη as referring to non-Judeans. However, the idea that ἔθνη primarily represented a unique Judean

¹⁰⁸⁵ Later use of ἔθνη in Rom 11:13, 15:16, and 18 are often cited in these arguments; for example, Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 238.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Galatians 1:15-16, 2:2, 2:7-9.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 17; Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1996), 41; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 238; Keck, *Romans*, 46; Moo, *Romans*, 53-54.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 113.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 113.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 115.

characterization of other ethnicities does not hold, given its use by Greco-Roman authors to describe other nations or peoples, in multi-ethnic contexts.¹⁰⁹¹

A non-Judean in Rome could have as easily interpreted ἔθνη as including Judeans in any ethnic characterization. Moreover, there is a Roman understanding of the concept of the nations or peoples in relation to Rome. In Sallust's *Histories*, in which Rome is called *gentium moderator*, there was a sense of Rome's rulership, and in Cicero's clear statement of her dominance over all peoples, "*victor atque imperator omnium gentium*."¹⁰⁹² Given the Roman perspective, "Gentiles" were the other people they ruled over.

Additionally, the phrase "among all the nations," is a parody on Roman political practice and perceived status, for "Roman faith" was what all nations historically and contemporaneously gave themselves over to in surrender to Rome, and for what Rome and her people claimed and were proclaimed to be reliable in honoring.¹⁰⁹³ The link of Rome and faith in Greek circles was known and announced early, imprinted in Locri's coinage in the third century BCE, bearing personifications of Rhome (*Roma*) and Pistis (*fides*, Faith).¹⁰⁹⁴ If so, the imagery of Faith's manifestation on the Capitoline as described in chapter 3.4.4 lurks behind the writer's language, hardly missed by an audience immersed in the reality and pageant of Roman religious honoring of Faith deified and oaths with other nations.

Thus, the writer is not pointing out any ethnic differentiation at this point in his discourse, nor pointing to his mission as in Galatians, but simply stating the inclusion of all "peoples" or nations as the target of his efforts in regard to the gospel.¹⁰⁹⁵ Scott's detailed assessment of

¹⁰⁹¹ For other people than Egyptians, including Greeks. Diodorus Siculus 1.55.8, 1.55.10, 1.57.5, 1.67.8-11; with comparison to *Hellenes*, Aristotle, *Politics* 1324^b10; Cassius Dio, 36.41.

¹⁰⁹² "master of nations," Sallust, *Histories*, *Oratio Lepidi* 11; "conqueror and lord of all nations/peoples" in Sallust, *Orations and Letters from the Histories*, J.C. Rolfe (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1921); Cicero, *Philippics* 14.32, in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Orations, Philippics*, Walter C.A. Ker (trans.), *LCL* (London, Harvard University, 1926); Cicero, *De Domo* 90; A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 438-439.

¹⁰⁹³ "I have previously stated what this phrase (*dedere se in fidem*) means, but it is here necessary to remind my readers briefly of its significance. Those who thus commit themselves to the faith of Rome surrender in the first place the whole of their territory and the cities in it, next all the inhabitants of the land and the towns, male and female, likewise all rivers, harbours, temples, tombs, so that the result is that the Romans enter into possession of everything and those who surrender remain in possession of absolutely nothing. Shortly after this surrender had been made by the Carthaginians they were called into the senate, where the praetor conveyed to them the decision of the senate, that as they had been well advised, the senate granted freedom and their laws, besides their whole territory and all other possessions both public and private." Polybius 36.4.1-4.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Mellor, 'Graecia Capta', 89.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Gal. 1:16, 2:2, 8-9; John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM, 1989, repr. 1997), 64.

Judean and the authors' use of ἔθνη lends support to this position.¹⁰⁹⁶ As a result, “among all the nations” seems more representative of efforts to include all listeners without creating early ethnic tension by intending “Gentiles” in Romans 1:5. Thus, the phrase would have heightened the honor of listeners as members of Rome’s populace drawn from the nations and peoples of the world, and as Romans honored throughout the world – in this case in a faith relationship in regards to the activity of God evident in Jesus Christ.

That the author links this activity “among all the nations” to “on behalf of his name” reaffirms the imperial similitude of Christ’s honor crafted in Romans 1:1-4.¹⁰⁹⁷ Yet, mention of “on behalf of his name” intimates the role of divine names as foundational element in the creation and demonstration of faith. Philodemus’ *On Piety* depicts the name of a deity as an element of piously demonstrating faith, “...and at the festivals most of all, with purpose he (Epicurus) progresses for the sake of the name of (the divinity or the god), always upon his lips, to have πίστις, faith more intensely to embrace...”¹⁰⁹⁸ The concept of the writer proclaiming Christ’s name, stated in 1:4, among the nations with Philodemus’ piety as audience perspective may have demonstrated the intense zeal of the author’s faith in relation to Christ as Lord.

4.3.6 Romans 1:6: Called to Belong to Jesus Christ

Both Judean and non-Judean listeners were included as living among the nations in 1:6, in continuation of the thought in 1:5. It is not a disparaging statement singularly directed to Gentile converts since the reading was heard by all in the audience. In actuality, their inclusion among the “nations” was divine conferral of honor.¹⁰⁹⁹ If the audience in Rome are also among “the called” of Jesus Christ or as Barrett interprets it “Jesus Christ’s, by divine call” among the nations, then they are honored, similarly to the writer being called by the divine choice of God and Christ in Romans 1:1.¹¹⁰⁰ Since the recipients reside in Rome, and

¹⁰⁹⁶ J.M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul’s Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians*, WUNT 84, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), 57-134.

¹⁰⁹⁷ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ.

¹⁰⁹⁸ ἐν δεξιῇ ταῖς ἑορταῖς μάλιστα εἰς ἐπίνοιαν αὐτῆς βαδίζοντα διὰ τὸ τοῦνομα πάντα ἀναστόμ’ ἔχειν πίστει σφοδρότερως κατασχεῖν, Philodemus, *On Piety*, 27.765-772; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 158-159, 406-408.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Grant R. Osborne, *Romans*, Grant R. Osborne, D. Stuart Briscoe, Haddon Robinson (eds.), (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 33.

¹¹⁰⁰ C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1962), 22.

Rome was considered one of the ἔθνη, then the honor offered is that the writer has been led to address them as well, included in other nations or ethnicities called by Christ.

For Judeans resident in Rome, perhaps the closest conceptualization in Judean tradition is the “Called of God” as used in Qumran sectarian documents.¹¹⁰¹ However, Rome was rich with examples of claimed divine calling of Rome’s leaders, emperors and the Roman people. One imperial example in stone of divine calling and fulfillment was visible in the statuary and temple of the Forum of Augustus, in which 108 predecessors and imperial ancestors of Augustus decorated its environs to demonstrate their and his divine calling and to substantiate Rome’s superiority.¹¹⁰² The traditional perspective was that Romans were the elect of Jupiter, given *imperium* by the will of the gods due to Roman piety. “We have excelled every race and nation in piety (*pietas*), in respect for religious matters (*religio*), and in that singular wisdom which recognizes that everything is ruled and controlled by the will of the gods.”¹¹⁰³ The will of the gods was clear for Rome, divinely substantiated by Jupiter’s command, “I have given them (the Romans) empire without end.”¹¹⁰⁴

Thus, the calling of the listeners was based upon divine favor apparent in divine action and the sponsorship of God evident in Christ. This phrase plays upon their context in which divine calling was a foundation of relation of peoples and deities, as apparent in the presumed divine calling of the people of Rome, as well as the interpretive lens of Judeanism and the LXX. The ethnic implication is that the writer has continued to apply the theme of superior honor status to all listeners through an allusion to their divine choice in relation to Jesus Christ, parallel to the writer being personally being called by God.¹¹⁰⁵

4.3.7 Romans 1:7: *Beloved of God, Called Saints.*

The prologue does not break, but continues to grant listeners honor and status by means of a doublet continued from the previous verse. The hearers’ recognition as part of those “called by Jesus Christ” in Romans 1:6 is coupled with “to all those in Rome beloved of God, called saints” in 1:7.

¹¹⁰¹ 1QM 3.2, 1QM 4.9-11, CD 2.11, God calling men by name in CD 4.3f; Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 69.

¹¹⁰² David Magie, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, with an English Translation by David Magie, LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1921-1932), 235.

¹¹⁰³ Cicero, *De Haruspicum Responsis, On the Reply of the Haruspices* 19; Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 7.

¹¹⁰⁴ Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.279.

¹¹⁰⁵ Keck, *Romans*, 46.

For Judeans, perhaps the honor of being “beloved of God,” was heard as a term of endearment and sonship drawn from the LXX.¹¹⁰⁶ Yet to be the “beloved of God” would not be a new concept to listeners unfamiliar with the Psalms and more familiar with Cicero and other Greco-Roman commentators as noted by Dunn.¹¹⁰⁷

4.3.7.1 Romans 1:7: Beloved of God: Non-Judean-listeners Interaction

The concept of people being called or beloved by the gods was not foreign to Rome’s concepts of human and divine relations. In *De Natura Deorum*, Cicero narrated that “while asserting the supreme goodness and excellence of the divine nature, he (Epicurus) yet denies to god the attribute of benevolence, that is to say, he does away with that which is the most essential element of supreme goodness and excellence. For what can be better or more excellent than kindness and beneficence? Make out God to be devoid of either, and you make him devoid of all love, affection, or esteem for any other being, human or divine.”¹¹⁰⁸ Cicero’s point is that divine benefaction or being beloved by deity involved their interest and interaction with human affairs.¹¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, Cicero expanded the concept of love, to include friendship stating, “There is something attractive in the very sound of the word ‘love’ from which the Latin term for friendship is derived.”¹¹¹⁰ In defending how love-based friendship functioned, he commented, “but affection and friendship between men is disinterested; how much more so therefore is that of the gods, who, although in need of nothing, yet both love each other and care for the interests of men.”¹¹¹¹

Cicero’s conceptualization of being beloved by deity was not unique. As noted in Appendix 3.4, Plutarch described love as the same basis of interactions between humanity and Isis.¹¹¹²

¹¹⁰⁶ Ps 60:7, 108:7 LXX; Fitzmyer, 238.

¹¹⁰⁷ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 19.

¹¹⁰⁸ “*Cum enim optimam et praestantissimam naturam dei dicat esse, negat idem esse in deo gratiam: tollit id quod maxime proprium est optimae praestantissimaeque naturae. Quid enim melius aut quid praestantius bonitate et beneficentia? Qua cum carere deum vultis, neminem deo nec deum nec hominum carum, neminem ab eo amari, neminem diligere vultis.*” Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.121, LCL.

¹¹⁰⁹ James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in its Graeco-Roman Context*, WUNT 172, (Tübingen : Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 208.

¹¹¹⁰ “*Carum ipsum verbum est amoris, ex quo amicitiae nomen est ductum;*” Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 1.122.

¹¹¹¹ “*hominum caritas et amicitia gratuita est; quanto igitur magis deorum, qui nulla re egentes et inter se diligunt et hominibus consulunt.*” Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.122.

¹¹¹² The adherent’s response to Isis and Osiris is plain, “for these (people) hearing (the gods Isis and Osiris) have love and faith (ἀγαπῶσι καὶ πιστεύουσιν).” Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 65, in John Gwynn Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride* (Cambridge: University of Wales, 1970), 221.

If we follow Cicero's and Plutarch's thought, then the concept of being "beloved of God" in this epistle may have been heard in relation to the imagery of divinely interested friendship between gods and men common in Roman religious philosophy, as much as Judean sources.

4.3.7.2 *Romans 1:7: Called Saints*

Furthermore, in Rom 1:7, the author makes no hint of dividing his audience by ethnicity, or ethnic terminology. Their inclusive honor is heightened with additional praise, "called saints." Interpretation is divided regarding this last attribute, whether "called as saints" or "called to be saints."¹¹¹³

4.3.7.2.1 *Romans 1:7: Called Saints: Judean-listener Interaction*

Barrett's interpretation: "by divine call, saints," links the phrase to Israel's designation as holy people in Ex. 19:6, the assumed source by numerous commentators.¹¹¹⁴ Dunn goes as far as to claim that "it is characteristically and overwhelmingly a Jewish term."¹¹¹⁵ However, while Käsemann argues the phrase "called saints" would have been well known to Judean Christ-believers as the term for God's sacred people in Exodus 12:16, or Deut. 7:6 LXX, he also states non-Judeans would have hardly been aware of its formulaic OT use to transfer God's honor from Judeans as "the OT people of God" to a broader audience of Christ-followers.¹¹¹⁶ Other analysis suggests ἄγιοι is not about a state of holiness per se, but a term for recognition of special status with God, "the ones called to be God's people," to denote the full audience's special relationship as the people of God.¹¹¹⁷ Judeans would have naturally presumed they were the chosen people of God, in an ethnic sense, strengthened by the status given in Romans 1:3.

¹¹¹³ "Called as saints," NASB; "Called to be saints," NET, NRSV, Osborne, *Romans*, 34; Wright, *Romans*, 421.

¹¹¹⁴ Barrett, *Romans*, 22.

¹¹¹⁵ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 19; Witherington sees the phrases as drawn from Judean use and reapplied to Christ-followers, Ben Witherington III, with Darlene Hyatt, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 37.

¹¹¹⁶ Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, (1982), 15-16.

¹¹¹⁷ J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition), (New York: United Bible Societies. 1996, c1989), LN 11.27.

4.3.7.2.2 Romans 1:7: Called Saints: Non-Judean-listener Interaction

However, Ziesler proposes the use of “being called” reminds the listeners that their status “is not by birth.” He suggests this marks a difference from Judaism, where the normal thing was to be a member of Israel “by being born into it.”¹¹¹⁸ However, the audience conceptualization of being called “saints” in Rome, especially for non-Judeans likely drew upon its context. While the TDNT claims that ἅγιος was not applied to humans in Greek religious tradition, certainly the concept of “holy people” was found in Roman literature drawn upon Greek philosophy.¹¹¹⁹ Cicero derides Epicurus for writing a treatise on holiness, but not believing in the gods. He blusters, “For how can holiness exist if the gods pay no heed to man’s affairs?”

Cicero hints that holiness is not only a divine characteristic, but human action as well.¹¹²⁰ Mueller provides further support by asserting that Valerius’ description of Decimus Laelius and Marcus Agrippa as “holy men” can be more closely construed as “saints” (*sancti*), because they “obtained their status by performing the duties of unblemished faith (*sincerae fidei*),” founded upon Valerius’ attribution of this holiness to the “rich harvest of their works.”¹¹²¹ Given use of Valerius’s moral instruction in Rome, produced less than 30 years before the epistle, this imagery may have shaped Judean and non-Judean perspectives of being “saints,” inherent to faith-making and being faithful toward God.

There is not a hint of ethnic division or superiority, since the appellation could be applied equally by listeners. Additionally the listeners in Rome are “called saints” in the present, currently privileged with highest honor in their relationship with Jesus Christ and the Father. As Haacker notes, both callings, by Jesus Christ in 1:6, and called “holy” in 1:7 cement the experience of “faith” of writer, reader, and listeners.¹¹²²

¹¹¹⁸ Ziesler, *Romans* (1997), 64-65.

¹¹¹⁹ ἅγιος, *TDNT, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey William Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich (eds.), electronic ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-c1976), Vol. 1, 88.

¹¹²⁰ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.122-123, *LCL*.

¹¹²¹ Valerius Maximus 4.7.7; Mueller, *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, 135-136.

¹¹²² Klaus Haacker, *The Theology of Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003), 23.

4.3.8 Romans 1:8: For your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world

The audience hears approbation of honor because “their faith is publicly proclaimed throughout the whole world.” Praise of the Roman listeners’ faith in 1:8 imitates other Roman and Greek commentators’ lauding the people of Rome’s renown for their faith, in almost identical language to Roman public use. One example is Valerius Maximus’ claim that divine Faith “had always flourished in our community (*civitate*) all nations have perceived.”¹¹²³ Similarly, Silius Italicus, probably living in Rome as a senator and orator when the Roman epistle arrived, enshrined Roman *Fides* as one of Rome’s core values by which she related with other peoples, both collectively and individually as discussed in chapter 3.5.¹¹²⁴ Silius Italicus’ presentation of faith contemporarily mirrors the proclamation of Rome’s Christ-believers’ faith publicly proclaimed throughout the whole world.¹¹²⁵ Thus, the phrase, “because your faith is being publicly proclaimed throughout the whole world,” was certainly heard as praise of the Roman audience, which played upon familiarity with Rome’s cultural circumstances and public values redirected into the Christ-follower’s relationship with Christ. The audience likely heard this proclamation based upon their experience of proclaiming faith with Rome, as some were Roman citizens, and as each city and ethnicity proclaimed faith with Rome throughout the empire as noted in chapter 3.11 and 3.12.

4.3.9 Romans 1:9: For as God is my Witness

The oath-swearing element of faith, “For as God is my witness” may have been heard as a Judean phrase or act, yet calling upon the gods or a god as judge, participant, and witness of one’s oath-backed intent and action was common practice in Roman life as an expression of faith, as shown in chapter sections 3.5 and 3.9.¹¹²⁶ An example of faith swearing with gods as witness familiar in Rome’s culture was Horatius Cocles calling upon the *fides* of gods and

¹¹²³ Valerius Maximus 6.6.*praef.*, translated in Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings Vol II*, 67.

¹¹²⁴ Silius Italicus, born 26 CE, was a member of the Roman elite during Nero’s rein. Silius Italicus, *Punica*, ix-x.

¹¹²⁵ Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 173-177.

¹¹²⁶ For Judeans, perhaps 1 Sam. 12:5-6, *Testament of Levi* 19:3; For Romans, Polybius, 11.6.4; Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 41-43.

men to witness and judge his actions when standing his ground in combat as other Romans fled the Etruscan advance.¹¹²⁷

Thus, the oath sealed the author's sincerity and honored Christ-followers in Rome before God and in relation to Christ-followers in Corinth and elsewhere where the Roman Christ-followers' faith has been "publicly proclaimed in the whole world." The use of faith in 1:12 is more than a shared belief or of being an adherent of Jesus, but carries the undertone of entering into an ongoing relationship. According to Gaston, the better interpretation of πίστewς in this verse should be "faithfulness."¹¹²⁸ I concur with Gaston, since this more directly expresses the author's desired ongoing relationship with Rome's Christ-followers. Inference about their relationship with God is more oblique, given the writer's proposal of mutual obligation and reciprocity involved in his visit. Thus obligation and honor, expressed in terms of Christ-following, underlie the use of "faith" or "faithfulness" in 1:12 and expresses the author's effort to initiate and, in some cases, renew his relationship with Christ-followers in Rome, as apparent in Romans 16.

4.3.10 Romans 1:13: As Among the Rest of the Nations

Romans 1:13 refers to the previous successful realization of the author's mutual gifting, honoring, and obligation ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν. The predominant presumption by scholarship is that ἔθνεσιν in 1:13 should be translated, "Gentiles."¹¹²⁹ The general rationale for this among commentators is that interpretation elsewhere in Pauline letters for ἔθνεσιν is "Gentiles."¹¹³⁰ Similarly, Esler does not interpret ἔθνεσιν as "Gentiles," but given the audience mix, prefers "foreigners" as an expression for non-Judean peoples.¹¹³¹

However, the audience has not yet heard specific ethnic identifiers in regard to other peoples in Romans, which has been a careful effort to unify the audience, not only with the author,

¹¹²⁷ Livy, 2.10.3; Carlin A. Barton, 'Being in the Eyes: Shame and Sight in Ancient Rome' in David Fredrick (ed.), *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power, and the Body* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, 2002), 216-235, (221).

¹¹²⁸ Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and Torah* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, 1987), 169.

¹¹²⁹ Translated "Gentiles" in the NASB95, NET, NRSV, NIV, ASV, HCSB, and ISV. Also, among others, by Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 32.

¹¹³⁰ Moo refers back to his argument for "Gentiles" in Rom. 1:5. Moo, *Romans*, 61; Schreiner, *Romans*, 53.

¹¹³¹ Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 115.

but also, with one another and God. The author has addressed “all those who are in Rome” to encapsulate all Rome-inhabiting Christ-followers as delineated in Romans 1:7, 8. Moreover, he has painted a very honorable picture of all Roman Christ-followers that aids the shaping the discourse as he deals with issues of ethnicity and relationship in regard to relationship with God and Jesus.

4.3.10.1 Romans 1:13: As Among the Rest of the Nations – Judean and non-Judean-listener Interaction

If the concept of ἔθνος was used to distinguish one’s superiority over other groups by Judeans and non-Judeans alike, and if the Roman church environment was ethnically competitive, then both groups may have perceived superior status. In other words, Judeans are as much “Gentiles” or “foreigners” for Greeks or Romans, as is traditional ethnic interpretation of Judeans regarding non-Judeans. If the author intended ἔθνεσιν to be interpreted “Gentiles,” his listeners are enabled to supply their own delineation of who the ἔθνεσιν might be, whether as a non-Judean competitively ethnically assessing Judeans in the audience, or from a Judean perspective considering those present who are non-Judean.

However this argument misses the richness of nations and peoples in Rome’s context. It seems more plausible that ἔθνεσιν was heard as “nations” or “peoples” in 1:13, since the writer has not yet begun ethnic comparison or delineation, as he is about to do, except to distinguish between the geographic location of Christ-followers in Rome and those residing elsewhere. The writer desired to gain results, whether converts or logistical support among the Romans as unified occupants, as he has among other peoples.

4.3.11 Romans 1:14: Greeks and Barbarians, Wise and Foolish

The thought completion “the rest of the nations” in 1:13, points forward into 1:14, drawing the Roman listeners forward into the upcoming doublet. Without a particle the writer continues, “Both to Greeks and barbarians, both to wise and foolish, I am under obligation.” These phrases initiate the re-negotiation of ethnicity and ethnic rivalry in Romans. These

comparative pairs were utilized as ethnic and cultural categorizations of honor and shame.¹¹³² While all the Roman Christ-followers are addressed, they hear a shift to an ethnically characterized segmentation of the “peoples” or “nations” mentioned in 1:13 to whom the author was called to pronounce the good news of God regarding Jesus Christ.¹¹³³

4.3.11.1 *Romans 1:14: Greeks and Barbarians, Wise and Foolish: Current Commentators*

Commentators are quite mixed in understanding and approach to these ethnic designations. Barrett determined that the phrases were characterizations, with Greeks representing “those who inhabit the city states of the inner Mediterranean world” and barbarians those outside that area.¹¹³⁴ Cranfield determines that the phrases are ethnically determinative and proposes five possible ways of perceiving the pairings.¹¹³⁵ His best option is that the Greeks be understood as non-Judeans of Greco-Roman culture and barbarians all the rest of humanity, and that “wise and foolish” be considered a different grouping of the same peoples that is more individual, based upon intelligence and education.¹¹³⁶ Moo ends up with a similar position as Cranfield.¹¹³⁷ Witherington’s perspective is that the phrases apply to all non-Judean peoples based upon 1:13’s use of ἔθνη meaning “non-Jewish”, with the division in 1:14 being language, between those who spoke Greek and those who did not among non-Judeans, concluding that the phrase includes Rome among non-Judean, Greek-speaking peoples, both wise and unlearned.¹¹³⁸

Byrne follows Cranfield, concluding “the phrase as a whole encompasses the entire non-Jewish world.”¹¹³⁹ He rationalizes that “Greeks” would have included not only those of Hellenic stock, but also those who saw themselves equals to the Greeks in social status and education, including the Roman Christ-followers. In fact, Byrne implausibly suggests that the author may have been subtly complimenting the Roman recipients by suggesting they

¹¹³² Robert Jewett, “Paul, Shame, and Honor” in J. Paul Sampley (ed.), *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2003), 551-574, (551).

¹¹³³ Romans 1:1, 9.

¹¹³⁴ Barrett, *Romans*, 26.

¹¹³⁵ His possibilities were 1) the pairings represent the whole of mankind. 2) Each pair represents the whole of mankind but as different groupings. 3) The first pair represents all of non-Judean humanity and the second all mankind, including Judeans. 4) Both pairs cover non-Judean humanity and are identical. 5) Both pairs represent the whole of non-Judean humanity but as different groupings. Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 83.

¹¹³⁶ Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 84.

¹¹³⁷ Moo, *Romans*, 62.

¹¹³⁸ Witherington, *Romans*, 44-45.

¹¹³⁹ Byrne, *Romans*, 56.

belonged to the educated Greek world, rather than the more rustic peoples of Asia Minor that he previously evangelized. For Byrne, “barbarians” would have been all non-Greek, non-Judean peoples.¹¹⁴⁰ Osborne echoes Byrne and others by concluding that the phrase divides the non-Judean world, but at least notes the issue of cultural superiority underlies these classifications.¹¹⁴¹ Leenhardt goes furthest presuming the author intends the barbarians to allusionally be Spain, which is unlikely given its long Latin-speaking heritage and considerable Romanization.¹¹⁴²

However, Esler helpfully notes the use of ἔθνη ἐσθλὰ does not exclude ethnically Judean listeners or other Christ-following groups. For Esler, the author’s mission was geographically defined as excluding the Judean homelands, but within non-Judean territories where Diaspora Judeans resided. He states, “None of this (in 1:13) suggests Paul is not speaking to Judeans, nor does his statement in the next verse (1:14) of the debt he owes (that is, because of his success) to ‘Greeks and barbarians (meaning non-Judeans of all ethnic groups)’...There is no justification for claims that these expressions in any way exclude Judeans from Paul’s address, or would have been so understood by the recipients.”¹¹⁴³ As Bryan helpfully alludes, the writer may already be aware of the Roman Church being “divided and weakened by factional infighting, by claims to superiority of one group over another.”¹¹⁴⁴

4.3.11.2 Romans 1:14: Greeks and Barbarians, Wise and Foolish: Questions among the listeners

Despite this range of interpretation, there seem to be several issues which beg resolution in interpretation in this verse from the audience perspective. In regards to “Greeks,” the ethnic identification is nebulous and contentious in use in Rome or empire. Is this use supposedly defined by language? If so, then the Judeans would be included as Greek speakers, which is not probable. Is it a Greek way of life based upon other ethnic identifiers? If so, then Judeans may be excluded from the categorization. But what about the Romans? Are the Romans

¹¹⁴⁰ Byrne, *Romans*, 56.

¹¹⁴¹ Osborne, *Romans*, 38.

¹¹⁴² Franz J. Leenhardt, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Harold Knight, (trans.), (New York: World Publishing, 1957, 1961), 45-46.

¹¹⁴³ Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 115.

¹¹⁴⁴ Christopher Bryan, *A Preface to Romans: Notes on the Epistle and its Literary and Cultural Setting* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), 63.

“Greeks”? As was detailed in chapter 1.1.8.1 and 1.1.8.2, Greek authors negotiated Roman ethnicity as being Greek. Perhaps the writer intended that ethnic Romans or those who were Roman citizens be categorized as “Greeks.” This in turn was contentious, since Romans self-categorized as non-Greeks, and as Trojan descendants as argued in chapter 1.2.1.1 and 1.2.4.1, and perceived Latin language as superior to Greek in 1.2.4.2. It seems the author’s use reflected Greek versions of Roman identity, yet in turn may have still held that Greeks were inferior if adopting a Roman perspective, and had not intended the Romans to be considered at all at this juncture. They are left as the audience in consideration of ethnic categorization of nations among whom the author had labored for Christ.

But who were the “barbarians”? Is it the Romans? That is unlikely and dubious since most of the recipients are “Romans” in some sense either by citizenship, residence, or to some extent, by Romanization or ethnic assimilation. Considering Roman recipients “barbarians” would have insulted the elite of the audience at a delicate time in the discourse and hardly makes sense since the writer is a Roman. Is it other “non-Greek-speaking, or non-Greek-way-of-life practising nations” outside the empire? The writer doesn’t seem to say anything about the non-Roman world in Romans. Is it the “non-Greek,” Judean Christ-followers? If taken this way, then the doublet is quite inflammatory, if that conclusion was drawn by a portion of the epistle’s hearers. Some in the audience in Rome may have already been derogatory enough to promulgate this view, that Judeans were “barbarians” creating ethnic conflict amongst Christ-followers.

4.3.11.3 Romans 1:14: Greeks and Barbarians/Wise and Foolish: Audience Perceptions

If the audience carefully followed the narrative, it seems that 1:14 descriptively detailed the ethnic delineation of the “nations” of 1:13. These terms categorize audience-perceived ethnic relationships, contra Dunn.¹¹⁴⁵ The concepts and phrases are similar to cultural differentiation used by Diodorus Siculus in the 1st century BCE. “For it is this (history) that makes the Greeks superior to the barbarians, and the educated to the uneducated...”¹¹⁴⁶ Diodorus’ phrasing demarcated Greeks from other ethnicities by their cultural background and

¹¹⁴⁵ Dunn’s conclusion on ethnic use in 1:14-15, is that Paul wouldn’t have intended any intimation of ethnic rivalry. “At the same time it is just as likely that the terms used in v 14 were deliberately general so that no one would take offense, even if any did not recognize themselves as “Greek” or “wise.” Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 35-36.

¹¹⁴⁶ τουτω γαρ οι μεν Ελληνες των Βαρβαρων, οι δε πεπαιδευμεοι των απαιδευτων προεχουσι, Diodorus Siculus 1.2.5-6.

“wisdom,” presented as education, by which Greeks were depicted as culturally superior. Diodorus stereotypically invoked a doublet in which “being Greek” is equated with “wisdom” in relation to “barbarians” who are linked by literary allusion to being “foolish” or unknowing people. Philostratus’ later comment, “[You] do not realize that everything is Greece to a wise man,” serves to further place the doublet into the realm of espousing Greek superiority, linking “Greekness,” and wisdom.¹¹⁴⁷ The author’s use is clearly conceptually and textually similar to Diodorus’ ethnically rivalrous description, which links Greek ethnic superiority and wisdom, concepts seen earlier in chapter 1.1.8.1.¹¹⁴⁸

Thus, the phrase in 1:14 ethnically honors non-Judean, culturally Greek adherents. Thus, it may be concluded that the writer, similarly to Diodorus, indirectly honored cultural Greek Christ-followers in the audience, who already considered themselves culturally superior and “wise.” It did not matter that praising those culturally Greek might be ethnically offensive in Rome. The author is a Roman and so are some of his audience who might also be culturally Greek or Roman, but the comment is not directed at them, nor directly addresses their ethnicity, but only encompasses those who live where the writer has already worked and their geographic placement, who may or may not have been Roman citizens, or ethnically Roman.

The author had also presented Jesus Christ to non-Greek speakers in the Empire, which seems the geographic and cultural underpinning for his reference to “barbarians.” This seems most plausible as the writer’s point of reference. He had already worked in regions of the empire where Greek was not the local language.¹¹⁴⁹ In summary, the author has made an ethnic characterization that highly honored those geographically and culturally Greek in relation to other ethnicities where he has previously traveled and his listeners in Rome would be cognizant of this fact.

¹¹⁴⁷ Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 3 Vols., Christopher P. Jones (trans.), Christopher P. Jones (ed.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2005-2006), 1.34.

¹¹⁴⁸ Diodorus Siculus 1.2.5-6.

¹¹⁴⁹ If Acts is considered, Paul’s experience in Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe was in an area where Greek or Latin were not the primary local language in Acts 13:6-18; Some communities of Galatia and Phrygia, mentioned in Acts 18:23, would have used Greek, or other languages as the primary form of speech. Paul will later add Illyricum to his list of “barbarian” destinations in Rom. 15:19.

4.3.11.3.1 Romans 1:14 Greeks and Barbarians/Wise and Foolish: Judean Christ-followers in Rome:

I suggest Judean Christ followers likely heard this remark in line with conceptualizations such as Diodorus' earlier description of Greek ethnic superiority. If so, then this remark likely caused some ethnic consternation, given potential deep-seated rivalry in regard to Judean and non-Judean ways of life. Such a remark would have struck Judean Christ-follower sensitivities and been an indirect insult to their honor and perhaps self-perceived superiority, since they certainly would not have been self-perceived as "barbarians." Furthermore, the remark would have been a surprise to Judean Christ-followers, creating ethnic displacement and adding to already existing tension in Rome.

The author is walking a fine line with his audience in honoring Greek ethnicity, yet it is being done to create later discourse effectiveness for realigning ethnic rivalry among Rome's Christ-followers. The bold honoring of Greeks may have created momentary internal conflict over who was "barbarian" and "foolish," epithets which ethnic Greek Christ-followers may have applied to their Judean counterparts in heated moments. Clearly, ethnic Judeans would have been incensed with being indirectly culturally aligned with "barbarians," especially if non-Greek speaking or non-Greek hearers required a translation of the letter and were awaiting a multi-lingual regurgitation.

4.3.11.3.2 Romans 1:14 Greeks and Barbarians/Wise and Foolish: Non-Judean Christ-followers in Rome:

For non-Judean Christ-followers, hearing the ethnic division of "Greeks and barbarians" would have piqued their interest. Perhaps their perspective aligned with Moo's cursory comment that Greek Christ-followers may have considered Judean Christ-followers "barbarians," yet Moo contends that the author would not have placed Judeans in an inferior group.¹¹⁵⁰ However, this needs to be reconsidered. Judean Christ-followers would have fit the ethnic perspective of "barbarian," if one presumes that Greek Christ-followers were ignoring shared language as the key ethnic differentiation, and determining that non-Greek cultural practice, predominant in the Roman East, left Judeans open to ethnic derision or perhaps

¹¹⁵⁰ Moo, *Romans*, 62.

Greek derision of their inferiority. That cultural Greeks would have heard “Greeks and barbarians” as ethnic honor is likely. The statement heightened their sense of ethnic superiority in reaction to the discourse. Certainly, the pairing of “Greeks” with “wise” and “barbarians” with “foolish” in doublets was a play on Greek claims to superior wisdom, especially philosophy, and in turn – superior ethnicity.

In summary, despite the comment being illustrative of the locations where the author had fulfilled his faith obligations to God, the use of these phrases would have stirred ethnic concerns and rivalries. The use, given Greek conventions, may have given those who identified as ethnic Greeks, a flash of honored superiority in relation to whomever they considered barbarians, which may have differed on an individual case by case basis.

4.3.12 Romans 1:15: “You who are in Rome”

The audience hears the Greek-honoring and attributed wisdom of 1:14, refocused on “you who are in Rome,” from a general statement of honoring Greeks elsewhere in the empire where he has previously worked to honoring ethnic Greeks in Rome, among the audience. The writer boldly links Greek ethnic superiority in addition to earlier praise of recipients in Rome with honor/faith status as Christ-followers as proclaimed in 1:5-8. If the Greek ethnic superiority claims were transferred to those in Rome, it would have provoked consternation among ethnic Judean and perhaps Roman listeners, or any whom others perceived as “barbarian” or “foolish.”

Yet, use of *πρόθυμος* was carefully selected since the term was formulaically used to express public service in Greek literature and honorary decrees.¹¹⁵¹ The writer has given honor not only to Greek Christ-followers, but this phrasing also claims personal honor for publicly fulfilling his obligations to God. This is not “boasting,” since the honor claim has been substantiated with the evidence of the author’s prior proclamation of public actions in presenting the good news of God about Christ to the nations in 1:13. Eager fulfillment of his obligations demonstrates the writer’s faithfulness in action in relations to God and Christ.

¹¹⁵¹ Arndt, *BDAG*, 870.

4.3.13 Romans 1:16: “For I am not ashamed”

The final phrase in 1:15 finishes with the infinitive εὐαγγελίσασθαι – “to proclaim the good news.” What follows in 1:16-17 is often stripped away from the previous thought flow in 1:1-15. Translations and commentators commonly break the discourse with a paragraph heading to denote what is generally held as the “theme” for the letter, and synthetically restrict listener/reader focus to 1:16-17.¹¹⁵² Byrne comes closest to a continuation linked with the preceding verses by combination of 1:16-17 with 1:8-15, yet still considers 1:16-17 the “theme” of Romans, as does Käsemann.¹¹⁵³ Fitzmyer cursorily mentions a link to 1:15, but portrays 1:16-17 as the commencement of the letter’s “main topic.” For him, these verses serve a double purpose: to initiate the letter’s doctrinal section from 1:16-11:36, and also serve as the proposition for 1:16-4:25.¹¹⁵⁴ Tobin similarly proposes they are the basic proposition of the letter, citing Epictetus’ diatribes as rhetorical support.¹¹⁵⁵ Witherington emphasizes these verses as the *propositio* of Romans 1-15, claiming their importance “cannot be overestimated.” For him, the rest of Romans is an attempt “to instruct about the nature of faith and faithfulness as introduced in 1:16-17.”¹¹⁵⁶

Yet for those listening to Romans in Rome, this disconnection with only a cursory glance at Romans 1:1-15 would not have occurred since they would not have missed the connected richness of the assignation of honor, the writer’s ethnic negotiation with Roman Judeans and non-Judeans, and the continued enlargement of his message from 1:1-15 into 1:16-17. As Schreiner notes, “the disjunction between verses 15 and 16 should not be overplayed.”¹¹⁵⁷ Moo, despite defending 1:16-17 as Paul’s “theme,” correctly notes that 1:16-17 are four subordinate clauses supporting or illuminating the preceding clauses that directly connected 1:15 and also what follows in 1:18. He muses that isolation of 1:16-17 arguably creates a preoccupation with theology, and neglects the reasoning and syntactical flow of the writer’s previous argument.¹¹⁵⁸

¹¹⁵² Translations that break the text with a heading at 1:16: NET, ESV, GNB, NRSV; also, Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 37; Separated as a paragraph at 1:16: ASV, Darby, KJV, NASB, NIV, RSV, YLT; also Barrett, *Romans*, 27.

¹¹⁵³ Byrne, *Romans*, 48-51; Käsemann, *Romans*, (1980), 20-21.

¹¹⁵⁴ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 253-254.

¹¹⁵⁵ Thomas H. Tobin, *Paul’s Rhetoric in its Contexts: The Argument of Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 104-105.

¹¹⁵⁶ Witherington, *Romans*, 47.

¹¹⁵⁷ Schreiner, *Romans*, 58.

¹¹⁵⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 63-64.

Audience reception flows seamlessly from 1:15 into 1:16a with its continuative γὰρ.¹¹⁵⁹ What follows from 1:15 is sequentially integrated through 1:16-17 by similar continuative use of γὰρ in 1:16b and 1:17a, and by καθὼς in 1:17b to expand on the concluding thought in 1:15.¹¹⁶⁰

Moreover, the first phrase in 1:16a further integrates the writer's earlier self-proclaimed honor demonstrated by his public service from his use of πρόθυμος in 1:15, by reemphasis in his ἐπαισχύνομαι, "I am not ashamed." It rhetorically serves as a *litotes*, an affirmation by denying the opposite, or a comparative opposite in a glimpse of wit.¹¹⁶¹ Wedderburn perceives a contrary claim, that the author's discourse to Rome amounted to a lengthy defense of his message because some in Rome "had in fact claimed that he (Paul) ought to be ashamed of his gospel...in some way discredited and disgraceful," concluding that some charged the writer's gospel was shameful.¹¹⁶²

However, the opposite of ashamedness, or the terminology to express fulfillment of a claim by action in Roman tradition, was honor. In Romans 1:16a, the audience hears the proclamation of "good news" as an honor claim – there is no shame for the author in speaking about Christ, the gospel of God. As Witherington remarks, the writer signaled his discourse would be about honor and what is honorable in 1:16a.¹¹⁶³ Thus, use of ἐπαισχύνομαι anchors comparative honor and shameful dishonor as a thematic framework that undergoes explanatory expansion in the following sections. Finally, the author's honor claim points his listeners to his honor and faith-based exaltation of Jesus – intertwined with their honoring in Romans 1:5-15 as well.

4.3.13.1 Romans 1:16b: "for all who (swear) faith"

The continuative phrase in Rom 1:16b, "for it is the power of God for salvation for all who (swear) faith," instigates the relating of the "good news" personified in Jesus Christ.

¹¹⁵⁹ Luke Timothy Johnson, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2001), 26.

¹¹⁶⁰ Schreiner, *Romans*, 58-59.

¹¹⁶¹ Keck, *Romans*, 50.

¹¹⁶² A.J.M. Wedderburn, *The Reasons For Romans*, John Riches, (ed.), (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 104.

¹¹⁶³ Witherington, *Romans*, 47.

Since salvation is most likely tied to God’s power displayed in presence and action, then salvation is more about what God’s action portrayed thus far in Romans to create “salvation.” God’s manifestation of power presented in Rom. 1:1-16 has been portrayed in Jesus Christ as “Son-of God-in-power ... by resurrection from the dead” in 1:4, by Christ being the avenue of God’s grace and calling in 1:5, 6, and the quintessence of the Father’s “good news” in 1:9. All of these have expressed God’s promise fulfillment and evidence of divine faithfulness. Given this, it seems more likely “the power of God for salvation” has to do with the proclamation and reality of God’s revealed “good news” in Jesus. Plainly, the audience has not heard salvation ethnically categorized just yet, despite the author’s mention of ethnic groups or characteristics in 1:14 in relation to the nations where he presented the good news of Jesus and foremost in his honoring of Greeks amongst the ethnic groups in those areas. This non-ethnic presentation of the gospel, presented in Roman conventions is especially apparent in the phrase, “*παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι.*”

The initial problem is how to render this clause. Often it is translated: “to everyone who believes,” or “to all who believe.”¹¹⁶⁴ Yet the author has not created a context in his prior Romans discourse about belief as a basic conceptual cognizance of Jesus as Lord. Faith, not belief, has been the foundation of the author’s interaction between God, Christ and humanity, esp. in Rom. 1:5, 8, 12. Additionally, as argued in chapter 3 and summarized in 3.15, faith was not primarily perceived or practised as belief in Roman life. Thus, in line with the use of “faith” in 1:5, 8, 12, that phrase should be translated as “to all who swear faith” or, “to all who oath faith,” given its continuity with the writer’s earlier statements attributing faith as honor to his audience in a Roman context, in regard to his active faithful fulfillment of God’s personal calling, and the faith of Christ-followers whom the author has known elsewhere.¹¹⁶⁵

This interpretation – “to all who (swear) faith,” dually expresses the concept of “faith” as transaction, and also relationship as “faithfulness” detailed in its contextual development of Romans 1:5 and above, in chapter 3.¹¹⁶⁶ Given that the term “faith” is more likely perceived from a Roman context in 1:16b, it seems more than human response to God’s action in Christ

¹¹⁶⁴ NASB, NET, NIV, ASV, HCSB, ISV, KJV, NCV, NKJV, NLT.

¹¹⁶⁵ NRSV, Ziesler, *Romans* (1997), 69-70; Barrett, *Romans*, 28; Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 89-90.

¹¹⁶⁶ Ziesler, *Romans* (1997), 69.

Jesus, but also that God has acted to establish a transformed relationship with humanity in the revelation of Jesus as “Son-of-God-in-power.”

Both parties – God and humanity – are actively involved in reciprocity, more than juridical, judicial, or eschatological, but a relational covenanting with one another established by a transaction of faith by God’s actions and on God’s terms into which a human covenantally or contractually agreed or vowed “by faith” to enter.¹¹⁶⁷ The point for the audience was that “faith” or “faithfulness” as a relationship with God was a universal choice – made possible by the “good news” available to all humanity or every individual who made this choice of faith transaction to become God’s people or “saints.” Since the Roman conventions of faith were predominant for the audience, it seems more probable that the sociolect, behaviors, and practices of making faith in a Roman sense would have been the basis of making faith for the audience, given they were immersed in this process as their way of life. Thus, I suggest that for the audience, faith was sworn contractual transaction, and ongoing relationship as the consequence of that sworn oath, and not primarily as belief.

4.3.13.2 *Romans 1:16c: “Both to the Judean first and Greek”*

Here the audience confronts a second ethnic reference. It is different than the first, in that the “barbarians” of Romans 1:14 are seemingly dropped as the comparative focus. Moreover, this occurrence is the first instance of “Judean” and “Greek” pairing, and one in which Judeans are somehow “first.” The phrase is intimately linked with what precedes it, in close linkage with “all” as continuative explanation, as use of τε demonstrates. Yet, the pairing of τε...καὶ, marks partial segmentation in that relatedness, thus the use of initial use of “both” to translate τε in 1:16c.¹¹⁶⁸ The importance of this phrase cannot be overestimated, since its interpretation shapes how the audience may have ethnically and theologically interpreted the rest of Romans. Given this importance, the following is a brief exploration of prior research, an alternative interpretation, and the implications of a proposed audience reception approach to 1:16c.

¹¹⁶⁷ R. David Kaylor, *Paul’s Covenant Community: Jew & Gentile in Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988), 30-31.

¹¹⁶⁸ Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, & Neva F. Miller, *Vol. 4: Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament, ANLEX* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 376.

4.3.13.3 *Rom 1:16c: “Both to the Judean first and Greek”*: Current Commentary

There are several points of interest and contention in this clause. First, who are the “Judean” or “Greek”? As argued earlier in this dissertation, Judeans and Greeks both acculturated in Rome, as well as resisted cultural assimilation. Both influenced Roman ethnicity as it assimilated or resisted Judeanization and Hellenization. Yet, as depicted in Appendix 1.3, each ethnicity in Rome recognized or claimed certain physical, religious, dietary, calendrical, social, and patronymic characteristics as more typical of themselves and different than others. Yet, simultaneously, individuals or groups within any ethnicity might adopt or adapt certain celebrations, political, economic, and religious events, legal rights, or characteristics of other ethnic groups in Rome as it was to their benefit, either collectively or individually. Additionally, the ethnic labels of being “Judean” or “Greek” did not preclude self- or other-identification as a Roman. One might also apply positive or derogatory ethnic labeling to others when they may not claim it themselves, given their personal practices. Furthermore, individuals or groups of various ethnicities used labels and stereotypes for lauding or critiquing other groups in ethnic negotiation or their quest for establishing cultural or social superiority portrayed in Appendix 1.2 as Roman ethnic identity construction and negotiation.

Generally, scholarship has taken a mixed approach to the twinned ethnic categorizations in 1:16c. Dunn’s approach alludes more to Judean “priority” or potentially, their superiority. He asserts, that “... ‘Jew and Greek’ is the Jewish equivalent to the Gentile categorization of the world given in 1:14, only here with “Greek” replacing “Gentile.”¹¹⁶⁹ There are several problems with Dunn’s view. First, the writer did not unthinkingly generalize “Greeks” to mean “Gentiles” as presumed by Schreiner, Dunn, and Fitzmyer, among others.¹¹⁷⁰ He was intentionally careful in his use of “Greeks and barbarians,” in 1:14, to create a clear case of Greek honor, implying Greek ethnic superiority comparable to Diodorus’ earlier ethnic claim and he is being equally careful in 1:16c. Furthermore, 1:14 was not a “Gentile” categorization, but clearly a “Greek” one. Furthermore, despite Dunn’s insistence, “Gentiles” or “the nations” are not mentioned in 1:14, but in 1:13. Romans 1:13’s use of “Gentiles” or “the nations” demonstrates the author’s ability to intentionally apply that descriptor and he deliberately does not do so in 1:14, or 1:16c. However, despite the flaws, I partially agree with Dunn that the writer’s shift to use of “Judean” and “Greek” is intentional rhetorical

¹¹⁶⁹ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 40.

¹¹⁷⁰ Schreiner, *Romans*, 62; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 40; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 256-257.

stereotypical categorization that places Judean ethnicity in position of honourable mention. While Judean honor in 1:16c is intentional, to preliminarily read the rest of Romans into this statement as Judean “priority” distorts the rhetorical and theological strategy. The audience had only heard what was articulated through 1:16 for a basis of interpretation, not the rest of the epistle, nor the rest of the Pauline corpus.

Witherington comments that the rhetorical strategy in this phrase is based on deliberative oratory, noting that the discourse has followed the highest themes noted by Quintilian for an address regarding character and honor, “right, justice, piety, equity and mercy.”¹¹⁷¹ His point is that the writer was deeply engaged in instructing Rome’s Christ-followers about honor and was calling God’s people to fulfill the virtues most admired by Romans and considered honorable. Witherington goes further, noting that the “good news” was inclusive, not granting room for Roman ethnic superiority, and that “all who have faith” balanced his clarification “to the Judean first.”¹¹⁷² Witherington is correct in portraying the clause in context of a Roman audience already lauded for living the highest Roman virtues in relation to God and Christ, aligned with the social conventions of Rome.

Why no mention of ethnic or cultural Romans in 1:16’s ethnic comparison? It is more than Witherington’s claim that the author was not wanting to give room for Roman ethnic superiority claims. Plainly, those who were Roman or acculturated to being Romans had already been lauded in regard to their relationship with God by praise of their Roman values as reapplied to God and Christ. The author usurped Rome’s most important and valued language and imagery for his purposes. He skillfully borrowed, for reapplied use, Roman imagery to power his message in the discourse to Rome. Additionally, since the writer was a Roman as well as Judean, he has not made derogatory comments against Rome or Roman ethnicity, since he would have derided himself and his host in Corinth in his remarks. He has not critiqued Rome, nor Roman ethnicity in Romans 1, nor has he been “anti-imperial” as assumed by some commentators. Thus, derogatorily critiquing Roman ethnicity or avoiding the granting of honor to Romans was not the author’s primary concern in 1:16c, since he had already honored those resident in and citizens of Rome, without further demarcation.

¹¹⁷¹ Witherington, *Romans*, 49; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 3.8.25-29.

¹¹⁷² Witherington, *Romans*, 51.

4.3.13.3.1 Rom 1:16c: “Judean first”: Current Commentary

What is the meaning of “Judean first”? Does this phrase contain some sense of Judean “priority” or “superiority?” If so, what is the scope of that “priority?” Does it stretch back to God’s covenantal relationship with Judeans through Moses based upon his pronouncements at Sinai, or is it something else? Numerous commentators interpret “Judean first” as an order of salvific or covenantal priority, ascribing Judean ethnic precedence in salvation, based upon interjection of the Sinai agreement, or God’s promises to save Israel.¹¹⁷³

Bell presumes the author is reaffirming Israel’s special role in salvation history, one of priority in relationship, that God is partial toward Israel in terms of predestination and election, with divine partiality towards the Jews distinctly articulated by Bell’s jump forward to Rom 11:26, and “all Israel will be saved.”¹¹⁷⁴ Käsemann similarly perceives Judeans and Greeks representing “the whole cosmos,” with the writer giving Judeanism “precedence for the sake of the continuity of the plan of salvation.”¹¹⁷⁵ Similarly, Fitzmyer concludes that the author is “asserting the privileged status of the Jew in God’s salvific plan,” based upon the gospel being preached first to Jews and because God had promised his “good news” through the Judean prophets of old, referring to Rom. 1:2 as a basis for arguing God destined the “good news” for his chosen people and “through them” to all other peoples.¹¹⁷⁶ Fitzmyer is helpful in that he does look back in Romans 1 to determine the meaning of 1:16c, yet does not grapple with all the ethnic Judean related material in 1:1-4 in their relation to 1:16c to draw his interpretive conclusions.

Schreiner veers further and while noting the universality of the “good news,” comments that the surprising element of the message is that the saving promises God made to the Judeans are now being fulfilled among non-Judeans, and that the author may be reflecting his practice of presenting the good news in synagogues first, given his presumed theological conviction that the Judeans “were specially elected to be God’s people.”¹¹⁷⁷ The problem is that Schreiner draws too heavily on Acts to create the argument of a “synagogue first” presentation of God’s good news.

¹¹⁷³ Presumably the covenantal events of Exodus 19-24; Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 35-36.

¹¹⁷⁴ Richard H. Bell, *No one seeks for God* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 1, 8-9.

¹¹⁷⁵ Käsemann, *Romans*, (1982), 23.

¹¹⁷⁶ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 256-257.

¹¹⁷⁷ Schreiner, *Romans*, 62.

Johnson overstates the concept of Judean priority in salvation altogether by construal of this phrase prior to consideration of the writer's "to all who have faith," to establish a social and ethnic basis for "the power of God for salvation." Johnson then jumps back to the preceding phrase in 1:16b. By this approach Johnson redefines God's action as one in which the author presumed that by his "good news," he included the "nations" within God's historically chosen people.¹¹⁷⁸ The core problem is that Johnson's textual transposition fits a theological construct by conjuration of a non-existent textual variant that does not follow the narrative order in 1:16, and reads a presumed theological interpretation of Romans 9-11 back into this passage to establish his view of a Judean "priority" with God.¹¹⁷⁹

Another approach to interpretation of 1:16c links it more closely to what immediately precedes it in the monologue. Ziesler contends this entire phrase is explanatory of the preceding line, "to all those who have faith" in Jesus Christ. His position, that *πρωτον* reflects nothing more than a chronological advantage, and an advantage of Judeans being recipients of God's preparatory work through the prophets for the revelation of Jesus, reflects the author's comments in 1:2. For Ziesler, the writer has moved the discussion to one focused on faith as the only condition for salvation with no advantages and equal opportunity for Judean and Greek.¹¹⁸⁰ Morris similarly portrays 1:16c as explanatory of the universality of the good news; "...the gospel is for all and knows no limitation by race."¹¹⁸¹ Yet Morris, as does Barrett, perceives the author's statement of Judean priority was immediately balanced by his reference to Greeks, noting that Judeans received the "good news" first, but sees Judean priority not as ethnic pre-eminence, but in "God's plan," in which an electing purpose was expressed.¹¹⁸²

Byrne's approach more carefully nuances 1:16c in relation to the rhetoric of honor in 1:1-16. Despite assuming "Greek" is substitutional for "Gentile," Byrne links "Judean first" forward with its follow-on use in Romans in 2:9, 10; 3:9, and 10:12, adeptly demonstrating that the author is laying the foundation of a oratorical strategy of ironic farce, in which "Jews are

¹¹⁷⁸ Johnson, *Reading Romans*, 27-28.

¹¹⁷⁹ Reuben Swanson (ed.), *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Romans: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines Against Codex Vaticanus* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001), 8-9.

¹¹⁸⁰ Ziesler, *Romans* (1997), 70.

¹¹⁸¹ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 68-69.

¹¹⁸² Barrett, *Romans*, 29.

bound up with the Gentiles in a common lack of righteousness.” While Byrne notes there are “Judean privileges” stated by the writer, and priority with respect to address of the “good news,” he holds that by the end of Romans 11, Judean “priority” has been reversed, based upon Romans 11:11-12, 15, 30-32.¹¹⁸³

Finally, Tobin helps establish a way forward in conjunction with Byrne’s thought, pointing out that the writer’s positioning in 1:16c is dissimilar to previous dialogue on Judeans and Greeks, and certainly not equivalent to Galatians. Most pointedly, he observes that whatever is meant by “Judean first” is not clear in 1:16 and only revealed through a reading of the entire letter, as I have suggested in following its written progression of the full discourse, which falls outside the scope of this thesis.¹¹⁸⁴ This brief review of current scholarship demonstrates the problems of current approaches and potential opportunities for reinterpretation of 1:16c.

4.3.13.4 Romans 1:16c: Interpretation By Sitting in the Audience:

There is an alternative approach to contextually interpret “Judean first.” This method clarifies the text by utilizing the consecutive narrative order of what the audience has heard thus far, by joining the first hearers in Rome and “sitting in the audience.” This results in interpretation of 1:16c through what has been previously presented in 1:1-16, which explicitly and implicitly honors Judean Christ-followers in conjunction with other ethnicities.

In 1:1-2, the audience explicitly heard Judeans honored by affirming that the “good news of God” had come as promised through Judean-received prophecy, recorded in what was traditionally considered a Judean corpus. Furthermore, the author implicitly honored Judeans by denoting the birth of Jesus among them, and by establishing in Romans 1:3, Christ’s human patrilinage as a descendant within the royal ancestry of David. In an ethnic and human perspective, Christ was a Judean. Moreover, the narrative of 1:1-16 linked the discussion of Judean Christ-follower’s ethnic-based relationship with God to Jesus, and most importantly, not through Mosaic Law, or Sinai covenant.¹¹⁸⁵ The honorific language and ethnic positioning of Judean Christ-followers had occurred without mention of Judean ethnic

¹¹⁸³ Byrne, *Romans*, 57.

¹¹⁸⁴ Tobin, *Paul’s Rhetoric in Romans*, 104-105.

¹¹⁸⁵ Tobin, *Paul’s Rhetoric Romans*, 104.

forefathers, such as Abraham, Moses, or covenant, or prophecy regarding the promised land, Jerusalem, or Judean religious or ethnic practice.

The discourse in 1:1-3 intertwined the Judean Christ-follower's sense of explicit or implicit ethnic honor with God's foretelling of Jesus' ethnic origin, his Davidic heritage, and the realization of Judean Messianic prophecy within the context of Jesus' life. Accordingly, a Judean Christ-follower's honor was compositely embedded in the lineage and prophetic fulfillment embodied in Jesus.

On the other hand, the writer's praise of Judean ethnicity is not exclusive in 1:1-16. He has similarly honored other ethnicities or "the nations" in Romans 1 without explicit reference to their ethnic patrilineage, homelands other than Rome, heritage, or laws, but implicitly in relation to their reception of the "good news of God," and "faith" as the basis of relationship with God the Father, and Jesus Christ as "Lord," especially apparent in 1:5,7,13,14.¹¹⁸⁶ Consequently, Judeans are directly honored by "faith" as similarly employed by the author to honor Greek, Roman, and other Christ-followers from among "the nations." It is a use of Roman sociolect of the audience resident in Rome shaped to focus on the essential elements of being a Christ-follower. Additionally, the author has honored Judeans "first," in Romans 1:2-3 prior to other ethnicities or people groups in 1:1-16. It is these explicit and implicit characterizations that illustrate the human Judeanness of the divine Jesus Christ, the "good news" of God, that underlie and shape the author's "Judean first" in 1:16c.

If "Judean first" was any reflection of ethnic precedence with God or ethnic superiority, then the stated amplified honor would carry significant connotations. Higher honor implied heightened obligation in the Roman world in adherence to terms of relationship, in this case potential ethnic obligations were placed upon Judean Christ-following hearers. If so, the narrative obliquely presents the "good news" with an inherently increased obligation on those of Judean ethnic lineage based upon reception of Judean prophecy, the appearance of Jesus in historic Judean territory, his birth as a Judean in the flesh, and not only in acceptance of the writer's conceptualization of a Judean Jesus, not only as eschatological Messiah, but also inclusive of the non-Judean, divine aspects attributed to Jesus in Romans 1:1-16.

¹¹⁸⁶ Rom 1:5, "the nations"; 1:7, Rome; 1:13, "the nations"; 1:14, Greeks.

Quite simply, the audience heard the “Judean” Jesus presented as more than Judean. He, who was “descendant of David” according to human birth, was additionally represented as the divine Son of God resurrected from the dead in 1:3, 4 – as “Jesus Christ our Lord.” The implied heightened expectation seems to be that Judeans should recognize Jesus, not only ethnically as one of their own, but also divinely as God. As Stuhlmacher rightly observes, “The gospel addresses itself first to the Jew, in order to show him or her the messianic redeemer promised to Israel and then, in addition, to the Greek (Gentiles), who likewise may recognize in Christ his or her savior and Lord.”¹¹⁸⁷ The audience heard the promotion of a Jesus transformed from Judean Messiah to world Savior, similar in scope and competitively placed in juxtaposition to his Roman imperial counterparts, living, dead, and ascended. It is within this context that “Judean first and Greek” perhaps comes closest to the audience’s experience. Thus “Judean first” carried not only a precedence of honor, but also additional ethnic obligation shaped by the author in regard to being Judean Christ-followers, based upon ethnic human kinship.

4.3.13.5 Romans 1:16c: Audience Implications:

Any author-avowed ethnic elevation ascribed to Judean Christ-followers by “Judean first” in 1:16c carried important implications. First, this Judean ethnic honoring would have been recognized by both Judean and non-Judean Christ-followers among the listening audience in Rome. While the writer had similarly honored Christ-following Greeks, including those in Rome, and of “the nations,” in 1:14, this is the first instance in which he granted Judean honor which created direct competition between ethnicities. Ethnic rivalry until this point had only been implied. This suggests the author purposely created this first moment of audience-directed ethnic rivalry in “Judean first and Greek.”

If “Judean first” was heard as Judean ethnic priority, then the author has purposely thrown rancorous fuel on the communal debate regarding ethnic superiority among Christ-followers in Rome, escalating ethnic tension as did the use of “barbarians” in previously honoring Greek Christ-followers. This ethnic priority most probably provoked consternation among some non-Judeans and proud appreciation among many Judeans. However, it also may have been perceived by some as a balancing of Greek honoring in 1:14, with Judean honoring here

¹¹⁸⁷ Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 28.

in 1:16. If so, the author is attempting to honor both ethnic elements of his audience while creating focus on ethnic concerns. Either way this was perceived, this narrative ploy would certainly have gotten the listeners' attention in regard to ethnicity and competing ways of life, rhetorically preceding continuation of the core statement of divine-human and communal relationships in 1:17-18.

Second, if the explicitly-crafted ethnically-rivalrous declaration mimicked debate raging among Christ-followers in Rome, the writer does not clarify it in 1:16c. "Judean first" remains nebulous in the immediately following narrative, as an unaddressed rhetorical tension in the discourse, blatantly brought to audience awareness, as noted by Byrne.¹¹⁸⁸ Whether the author intended further unspoken understanding of "Judean first" than detailed above is left open to his audience's conjecture. The audience is left with authorial intention and meaning unclarified. He does not refer to a priority of Judean relationship with God (covenantal), a priority of time (Christ revealed to Palestinian Judeans first, then to "the nations" as "good news," as earlier stated in Romans 1:4-5), or a priority of place (Judea/Palestine, then "the nations"). All options are left open for further narrative development, as an enduring dissonance driving a portion of the discourse to Rome. I propose this pronouncement of ethnic "superiority," left unresolved, becomes a core precursory element of ethnic renegotiation among rivalrous honor and ethnically tinged relationships with God and Christ throughout the Roman epistle.

Third, the audience has not heard Judean ethnicity articulated as the primary foundation of relationship with Jesus as Lord or with God the Father, but has heard that "faith" – the core value of Roman transaction and relationship defined honorable human and divine relationships in 1:5, 1:8, and 1:12 – is inherent to those relationships. The author built on "faith" in 1:16b, proclaiming that the "good news," embodied in Jesus Christ, was "the power of God for salvation," and transacted with all who "have or swear faith." As previously argued, to "have or swear faith" in Romans 1 was to establish an individually covenanted relationship with God in regard to and recognition of his "good news." All ethnicities are included in the "to all who swear faith" in 1:16b, mimicking Roman social conventions to amplify the contextualized meaning.

¹¹⁸⁸ Byrne, *Romans*, 57; This ethnic Judean "priority" (Judean first) remains the ethnic undercurrent of the text until 2:9 where Paul will repeat the order in relation to practicing evil, and again in blessing in 2:10, but that is far ahead in the discourse.

Finally, the author has clearly reminded the listeners of explicit and implicit Judean ethnic honor in relation to God and Jesus with his brief, “Judean first.” But it is granted in conjunction and in competition with honor previously granted in his discourse to Romans, Greeks, and those of “the nations” who have embraced his “good news.” It appears that the ethnic categorization of 1:16c to clarify “to all who swear faith,” carried full intent of honoring Judean listeners, especially based upon ethnic Judean honoring in Romans 1:1-3.

The writer accomplished two things in this phrase, he established that “good news” in regard to Jesus Christ and “faith with God” has been presented first to Judeans, and later to Greeks. He also added those in Rome, both Judean and non-Judean, to the other communities who have heard and whom he hoped would accept his divinely-revealed perception of the “good news” of God *as Jesus Christ*. Furthermore, and more importantly, the writer has deliberately incorporated ethnic rivalry as part of his core themes. He left it unresolved at this point in the narrative. It creates an underlying implicit and explicit ethnic tension over status among Christ-followers resident in Rome. It sets the stage for renegotiation of ethnic rivalry and resolution of conflicting social superiority claims among Christ-followers in subsequent chapters of Romans. Therefore, since the author has just proclaimed a universal interest on the part of God to establish salvation with people of all nations, the phrase “to the Judean first and Greek” defines a clear order in which the “good news” has been presented, within the discourse in Romans 1, in the historical life of Jesus, and the proliferation of Christ-followers in balance with preceding Roman and Greek honoring.

4.3.14 Romans 1:17a: “For the righteousness of God is revealed”: Current Commentary

The narrative continues with a third γὰρ, that links listeners back to the preceding statements in Romans 1:15, 1:16a and 1:16b. Wedderburn rightly argues no separation, and full narrative continuation between 1:15, 16, and 17.¹¹⁸⁹ It creates rhetorical clarification including proclamation of “good news” and why it is the “power of God for salvation” in 1:16b.¹¹⁹⁰ Moreover, the prepositional ἐν αὐτῷ certainly refers back to εὐαγγέλιον in

¹¹⁸⁹ Wedderburn, *Reasons For Romans*, 103-104.

¹¹⁹⁰ Wright assumes 1:16b is the primary focus of 1:17a, Wright, *Romans*, 424; Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 91; Morris, *Romans*, 69; Schreiner, *Romans*, 62; Watson, *Hermeneutics of Faith*, 43.

1:16a.¹¹⁹¹ The phrase, “For the righteousness of God in it is revealed,” is a divine revelation of present action of God in the appearance of Jesus Christ by God’s action and discernible by the author’s proclamation, and not as a exegetical future present.¹¹⁹² However, the discourse in 1:17a seemingly re-enlarges the listeners’ scope of thought to universal salvation for “all who have faith” from its audience-startling, preliminary ethnic precedence in “faith-making” in regard to God’s divine relationship with humanity. Yet simultaneously, the just-mentioned ethnically competitive matrix of “to all who have faith, both to Judean first and Greek,” continues to underlie the illumination regarding God’s “good news” and “faith” developed in 1:17a’s first phrase.¹¹⁹³ Of core interpretive interest is what the audience perceives, as the “righteousness of God.”

As Witherington rightly states, we “have to evaluate the Pauline usage of *dikaïosynē* and its cognates on a case by case basis” in Romans.¹¹⁹⁴ Scholarship regarding *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* ranges widely and a full assessment falls outside the scope of this dissertation.¹¹⁹⁵ Most NT theological interpretation of the “righteousness of God” draws upon the LXX, MT, and Second Temple Judean literature to support their positions. Moo’s summarization of this approach is useful in grasping the range of generally proposed interpretive options. His first alternative considers the author’s *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* as descriptive of an attribute of God, most specifically, as God’s justice or faithfulness to his covenant with Israel.¹¹⁹⁶ A second explanation supports an objective genitive reading, that the writer intends righteousness to be a status given by God to those who have faith, or believe, as a righteous “status” imparted to believers, typical of forensic Protestant or Lutheran theology.¹¹⁹⁷ It becomes a forensic-

¹¹⁹¹ Barrett, *Romans*, 29; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 257; Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 91.

¹¹⁹² Leenhardt, *Romans*, 49; Byrne links this “revealing” to Paul’s allusional dependence on Ps. 98:2; Byrne, *Romans*, 60; An eschatological future presently revealed, Barrett, *Romans*, 29-30.

¹¹⁹³ Robert Jewett, Roy David Kotansky, & Eldon Jay Epp, *Romans: A commentary*. Hermeneia, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 146.

¹¹⁹⁴ Witherington, *Romans*, 54.

¹¹⁹⁵ For a sample of recent detailed explorations of righteousness in Rom. 1:17, see Watson, *Hermeneutics of Faith*, 43-53; Schreiner, *Romans*, 63-76; K. Art. Kertelge, “*δικαιοσύνη*” in *The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, EDNT*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990-1993), Vol. 1, 325-330, (327-328); “Righteousness” in D. N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992, 1996), Vol. 5, 754-772 (757-767); Arland J. Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Mission: The Outlook from His Letter to the Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 12-46; Moo, *Romans*, 69-90; J.A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul, A Linguistic and Theological Inquiry*, SNTS 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1972).

¹¹⁹⁶ In support of interpretation of God’s justice, A.E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 2 vols., (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1986, 1987), 1.52; in support of faithfulness to covenant with Israel, Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 40-42; Moo, *Romans*, 70.

¹¹⁹⁷ Morris, *Romans*, 69; Schreiner, *Romans*, 63; Moo, *Romans*, 71; Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Romans*, 13.

eschatological term for the righteousness that comes from God to the Christ-follower.¹¹⁹⁸ From this perspective the relationship with God is expressed primarily in legal terms and constructs.¹¹⁹⁹ Certainly, Wright’s argument, that the righteousness of God in Romans and in this passage is anti-imperial and in opposition to recently coined Augustan *Iustitia*, misses the richness of *Iustitia* in Cicero and other earlier Greek and Roman authors, and is discounted as a listener perspective.¹²⁰⁰

Third, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is perceived to describe righteousness as the saving activity of God, with θεοῦ being regarded as a subjective genitive, “the righteousness that is being shown by God.”¹²⁰¹ This conception of righteousness is that of God “establishing right,” drawn from the LXX to reveal the saving action of God.¹²⁰² Davies further stresses that in 1:17, righteousness is God’s saving activity in Christ which brought salvation and revealed God’s righteousness, modeled on the salvation characteristics of God’s righteousness in action, especially apparent in Isaiah.¹²⁰³ For Davies, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ “...accents God’s faithfulness in keeping his promises.”¹²⁰⁴ This perspective would have resonated well in Rome’s cultural context.

However, placing this phrase in ancient Judean sources is elusive. As Hultgren elucidates, the MT does not have an equivalent phrase to δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ despite claims that Deut. 33:21 supports this reading.¹²⁰⁵ Additionally, the LXX does not use the expression, but does contain “the God of righteousness” in Mal. 2:17.¹²⁰⁶ Perhaps it can be construed from Isaiah 51:5, 6, and 56:1 as Barnes suggests, or from Ps. 72:1-3, 142:1-3a, and 51:14-16 as posited

¹¹⁹⁸ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1951-55), Vol. 1, 273; Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Romans*, 14-15.

¹¹⁹⁹ Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 138.

¹²⁰⁰ Wright, *Romans*, 404-405.

¹²⁰¹ Ernst Käsemann, “The ‘Righteousness of God’ in Paul” in *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 168-182, (172,174, 181); Leenhardt, *Romans*, 54-55; Moo, *Romans*, 71, 71 n 40.

¹²⁰² Moo, *Romans*, 71; Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Romans*, 15-18.

¹²⁰³ For Isaiah passages that depict God’s salvation as display of his righteousness, see Isa. 15:5-8, 54:17, 56:1, 61:10, 62:1, Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 36-37; 37 n 1.

¹²⁰⁴ Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 36-37.

¹²⁰⁵ Deut. 33:21 in the MT is not the same in the LXX. Also the LXX uses “righteousness of the Lord” only in 1 Sam. 12:7 and Micah 6:5, but not “righteousness of God.” Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Romans*, 18-19.

¹²⁰⁶ Witherington, *Romans*, 52; Fitzmyer, 257.

by Seifrid.¹²⁰⁷ If one counts literary parallelism, the closest LXX equivalent allusionally embracing the theme of 1:17a is probably Ps. 98:2, but still it is not a direct parallel.¹²⁰⁸

Neither Philo nor Josephus uses the phrase, though both list “righteousness” as an attribute of God.¹²⁰⁹ While the phrase does appear in Second Temple Literature in Testament of Dan 6:10, it is not clear if the text is emended.¹²¹⁰

Finally, in Judean literature contemporary with this passage, the closest use in the Qumran documents is 1QS 11.12, which links the “righteousness of God” as the basis of salvific judgment in close parallel with the mercies of God as source of salvation.¹²¹¹ Whether Qumran’s views should be read as the basis for the author’s concepts in 1:17 is problematic. Furthermore, it is unlikely that Qumran’s teaching would be comprehended as his source by multi-ethnic listeners in Rome. Thus, while Dead Sea Scroll sources are helpful as distant literary comparison, the source of the phrase in 1:17a is likely different than the LXX, more distant from other Judean sources and more likely locally contextual in Rome.

Furthermore, while compelling, Watson’s argument for interpretation predominantly through a Habakkuk pseudo-citation in 1:17c makes as many presumptions as it solves. The core problem is reading the citation first, out of order of the discourse, and giving it weight for interpretation of the 1:17a, instead of the citation reinforcing what has already been heard by the audience. Also Watson uses Romans 3:9-10 and 9:22-23 to create his argument, neither of which has yet been presented to the listeners for comparative exegetical use. Moreover, Watson discounts the narrative prior to 1:17a, which would have been the weightier

¹²⁰⁷ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Epistle to the Romans Explanatory and Practical*, Ingram Cobbin, MA (ed.), (London: Gall & Inglis, 5th ed., c 1834), 38; Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification*, D.A. Carson, (ed.), *NSBT* 9 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000, repr. 2003), 38-45.

¹²⁰⁸ “The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.” NASB; (LXX Ps. 97:2); Byrne, *Romans*, 60; Leenhardt, *Romans*, 51-52.

¹²⁰⁹ Philo, *Deus Imm.* 79 in Philo, *Quod Deus Immutabilis, Immutability of God, Vol. 5*, F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1930); *Vita Mos.* 2.237-238 in Philo, *De Vita Mosis, The Life of Moses*, F.H. Colson (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1956); Josephus, *Antiquities* 11.267.

¹²¹⁰ “Depart, therefore, from all unrighteousness, and cleave unto the righteousness of God, and your race will be saved forever.”

¹²¹¹ “...if I stumble, the mercies of God shall be my salvation always; and if I fall in the sin of the flesh, in the righteousness of God (בצדקת אל), which endures eternally, shall my judgment be.” 1QS 11:12; Righteousness of God is also mentioned in 1QS 10:25-26.

determinant for audience comprehension. Thus, it is doubtful that the citation that follows in 1:17c generates interpretation of its antecedent in 1:17a.¹²¹²

Leenhardt further summarizes this OT case, arguing that Yahweh in the prophets has disclosed “his righteousness first and foremost by his goodness; he will faithfully fulfill his obligations under the covenant by delivering and saving,” concluding righteousness is “parallel with salvation.”¹²¹³ Byrne similarly notes that LXX translation of δικαιοσύνη into Greek also included not only Hebrew terms such as *šedeq/šēdāqâ*, but also *’ēmeṯ* or faithfulness as does Westerholm.¹²¹⁴

Ziesler’s comments may best summarize righteousness perceived in Roman terms, “God’s righteousness is the way he acts, and notably the way he acts in covenant. It is his activity-in-relationship.”¹²¹⁵ Additionally, he asserts that this “right relationship” (righteousness) of God is manifest in regard to the “good news (of Jesus Christ)” from 1:15 and 1:16b, now being revealed. The caveat to Ziesler’s summation in 1:17a is that God’s covenantal demonstration has been most evident in Christ as expression of God’s faith/faithfulness. The Father’s sworn promises underlie his righteous activity to demonstrate faithfulness through Christ. As the EDNT summarizes, “The God that Paul proclaims is the God who has revealed himself in abiding faithfulness to himself and to his people in Jesus Christ.”¹²¹⁶ The revelation of the “righteousness of God” portrayed so far for the hearers was in the resurrection of Christ. If this perspective is considered, then what God has done as righteousness has not only demonstrated divine power, but also faithful divine patronage, and covenant or promise fulfillment through Jesus Christ as “gift” or “benefaction,” given the attribution of “χάρις, grace” received from the Father through Jesus.¹²¹⁷

Given Ziesler’s and the EDNT’s perspective, the “righteousness of God” in 1:17a is not used to define or demarcate divine loyalty to covenantal faithfulness to Judean theocratic motifs

¹²¹² Watson, *Hermeneutics of Faith*, 41-53.

¹²¹³ Leenhardt, *Romans*, 51 also see Schreiner’s argument for LXX parallels of the righteousness and salvation of God, Schreiner, *Romans*, 66.

¹²¹⁴ Gen 24:49, Josh 24:14, Isa 38:19; Byrne, *Romans*, 59; Westerholm, *Understanding Paul*, 34-35.

¹²¹⁵ Ziesler, *Meaning of Righteousness in Paul*, 186.

¹²¹⁶ H. R. Balz & G. Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, EDNT* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990-c1993), 1:328.

¹²¹⁷ Romans 1:5; Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 37.

typical of Mosaic Law or Sinai's covenant, as argued by some scholars.¹²¹⁸ As Schreiner and Seifrid point out, the concepts of righteousness and covenant fulfillment rarely occur together in the OT.¹²¹⁹

Even if covenantal faithfulness in regard to the Messiah and LXX might have been predominant for Roman Judeans, the preceding themes in 1:16 incorporate non-Judeans who likely had a different context for their interpretive standpoint. It is in proclamation of God's action "to all who have faith, both Judean first and Greek" and in regard to "Jesus Christ our Lord" that the writer has positioned the "righteousness of God." It seems more likely that the author has utilized non-Mosaic, and likely non-Judean covenantal concepts as the framework for interpretation more relevant to his listeners. This leaves open the question, how do non-Judean and Judean residents of Rome relate to the "righteousness of God" within the context of Rome?

4.3.14.1 Romans 1:17a: "For the righteousness of God is revealed": Rome's Context

The question immediately arises if the Greek concept of the "righteousness of God" expressed in Romans has any legitimacy in being understood in "Roman" terms. It is almost certain it does for the listeners. For both Judeans and non-Judeans, Roman life was deeply concerned in daily activity with "right relations" with God/gods. As seen in chapter 3.8, and in 1.2.4.8, righteousness towards the gods was perceived as lived piety, and in turn righteousness or *Iustitia* was divinized as a god. Righteousness was a virtue to be embodied and lived, and was inextricably entwined with Augustan ideals, as a god. Righteousness was what resulted in honored faith as lived out in faithfulness.

This contextual background from Rome shapes a reconsideration of the phrase, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, as heard by the audience in Rome. Talbert, despite presuming that classical literature makes no contribution to understanding 1:17, actually summarizes it well, "God's righteousness refers to God's covenant faithfulness."¹²²⁰ In this case, covenant faithfulness is not in relation to Sinai, but to God's promise fulfillment embodied in Jesus Christ. Since in

¹²¹⁸ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 40; Kaylor, *Paul's Covenant Community in Romans*, 30-31.

¹²¹⁹ Schreiner, *Romans*, 68-69; M.A. Seifrid, *Justification by Faith: The Origin and Development of a Central Pauline Theme*. SNT 68 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 214-219.

¹²²⁰ Talbert, *Romans*, 37.

OT/LXX passages, God often promises in prophetic language and swears by his own name or character, it seems reasonable to conclude that a perspective of God's sworn oath is that of "faith," comprehended in Greek and Roman terms of oath-making with deity.

For those listening in Rome, the perspective in regard to 1:17a and the "righteousness of God" was more likely something that originates with, and is inherent to God as an integral aspect of his divinity and not a "state of being" that God provides humanity.¹²²¹ This seems most apparent as we examine what has been argued thus far in Romans. The author has attributed that God revealed himself to humanity, predominantly through Jesus Christ, the "good news" of God. He has presented Jesus as God's manifestation of "right relationship," or "righteousness realized through action" fulfilled through prophecy, who came as David's descendant, who was divine Son of God, who was resurrected from the dead, and who demonstrated the fullness of divine benefaction as the basis and avenue of restoration of "right relationship" with God, or salvation by divine interaction with humanity, something not yet unfolded or explained in Romans at this juncture in the discourse.¹²²²

In summary, the "righteousness of God" encompassed the fulfillment of God's self-proclaimed actions of righteousness, as demonstrated faithfulness toward humanity.¹²²³ This "righteousness of God" was the "right relationship" of God embodied in Jesus Christ and revealed to humanity as God's "good news." The writer did not intend that the audience hear that "righteousness" was perceived anthropologically or eschatologically, nor as humanity's forensic or juridical state of "right relationship" with God, nor as atoning "righteousness" provided by God to resolve human sinfulness as intimated by Barrett, Morris, and Osborne.¹²²⁴

The writer has not mentioned Christ's death for sin as the primary attribute of God's revealing his "good news" in 1:1-17. It has been Christ's resurrection from the dead – Christ's victory over death – which has been proclaimed thus far in Romans, a contextually meaningful element in a city filled with honors to those deified and ascended into the heavens. Additionally, the attribute most mentioned to the audience as the basis of relations

¹²²¹ Witherington, *Romans*, 54.

¹²²² Rom. 1:1-4.

¹²²³ Rom. 1:4.

¹²²⁴ Barrett, *Romans*, 30; Morris, *Romans*, 100-103; Osborne, *Romans*, 42-43.

with God has been “faith.” Faith formed the foundation of interaction with the revelation of God’s “good news” and also, God’s righteousness.

The author has not yet discussed these issues nor utilized this imagery with his listeners. The “righteousness of God” summarizes the pronouncement regarding the “good news” as Jesus Christ, who has embodied the prophetically-sworn faithfulness of God exhibited as the Father’s righteousness.¹²²⁵ The author has not excluded any portion of humanity in his discourse in Romans 1:1-17, but intertwines the revelation of the righteousness of God with ethnic honoring of those in Rome; Romans, Judeans and Greeks. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that the reference to the righteousness of God is universal in application – God is in the process through his “good news” of actively establishing “right relationship” with all humanity.¹²²⁶ In Roman cultural terms, God has been faithful through divine benefactory action which creates and requires human obligation in response through piety, *pietas*, or righteousness, which in Rome, as has already been argued in Romans 1:5, was expressed through oath-sworn faith or faithfulness, *fides* or πίστις.

4.3.15 Romans 1:17b: “From faithfulness for faithfulness”

This following phrase states the means by which the righteousness of God is revealed and its desired result: “from faith for faith.” While the “righteousness of God” has been contentious, the abbreviated explanation regarding the revelatory function of faith/faithfulness has created almost limitless theological conversation. The cryptic elucidation, ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν, has been rendered, among other readings, “by faith for faith,” “from faith for faith,” “from faith to faith,” “through faith for faith,” or translated in variants including “out of [God’s covenantal] faithfulness for [the purpose of establishing] faith.”¹²²⁷ Johnson leans even further towards interpretation rather than translation, based upon the dynamics of divine gift and human response, concluding the phrase means “out of the faith of Jesus” and “leads to the faith of Christians.”¹²²⁸

¹²²⁵ Kaylor, *Paul’s Covenant Community in Romans*, 30-31.

¹²²⁶ Byrne, *Romans*, 58.

¹²²⁷ Cranfield recites a more comprehensive but not exhaustive list, tracing a history of interpretation, Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 99-100; Kaylor, *Paul’s Covenant Community in Romans*, 31.

¹²²⁸ Johnson, *Reading Romans*, 29.

4.3.15.1 Romans 1:17b “From faithfulness”: Recent Scholarship

A brief perusal of current scholarship provides a breadth of current interpretation. Keck’s theological musings proposes ἐκ πίστεως addresses the method, or how the righteousness of God is apparent, expressed Christologically, as Christ being the Righteous One who lives faithfulness and εἰς πίστιν expresses the purpose for which it occurs, to bring about humanity’s faith response.¹²²⁹ What Keck adds is that the passage is ethnically inclusive, that neither Judean or Greek or Gentile has another way into relationship with God, the righteousness comes through the avenue of faith as the sole approach as “one salvation for Jews and Gentiles,” similar to Kuula’s position, that Christ is heard as the only savior for Judeans and Gentiles.¹²³⁰

Keck’s concept is certainly better than Barrett’s rhetorical reading; “faith from start to finish,” or Edwards’ “by faith from first to last” as supported by some commentators.¹²³¹ Morris posits that Manson’s interpretation; “a revelation that springs from God’s faithfulness and appeals to man’s faith more closely relates to themes of faith as used within the context of Rome.”¹²³² The problem is that neither Morris nor Manson clarify the evidence that supports their contextual conclusion.

Minear lists six interpretations of this expression. He determines that its intention was to be cryptically polemic and to combat ethnic contention by meaning, “proceeding out of faith in the direction of a stronger faith,” echoing Sanday and Headlam.¹²³³ Minear’s suggests that 1:17 is best comprehended through Romans 14 and 15’s presumed ethnic group contention of “strong” and “weak” – supposedly destroyed by this phrase in 1:17, which Minear is

¹²²⁹ Keck, *Romans*, 52-54.

¹²³⁰ Keck, *Romans*, 53-54; Kari Kuula, *The Law, The Covenant and God’s Plan: Volume 2. Paul’s Treatment of the Law and Israel in Romans*, *Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society in Helsinki* 85, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 87.

¹²³¹ Barrett, *Romans*, 31; James R. Edwards, *Romans*, *New International Biblical Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995, 5th ed., 2002), 42-43; or rendered “faith through and through,” Morris, *Romans*, 70; “beginning and ending in faith,” Johnson, *Reading Romans*, 29; faith as the believers part “first, last, midst, and without end,” H.C.G. Moule, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, W. Robertson Nicoll (ed.), *The Expositors Bible*, 10th ed., (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1894), 34.

¹²³² Morris, *Romans*, 70.

¹²³³ William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans*, *ICC*, S.R. Driver, A. Plummer, and C.A. Briggs (eds.), (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1900), 28.

predisposed to interpret in conjunction with Romans 1:5's "obedience of faith" read in association with Romans 16:26.¹²³⁴ The weakness in Minear's argument is that those termed "strong" and "weak" represent ethnic groups. Haacker also asserts the "strong and weak" factor driving the correspondence to Rome, however from the opposite position of Minear, that "Gentile" Christians were the weak.¹²³⁵ Both positions seem without merit, since there is no direct evidence that ethnicity plays a role in characteristic assignment in Romans 14, and the author only indirectly returns to ethnic themes in Romans 15:8-12 regarding his concluding praise of God and Christ in their relating to non-Judeans and Judeans.¹²³⁶ Moreover, to interpret Romans 1:17b in this way, Minear and Haacker read Romans backwards, ignore its textual progression, and disregard a consecutive reading of 1:1-17 within its Roman context.¹²³⁷

4.3.15.2 Romans 1:17b: "From faithfulness": The Roman Context

Now let us return to consideration of faith as oath-based covenant by contextually reading Romans within Rome. As detailed in Chapter 3, a Roman transaction of faith required a series of questions or promises to be affirmed by those entering into covenant or binding agreement. The format was: "Will you give?" "I will give"; "Do you promise?" "I promise"; "Do you promise your faith/honor?" "I promise my faith/honor"; "Will you do?" "I will do."¹²³⁸ As is evident, giving and honoring promises or vows was core to oath-based faith-swearing. Furthermore, Rome's populace understood that oath-making applied to the gods who worked by or through faith as honorable transaction. In Cicero's critique of those who pursued wealth in *De Amicitia*, he stated their attempts were "by the faith of gods and men," referring to faith practised in both the human and divine realms.¹²³⁹ Furthermore, faith and honor have been shown to conceptually overlap in covenantal vowing and oath-swearing, especially by Meyer.¹²⁴⁰ The phrase utilized core conservative Roman values as a framework for hearing the narrative.

¹²³⁴ Minear, *Obedience of Faith*, 42-43.

¹²³⁵ Haacker, *Theology of Romans*, 26-27.

¹²³⁶ Minear, *Obedience of Faith*, 42.

¹²³⁷ Minear, *Obedience of Faith*, 43-44.

¹²³⁸ Gaius, *Institutes* 3.92-93; Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 115-116.

¹²³⁹ "...pro deorum fidem atque hominum!" Cicero, *De Amicitia* 52, in Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione*, William A. Falconer (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University, 1931).

¹²⁴⁰ Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law*, 158-163.

4.3.15.3 Romans 1:17b: “From faithfulness”: Sitting in the Audience

In revisiting what the audience has heard thus far in Romans in regard to God and his relationship with humanity, God has acted to honorably fulfill His promises, an obvious act of faith/honor in Roman experience.¹²⁴¹ Romans 1:2 claimed that God the Father gave Christ Jesus as he “promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.” This presented the element of a “faith” transaction, borne out in action as faithfulness. Romans 1:3, 4, detailed what God did in fulfillment of promise-in-action in Jesus Christ, a descendant of David according to the flesh, and Son-of-God-in-power by resurrection from the dead. In the continuative statement of “good news” in 1:1-7, God has been honorable and faithful by what he has promised, given, and done in Jesus Christ, including toward those in Rome.

This idea is strengthened by the preceding verb. Use of the present tense in “being revealed,” developed the perception of God’s “faithfulness” personified in Jesus Christ, as the Father’s present “Faith.” If so, then ἐκ πίστεως also synonymously embodied God’s honor, and in turn declared the right of God to be honored as God, not from the perspective of OT tradition barely associated with the term “faith,” but primarily in alignment with the Greek and Roman conventions of sworn faith, and particularly practised in Rome.¹²⁴² Given this context, in 1:17b, ἐκ πίστεως carried a nuance of “by honor” or “from honor,” as much as “by faith” for the audience. This suggests that the author’s use of Rome’s social language has subsumed and realigned fundamental elements of covenantal oath-sworn faith core to the values, virtues, and practises of mythological, historical, and contemporaneous human and divine interaction in Rome to construct the theological concept of “faith” in Romans, familiar to Judean and non-Judean listeners.

In summary, ἐκ πίστεως seems, when sitting in Rome’s audience, best literally translated as “from or by faithfulness,” encompassing aspects of honor created by God’s faith act, as faithfulness in action. The phrase, ἐκ πίστεως reminds the audience of God’s faithfulness to his promises as the foundation of God’s relationship with those who have recognized his promises fulfilled as embodied in Jesus Christ, detailed in Romans 1:1-4.

¹²⁴¹ Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans 1-4*, 43.

¹²⁴² “Honor the Lord” in the LXX, Ps. 28:1; 95:7; Prov. 3:9; 7:1, but not connected with “faith.”

4.3.15.4 Romans 1:17b “For faithfulness”: Recent Scholarship

The author immediately paired ἐκ πίστεως with εἰς πίστιν. Given the discussion in Romans 1:5 regarding faith in Roman life, this phrase intends much more than “belief,” “reliability,” or “trust,” contra Dunn and others.¹²⁴³ Haacker aptly contextually interprets εἰς πίστιν, as faith that is “the adequate and required response to the Lordship of Jesus,” which I suggest is the faithful human response to God’s “from faithfulness” of the prior phrase.¹²⁴⁴

Yet if εἰς πίστιν is literally translated “for faith” and intended to encompass “for faithfulness,” then it anticipates not only a transaction of promise, of giving, of doing, but also an ongoing reciprocal relationship of honoring and being honored by God.¹²⁴⁵ If so, εἰς πίστιν, “for faith/faithfulness,” may tersely and subtly communicate what has already been stated about the audience’s reaction to God, that of Rome’s Christ-follower’s “faith” in Romans 1:5-8, 12 summarized as their “faith/faithfulness” relationship with God “known throughout the world.”

4.3.15.5 Romans 1:17b “For faithfulness”: The Roman Context

For the audience there was fertile ground for understanding divine faith, piety, and righteousness, drawn upon Greek and Roman writers in Rome’s context and how humanity should respond to deity in the same manner. In late Republican Rome, Philodemus, like Cicero, linked justice and faithfulness as intertwined core communication of piety towards the gods or God, as well as humanity. In mid-defense of Epicurus’ piety towards the gods, Philodemus states “that those who are oath-keeping (εὐορκος) and just (δίκαιος, righteous) are moved by the most virtuous influences both from their own selves and from those (the gods.)”¹²⁴⁶ He further presented oath-making as core to practising faith and faithfulness with gods and people, “it must be acknowledged that he (Epicurus) acted in accordance with what he believed, πράσσω (practised) and taught and that he faithfully employed, κατέχω (held

¹²⁴³ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 43.

¹²⁴⁴ Haacker, *Theology of Romans*, 28; also Byrne, *Romans*, 60.

¹²⁴⁵ Bryan touches on this, but not in relation to the audience. Bryan, *Preface to Romans*, 70.

¹²⁴⁶ “καὶ εὐορκούς [καὶ δι]καίους ταῖς ἀ[ρ]ίσταις διαδόσε[σι] κινεῖσθαι καὶ παρ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ παρ’ ἐκείνου.” Philodemus, *On Piety*, 38.1082-1087; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 180-181, 477-478.

fast) oaths (ὄρκος) and tokens (σημείον, indications) of good faith (πίστεως, faithfulness), and kept (φύλασσω, cherished) them.”¹²⁴⁷

The point here is the conventions of human faith in interaction with deity, of Philodemus’ cherishing the practice of faith in relation between a god and man in Epicurus’ life. The concept of expressed faithfulness towards the gods was more than ritual, but an inner perception, certainty, and emotion that drove the practice of faith with deity as righteous piety.

Thus, εἰς πίστιν, (for faithfulness) may implicitly be another reiteration of honoring the audience. Roman listeners heard themselves and their faith/faithfulness proclaimed in Romans 1:8, reaffirmed in εἰς πίστιν in Romans 1:17b. Additionally, there was no ethnic distinction in this phrase, the appeal to reciprocal faithfulness between humanity and God applied to each hearer no matter their ethnicity, Judean, Greek, or Roman, “without any restriction of race or culture.”¹²⁴⁸

4.3.16 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: Revisited as Quasi-Citation

The author followed with an intended clarification of the divine-human relationship of reciprocal faith/faithfulness. Again, his supposed citation from Judean scriptures, has stirred considerable debate. He clarified ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν with a citation presumably from Habakkuk 2:4: ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται, “the one who is righteous by faith/faithfulness will live.”

4.3.16.1 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: Which version?

Several dilemmas are encountered in this clause. The first dilemma is which “Habakkuk” did the author cite? Was it the LXX, MT, an unknown textual variant, his own faulty memory, or purposeful revision? Perhaps it was an interpretive gloss as proposed by Watson.¹²⁴⁹ If the intent was to reproduce the MT, the writer neglected an additional pronoun that produces a

¹²⁴⁷ “ὡς ἀκολούθῳ[ς ἔπρα]ξεν οἷς ἐδογ[μάτι]σεν κα[τε]χρήτο τοῖς ὄρκοις καὶ τοῖς [σημεί]οις πίστεως ὄλ[ω]ς ὑ]πονο[η]τ[έ]ον,] καὶ ἐ[φύ]λατ[τε].” Philodemus, *On Piety*, 51.1451-1461; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 206-207, 522.

¹²⁴⁸ Leenhardt, *Romans*, 55-56.

¹²⁴⁹ Watson, *Hermeneutics of Faith*, 49.

reading of “his faith/faithfulness,” presumably that of the faithful Israelite, or Judean, or perhaps intended by the author as Christ’s faithfulness.¹²⁵⁰

A second potential citation source was LXX codices S and W, commonly used by Greek-speaking Judeans which read: ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται, with an added personal pronoun that results in “my faith/faithfulness,” in supposed reference to God’s faith/faithfulness.¹²⁵¹ Two other LXX variants, possibly available to the writer, transpose the pronoun in Habakkuk, ὁ δὲ δίκαιος μου ἐκ πίστεώς ζήσεται, rendering a reading, “but my righteous one by faith will live,” presumably referring to the person who has faith with God, or perhaps intending Christ himself, which seems the most unlikely reading.¹²⁵² One thing is certain, the author is contrarian to *1QpHab*, who attributed righteousness to those who observe the Law and have faith in the Teacher of Righteousness.¹²⁵³

Whatever the tracing, the linkage to Habakkuk may have been obvious to Judean listeners and a point of ethnic honor in the use of a quasi-Septuagintal citation albeit not fully substantiated for its accuracy. However, Johnson notes that 1:17 “would have sounded familiar to any Jewish readers,” but that other elements of this imagery would have left them “uneasy” because it did not match Judean concepts or tradition.¹²⁵⁴ But, Judean and non-Judeans in Rome may not have been as uneasy as Johnson may conclude if the interpretive lens is reshaped.

4.3.16.2 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: Authoritativeness for Non-Judeans

A second dilemma to consider is if non-Judean Greco-Roman listeners would accept this Septuagint passage as authoritative. It is assumed the author concluded his diverse audience would do so. However, it is often assumed that use of a Septuagint passage calls for exegesis or interpretation through the Septuagint, other Judean texts, and aligned with ideas primarily drawn from Judean religious thought, drawn from Judea or Jerusalem.

¹²⁵⁰ The MT text is also cited in *1QpHab* 7:17, demonstrating a non-Pauline interpretation of the verse within contemporary Judean circles; Moo, *Romans*, 77; as Christ’s, Keck, *Romans*, 54.

¹²⁵¹ Schreiner, *Romans*, 73; Jewett, *Romans*, 144.

¹²⁵² LXX codices A and C; see Jewett, *Romans*, 144.

¹²⁵³ Bryan, *Preface to Romans*, 70.

¹²⁵⁴ Johnson, *Reading Romans*, 30.

A selective memory by the author for recitation of this citation was quite possible, given the ancients penchant for text memorization, and later modified reuse for rhetorical purposes in written texts.¹²⁵⁵ Furthermore, the people of Rome spent considerable time and effort memorizing key thoughts or ideas, often as brief phrases easily remembered to create a basis for education or entertainment. So while some audience members may have heard an authoritative Judean passage to explain the discourse, perhaps non-Judeans may not have held that perspective and heard it differently.

4.3.16.3 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: The Roman Context

Might it be possible to hear this semi-citation of Habakkuk from a different perspective? Is it possible for a Septuagint text to be taken as authoritative for expressing ideas regarding God, but be “heard” in the context of life in Rome, and its religious and cultural thought which immerses its Judean and non-Judean audience? In other words, does “the one who is righteous by faithfulness will live?” make sense to non-Judean recipients and if so, how?

If the concept of right relationship of God is based within the Roman life of faithfulness, then the off-use of Habakkuk may have served a very Roman role – that of maxim. Roman or Greek maxims or phrases expressed key cultural, moral or educational ideas and are found in countless venues and forms as varied as graffiti, funerary inscriptions, or gathered in collections, such as the *Sententiae* of Publilius Syrus, and even as inscriptions on backgammon boards. As Horsfall notes. “proverbs and maxims were dear to the Romans.”¹²⁵⁶

If the author intentionally quasi-quoted the Habakkuk phrase as maxim, then its appeal may stretch not only as an “it is written,” with Judean Septuagintal force, but also as a statement of memorable core truth evident within non-Judean traditions of how God and humanity related in right relationship. If the Habakkuk passage was cited as “the one who is righteous by faithfulness will live,” it might also have been rooted in the sociolect of Roman social and religious practice.

¹²⁵⁵ Ernst Best, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967), 17; Jocelyn Penny Small, ‘Wax Tablets of the Mind: Cognitive Studies of Memory and Literacy’ in *Classical Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1997), 126-131, (129-130).

¹²⁵⁶ Horsfall, *Culture Roman Plebs*, 123-124.

4.3.16.4 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: The Roman Context - Philodemus

Confirmation of interpreting Habakkuk 2:4 from a non-Judean perspective may be heard within Rome's context. Philodemus, Cicero's contemporary and Virgil's instructor, substantiated the linkage of piety and righteousness in personal human interaction with deity. The association of faith, piety, and righteousness was clear in his statements in regard to those unfaithful and unrighteous in relationships with deity. In regard to oath-sworn faith, he taught that, "to break one's oath is to be unjust (unrighteous) and also to lie, and both are disturbing (rebellious)."¹²⁵⁷ This is further attested by recalling that one's oath of faith in a Roman context was oath-sworn faith with a god, that "was sworn only with one's hand on the altar of the god taken as witness," most likely often Jupiter, perhaps Quirinus, Semo Sancus, or Fidius as the final guardian and guarantor of oaths.¹²⁵⁸ But the breach of faith went further. In discussion of those with bad conscience and fear towards the gods Philodemus stated, "Thus, as far as we are concerned (with respect to justice, righteousness), on account of the belief, πίστιν (faith) which they do not have, they would accomplish nothing (have no proper conception of the gods)."¹²⁵⁹ Ultimately Philodemus taught that the wicked, κακῶν "did not consider that justice (righteousness) and piety are virtually the same thing."¹²⁶⁰

Philodemus also described the relation of faith and righteousness in relation to deity. He claimed that those who were oath-keeping were equated "with the just (righteous) and aligned with the gods."¹²⁶¹ Furthermore, he also described the appropriate approach to pious relationship with deity, "the wise man addresses prayers to the gods, he admires their nature and condition, he strives to come near it (the god), he aspires, so to speak, to touch and live with it, and he calls wise men friends of the gods, and the gods friends of wise men."¹²⁶²

¹²⁵⁷ Philodemus, *On Piety*, 79.2273-2277; 38.1082-1089; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 594-595.

¹²⁵⁸ Plautus, *Rudens* 336; Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 90; Virgil, *Aeneid* 12.201; Turcan, *Gods of Ancient Rome*, 59, 64.

¹²⁵⁹ οὐτῶ δὲ τό γ' ἐφ' ἡμᾶς εἶναι δι' ἣν οὐκ ἐσχήκασι πίστιν οὐδεν ἄν πράττοιεν. Philodemus, *On Piety*, 71.2039-2043; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 246-247, 247 n. 3, 567.

¹²⁶⁰ "κα[ὶ μ]ὴ θεωρήσαντ[ες ὅ]τι σχεδὸν ταύτ[ο φαί]νεται τὸ ὄσιο[ν καὶ δί]και[ον...." Philodemus, *On Piety*, 78.2261-2265; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 260-261, 592.

¹²⁶¹ Philodemus, *On Piety*, 79.2273-2277; 38.1082-1089; Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 594-595.

¹²⁶² ὁ σοφὸς προσεύχεται τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ θαυμάζει τῆ[ν] φύσιν [αὐτῶν κ(αὶ)] τὴν διάθεσιν καὶ περᾶται συνεγγί[ζειν] αὐτῇ καὶ καθαπερὲ γλίχεται θιγε[ῖν καὶ συ]νεῖναι, καλεῖ τ[ε] καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς τῶν [θεῶν] φίλους καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς τῶν σοφῶν. Philodemus, *De dis* 3 col. 1, 13-18 in Epicurian fragment 386 Us. in Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 408-409.

Obbink provides further clarification of Philodemus' musings on faith or oath-making, "it may be said that for an Epicurian the swearing of an oath exhibits or even creates a disposition, *διάθεσις*, in one's soul to fulfill it – a disposition which according to Epicurian thought is closely connected, if not coextensive, with the gods by which one swears."¹²⁶³ In some Greek sources, *διάθεσις* was virtually synonymous with *διαθήκη*, or covenant, as representation of the desire and performance of an act of obligation termed "faith."¹²⁶⁴

Yet, while Christian theology often portrays much of the imagery of righteousness as faithfulness as juridical or legal in structure, in Philodemus' *Rhetoric 2*, Hermarchus' quotation denies the validity of oaths in courtroom rhetoric since they did not "in fact provide a guarantee, *πίστις* (faith), of their fulfillment."¹²⁶⁵ The proper perspective seemed to be relational and not necessarily legal. However that does not mean that when relational faith was broken, it did not have legal ramifications.

Philodemus' point was that human faith was lived in response to, and intertwined with divine faith – a concept well known to Philodemus' Roman audience. The experience with deity in daily life, of coming near the god, captured the essence of Roman piety and the social conventions of Roman righteousness or right relationship with God/the gods.

Similarly, in 1:17c, to keep one's oath of faith was to be just or righteous, and to be aligned with God. If God has covenantally sworn faith – fulfilled by keeping his sworn promises – as demonstrated faithfulness by giving Jesus Christ, and further established by grant of immortality through his resurrection, then "the one who is righteous by faithfulness will live," summarizes not only God's action "from faithfulness" but also dualistically the required human response "for faithfulness" to God's faithfulness which, as Philodemus held, righteously and piously aligned one with the gods.

4.3.16.5 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: The Roman Context – Cicero and Posidonius

¹²⁶³ Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 425.

¹²⁶⁴ Philodemus gave a hint by pairing *ὄρκους* and *διαθήκας*, in place of *διάθεσις* in discussion of oaths and covenants as expression of proper piety with the god, likely Zeus, in *On Piety*, 67.1936, Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 239.

¹²⁶⁵ Philodemus, *On Piety*, Vol. 1, 426.

This faith-lived relationship with God stated in Romans 1:17c was similarly described by Cicero. Cicero argued that “piety is justice, *iustitia* or righteousness towards the gods.”¹²⁶⁶ The Latin statement is no different than Greek. Cicero’s well documented Greek source was Posidonius, “ἔστιν ἡ ὁσιότης δικαιοσύνη τις πρὸς θεοῦς.”¹²⁶⁷ Yet, Cicero more specifically argued that piety towards the gods was essential for righteousness to be lived out in divine and human relationships, “...if piety towards the gods disappears, also *fides* (faith) and the *societas generis humani* (community of the human race) and that particularly excellent virtue, righteousness (*iustitia*), will disappear.”¹²⁶⁸ Wagenvoort argues that Cicero implied that piety was the expression of humanity’s faith in deity’s call to relationship, which he suggests was manifest in man’s and gods’ exercise of “that particularly excellent virtue, righteousness.”¹²⁶⁹ From Cicero’s and Posidonius’s perspectives, it seems *pietas* and *iustitia* are practically synonymous expressions, similar to Philodemus’ teaching, and that lived oath-sworn faith was an essential element of right relationship with deity.

4.3.16.6 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: The Roman Context – Later Authors

That the intertwined concepts and actions of piety, righteousness, and faith were still relevant and interrelated in the audience’s contemporary Rome was demonstrated by Silius Italicus’ presentation of faith (*fides*) as the foundation of *iustitia*, (right relationship) with the gods. In *Punica*, Hannibal’s breach of *fides* with Rome by his assault on Saguntum, was unrighteous or unjust, a demolition of *ius*, not only towards that city and Rome, but towards the gods as a “sin against Jove (Jupiter).”¹²⁷⁰

Similarly, Plutarch’s later comments that adherents of Isis and Osiris worshipped those gods based upon “faith and love,” would not have been unusual or foreign to the recipients in Rome given the popularity and official sanction of her cult.¹²⁷¹ Apuleis’ Lucius, similarly pondered, “how arduous was the service of faith, how extremely hard were the rules of

¹²⁶⁶ *Est enim pietas iustitia adversus deos.* Cicero, *De Natura .Deorum* 1.41.116; Turcan, *Gods of Ancient Rome*, 5.

¹²⁶⁷ “Piety (holiness) is righteousness towards the gods.” Posidonius, *Adv. Phys.* 1.124 in H. Wagenvoort, *PIETAS: Selected Studies in Roman Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 10.

¹²⁶⁸ ... *atque haud scio an pietate adversus deos sublata fides etiam et societas generis humani et una excellentissima virtus, iustitia, tollatur.* Cicero, *De Natura .Deorum* 1.2.3-4.

¹²⁶⁹ Wagenvoort, *PIETAS*, 11.

¹²⁷⁰ Bassett, ‘Regulus and the Serpent’, 12 n 20.

¹²⁷¹ For Plutarch, the adherent’s response to Isis and Osiris is plain, “for these (people) hearing (the gods Isis and Osiris) have love and faith (ἀγαπῶσι καὶ πιστεύουσιν).” Plutarch, *Iside et Osiride* 65, in Griffiths, *Iside et Osiride*, 221.

chastity and abstinence” that Isis place upon him in faith-sworn relationship.¹²⁷² Faith as faithfulness towards the gods was lived out in action.

Epictetus similarly expressed moral and social linkage with God in non-Judean terms, including interactive faithfulness: “Now the philosophers say that the first thing that we must learn is this: That there is a God, and that He provides for the universe, and that it is impossible for a man to conceal from Him, not merely his actions, but even his purposes and thoughts. Next we must learn what the gods are like; for whatever their character is discovered to be, the man who is going to please and obey them must endeavor as best he can to resemble them. If the deity is faithful, he must also be faithful; if free, he must also be free; if beneficent, he must also be beneficent; if high-minded, he also must be high-minded, and so forth; therefore in everything he says and does, he must act as an imitator of God.”¹²⁷³

4.3.16.7 Romans 1:17c: Habakkuk 2:4: The Roman Context – A Maxim Made for Rome

In summary, the phrase of Romans 1:17c, “the one who is righteous by faithfulness will live,” resonated well with non-Judeans in the audience. In Rome, to be in right relationship with a god who was righteous, required faith-based oath-swearing to honor the deity, but seemingly outside a forensic context. Oath-based faith was the basis of covenant relationship between humanity and deity. Thus, use of Habbakuk would not have been conceptually unfamiliar to non-Judeans unversed in the Septuagint.

The “one who is righteous by faithfulness will live,” maximized the proper human response of swearing honorable faith in obligated honor reciprocation to God’s faith-sworn benefaction. It summarized the ongoing human/divine relationship, in this case in humans sharing by oath-sworn faith in Christ’s resurrection.¹²⁷⁴ Hence, the phrase in context is not expression of a mono-directional relationship, of either God’s faithfulness or human faithfulness in response to God’s. The author has succinctly described the normative bi-

¹²⁷² Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 19, in Apuleius of Madaruros, and J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Isis-book - Metamorphoses*, J. Gwyn Griffiths (trans.), J. Gwyn Griffiths (ed.), (Leiden: Brill Academic, 1975, 1997), 93; J. Gwyn Griffiths, “The Great Egyptian Cults of Oecumenical Significance” in A.H. Armstrong, (ed.), *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek Roman* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 39-65, (54-55).

¹²⁷³ *Epictetus*, 2.14.11-13 in Epictetus, *Discourses*, W.A. Oldfather (trans.), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1925, repr. 1989), Vol. 1, 309.

¹²⁷⁴ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 265.

directional relationship between deity and humanity, with that of deity to humanity thus far being the primary focus in Romans 1:15-17.

What Rom 1:17c provided was a scripturally legitimized maxim to describe the interactive “faith-made” relationship between God and humanity – and humanity and God. In its abridged form it called for the desired response of human faithfulness to God’s action, that the writer ascribed as being lived by Christ-followers in Rome in Romans 1:5-8, as acknowledged world-wide. Yet 1:17c corporately addressed the audience in a faith-based relationship with God as potentially rivalrous ethnic groups, especially as Judeans and non-Judeans which the author has not yet fully developed or addressed.¹²⁷⁵

In summary, in 1:17c, “one who is righteous by faithfulness will live,” the author’s intentionality is contextually realized within the Greek and Roman cultural transactions of faith practiced in daily life in Rome, familiar to his entire audience – in its promising, giving, swearing by one’s faith/honor, and the following actions and living required to form ongoing “righteous” relationships among its population, cultures, ethnicities and with their God/gods. In this passage, it is oathed faith-swearing with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ that forms the basis of right relationship, based on the benefaction and promise-fulfillment of what God has already done in the revelation of Jesus.

4.4 Romans 1:1-17 Conclusions

This reading of Romans 1:1-17 from the potential initial audience perspective seems to suggest several important observations that emerge to contribute to further reading from a non-Judean perspective:

First, the author initiated his negotiation of ethnic ideas and concepts early in Romans. He commenced in Rom. 1:2, with reference to the Judean holy scriptures and ethnic undertones which emerge more clearly in 1:3, with his portrayal of Christ as son of David, which would have had ethnic appeal to Judeans. However, the twinned appellation of Son of God, and Lord, etc in 1:4, may have had greater significance with non-Judeans in Rome’s imperial setting. But even more, the writer expressed his ideas regarding Jesus Christ in terms that would have been uncomfortable and even blasphemous in some Judean settings. Second, the

¹²⁷⁵ Romans 1:13-17, Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans*, 112-115, 138-141.

author practiced a dualistic approach on ethnic issues, granting honor to Judeans and non-Judeans by ethnic phrasing and ideas, most apparent in Rom 1:14-16, yet traceable in the entire passage.

Most importantly, he began ethnic positioning by granting honor by his faith proclamations to the entire audience by positioning their and his relationship with one another by utilization of Roman social structures of faith in description of relations with God and Christ. The writer particularly placed himself in relationship with them by shared faith in Romans 1:12. Thus, I suggest he praised and highlighted the faith of the entire group to counterbalance their ethnic rivalry, by referring to all who are in Rome in 1:6-8 and 1:15.

The author's ethnic dualism in Rom 1:14 created a doublet array of relationships, and potentially reflected non-Judean perspectives towards Judeans, as used in other ethnic comparisons between Greeks and non-Greeks. The use of ethnicity to grant non-Judeans honor in combination with being wise and versus those who were foolish, which may have implied a reflection of Greek self-proclaimed superiority in stylized relation to other ethnicities, would have potentially slighted Judean listeners.

By granting ethnic precedence to Judeans in Romans 1:16, in comparison to his ethnic statements in 1:14, the author created and increased ethnic tension among the audience to form a milieu of competitive interest with which he interacted throughout his discourse and finally will resolve. Audience response to this Judean precedence is dependent on how they collectively and individually interpreted the intent of the passage. I conclude that since the writer worked diligently thus far in Romans 1 to recognize and balance ethnic difference that he is not intending the terminology to be read as Judean precedence before God, but as a precedence of place and time in which Jesus Christ was revealed to Judeans, given the promotion of Judean roots of Jesus in preceding verses.

However, at the end of 1:17, resolution of ethnic rivalry would not have yet been apparent to the epistle's recipients. Use of ethnic labeling to this point may have purposely increased ethnic tension by alternately honoring the listeners, setting the stage for deployment of coming arguments and ethnic negotiation in the discourse. Most important has been the author's inclusiveness of each ethnic group in his discourse. Despite his specific honoring of Judeans, Greeks, and "Romans," either jointly or in turn, the author established a singular

foundation for both Judeans and non-Judeans for relationship with God in relation to Jesus Christ.

It is apparent from this reading that there is a strong connection between the language of “theology” in Romans and the sociolect of communal life in Rome. Not only in religion, but in the practice of everyday life, from imperial relations, to interpersonal transactions core to Roman self-understanding, Judean and non-Judean ways of life were structured within honorable and faithful relationships. The use of faith as the core to interaction with the Roman hearers placed the author’s message, not in the realm of theology alone, but well within the practice of *mos mairum* of Rome’s culture and society, as one of right relationship. The writer adroitly expressed his gospel in the social language and practice used and comprehended by those who lived in Rome, no matter their ethnicity.

4.4.1. Conclusion: Reading Romans 1:1-17 as a Rome-dwelling Audience in Rome

It is apparent from this initial cross-disciplinary examination of Romans 1:1-17, there are new perspectives that might be gained by further detailed “hearing” of the rest of Romans from a “non-Judean” audience perspective in relation to Roman life. While it remains important to examine the Judean background that might influence a hearing of Romans, much of the discourse could be as easily and at times more aptly grasped within the framework of life in Rome and its sociolect, and in interaction with its culture and tradition.

Reading Romans in Rome

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions:

Reading Romans in Rome – From Beginning to End

5.1 Introduction:

The purpose of this thesis has been twofold. The first was to reshape the existing assumptions regarding the historical background and social context of the audience receiving and hearing the epistle in Rome. This involved addressing three core issues that influence the interpretation of Romans:

1. How did the ancients, especially Greeks and Romans, negotiate ethnicity? Chapter one focused on addressing this question to reshape an understanding of Greek and Roman ethnic self-definition, and that of others, including barbarians.
2. Was the ancient world anti-Semitic as proposed by Wiefel and argued by countless other NT theologians? Chapter 2 focused on addressing this question by following through the ethnic rivalry and negotiation of two contemporary ethnic and religious groups in Rome – Judeans and Egyptians – from approximately 64 BCE to after the reception of Romans.
3. What was the relationship between the sociolect of Rome, as used within the socio-cultural context of the city and Roman life, morals, religion and values when compared with key terms utilized in the epistle to the Romans? Chapter 3 presented evidence that Rome's culture and context utilized and practised the same language carefully crafted in Romans. It demonstrated that the epistle's sociolect utilized the traditional social language that formed the cultural context of Rome's residents.

The second purpose was to reconsider how a sampling of the key terms of the epistle of Romans might be heard in relation to the sociolect of Roman culture as the context of hearing Romans read in Rome. The question addressed was: To what extent can Romans be heard and understood by a readership in Rome within its religio-economic, socio-political

and ethnic context, especially by non-Judeans? The dissertation limited itself to the reading of Romans 1:1-17, to focus upon ethnic identity negotiation through the conceptualization of honor, faith, piety, and righteousness. Chapter 4 integrated the interpretive matrix to demonstrate that Romans could be heard in Rome, and understood by non-Judeans utilizing its sociolect and conventions.

With this in mind, here are conclusions drawn from this research.

5.2 Chapter 1: Conclusions Regarding Greek and Roman Ethnicity and Ethnic Negotiation

Definition, development, and dissemination of Greek ethnicity was one of ongoing negotiation. Throughout Greek history, even into the Roman era, being or becoming *Hellenes* was a process of defining what being Hellenes was in terms of language, location, law, religion, and way of life, among other factors. It moved from initially being multi-lingual, from at least four ethnic characterizations, to one of more homogeneity. With time, being ethnic *Hellenes* was shaped primarily, but not exclusively, by Athenian ideals. By the first century, despite underlying communal and regional or linguistic uniqueness, and rivalries among cities and ethnic branches of Hellenicity, the ethnicity became primarily defined as way of life and education focused on Greek speaking and way of living, loosely defined as Greek across the Mediterranean.

Roman ethnic definition underwent a similar development, yet by the end of the 1st century BCE and early empire, Rome became the focal point of Roman ethnicity. Being Roman included negotiated superiority claims in language, law, customs, religion, traditions, dress, education, and way of life. However, Rome went further to include time, calendar, architecture, morals, and imperial cult in molding and modeling its ethnicity. Rome not only proclaimed this superiority, but expected it to be recognized and honored by peoples within the empire. The development and dissemination of the cult of Roma, and later, the imperial cult, were manifestations of Rome's presumed divinely-ordained ethnic dominance, yet were not the only elements of Romanization that affected the Mediterranean world.

Becoming Roman within Rome and across the empire involved the adoption, adaptation and assimilation of Roman ethnic characteristics. Establishment of Roman *coloniae*, the

extensive Roman diaspora, distribution of Roman citizenship, and imperial benefaction made this process politically, economically, and religiously compelling. Ethnic groups in and outside the empire engaged in ongoing negotiation of their ethnicity in relation to *Romanitas*. In turn *Romanitas*, or being Roman, was also impacted by other ethnicities, and absorbed other ethnic characteristics and cultural practices. This ethnic negotiation was further detailed in a historical example in Chapter 2.

5.3 Chapter 2: Conclusions Regarding Judean and Egyptian Ethnic Negotiation as Minorities in Rome:

Chapter 2 provided a comparative review of the historical ethnic negotiation between Romans, Judeans, Alexandrians and Egyptians, from about 65 BCE to 57 CE, which demonstrated that Romans were not “anti-Semitic.” Rome was not uniquely persecuting Judeans as has long been argued by many NT theologians, especially in regard to the crises in 19 and 49 CE. By comparing and contrasting Judeans and Egyptians in relation to one another and in conjunction with events in Rome, it becomes apparent that they were in continuous interaction over influence, exercise of religion, benefaction, and the negotiation of their way of life, simultaneously with negotiation of being or becoming Roman or preserving their own unique ethnic characteristics.

The circumstances of Judeans and Egyptians, or adherents to their religions, shifted at times in tandem and at others in opposition to one another in Rome’s experience. In turn, Rome dealt with Judeans and Egyptians simultaneously, often carrying out actions that damaged or benefitted both, or played upon their ethnic rivalry. In time, likely the early 40s, Egyptianization gained its highest achievement, that of Isis cult inclusion as an official Roman religion. However, that did not end Roman acrimony towards the Egyptian cult. Later Romans still disparaged Egyptian practices, as others contemporaneously lived them.

Judeanism’s relations with emperors and the Roman populace, up until the Judean war, went through similar tensions, accommodation, and acculturation of Romans incorporating Judean ways, and Judeans incorporating Roman ethnic characteristics and behaviors. Judean influence continued at the highest levels of Roman elite culture, and it seems highly unlikely that all Judeans were not evicted from Rome’s regions in 49, but may have no longer been

able to worship in synagogues in Rome's expanded *pomerium*, yet continued in residence as Judeans and Judean Romans in Rome from 49 to 54 CE.

5.4 Chapter 3: Conclusions Regarding Key Roman Social Conventions Which Impact the Epistle to Rome:

Chapter 3 provided a brief exploration of what is considered the core theological language of the epistle of Romans as it was used in daily life in Rome and in Roman experience. The chapter demonstrated the behavioral relationships between these concepts, particularly how oath-sworn faith lived through time created right relationships that were honorable, and also, in relationship to deity, expressed piety in action. These terms and way of living were demonstrated across relations with deity, in military life, imperial relations, and even in slavery and death. Chapter 3 also demonstrated that Judeans knew and practised similar concepts of oath-sworn faith-making in relation to Romans. Furthermore, Philo's writing depicted a structure of faith-based relationship with God, and formative of God's relationship with humanity that also utilized Abraham to characterize the relationship. The core conclusion was that faith was not predominantly conceived as "belief" as characterized in contemporary theological terms, but was something far deeper and core to life experience in Rome and its ethnic identity, and inherent in its sociolect. Faith structured Roman society and religion. Roman ethnic definition used the concepts of faith, honor, righteousness, and piety and their actions to negotiate rivalry and relationship.

5.5 Chapter 4: Conclusions Reading Romans in Rome – Sitting in the Audience in its Social Context:

Chapter 4 demonstrates that the sociolect of the epistle of Romans, and its key terminology not only had common ground with first century Judeanism, but was also the primary language that expressed relationships in everyday life in Rome. The epistle draws upon language and terms descriptive of interaction and behaviors both human and divine as detailed in Chapter 3. It is clear that both non-Judeans and Judeans, steeped within Rome's culture, intellectual expression, and daily life would have been able to easily comprehend the message of Romans within the life experience of their cosmopolis.

The language often considered primarily theological in the New Testament was more broadly used as common expression of how Romans lived with deity and with one another in religious and ethnic negotiation. Faith, honor, righteousness, piety, grace, peace, pride, arrogance, sin, dishonor, wrath, and salvation, among other terms we deem theological, were all expressions utilized in the context of non-Judean covenantal transactions, reciprocity, relationships, and benefaction, including relations with gods in Rome. What is written in Romans is unique in that it redirects that sociolect into an epistle on the relationship with God the Father, Jesus Christ as resurrected and ascended Lord, an ever-present Holy Spirit and how people, no matter their ethnic claims, should live in relation to one another and with deity as God and Christ.

Simply, what some have often perceived as “special” New Testament or Christian language drawn from Judean ideas and culture reapplied as early Christian concepts, is not necessarily so uniquely Judean. For the audience listening to the epistle of Romans in Rome, they were presented a message expressed in ideas and concepts easily comprehended in relation to the social language, concepts, values and behaviors core to the daily lives of Rome’s inhabitants, and common expressions of how Romans lived with deity and with one another.

The epistle to Rome was a multi-ethnic text that adroitly drew upon Greek, Judean, and Roman elements to create a composite heard by an audience that lived in a multi-ethnic world. It adeptly negotiated and expounded the author’s ideas of how Christ-followers lived in a relationship of ongoing dynamic stasis with God and ethnically with one another, in terms based in the Roman experience. A recipient of Romans did not need the rest of the New Testament to grasp the meaning of Romans; they just needed to be a resident of Rome.

5.6 Summative Conclusions:

In summary, this work demonstrates Greek, Roman, Judean and Egyptian ethnic definition, rivalry and claimed superiority were integral to an ongoing negotiation in the ancient world, and in Rome. Ethnic relations in Rome, particularly towards Judeans, were not anti-Semitic, but Judeans experienced changes in ethnic status and privilege as did other ethnicities in competition in Rome, including what it meant to be a Roman. The language and behavior by which ethnicity was expressed in Rome was the sociolect of daily life, cultural behavior and action based in Rome’s earliest history.

Recipients in Rome, whether Judean or non-Judean received a document that we perceive as the epistle to the Romans, which expressed itself in Greek, used Judean concepts, and history, but expressed the relationships between humanity and God and between audience members in language and concepts that were primarily and predominantly inherent in the Roman experience, redirected to describing a relationship with God and Jesus Christ as Lord. It was a sociolect of audience and author, and also the inter-ethnic relationship amongst themselves. This dissertation utilizes this cultural context to demonstrate how Romans 1:1-17 may have been heard, and commenced the negotiation of ethnic and human and divine relationships in the Christ-following community in Rome. Basically, it was quite easy for non-Judeans, whether Greek or Roman, and not steeped in Judean text, to follow the presentation of the epistle they heard in Rome's Christ-following groups. It was a gospel to the Romans, expressed in Roman terms, of righteousness by faith and faithfulness that captured the highest ideals of Roman life and of honor.

5.7 Future Research: Reading Romans in Rome – From Beginning to End

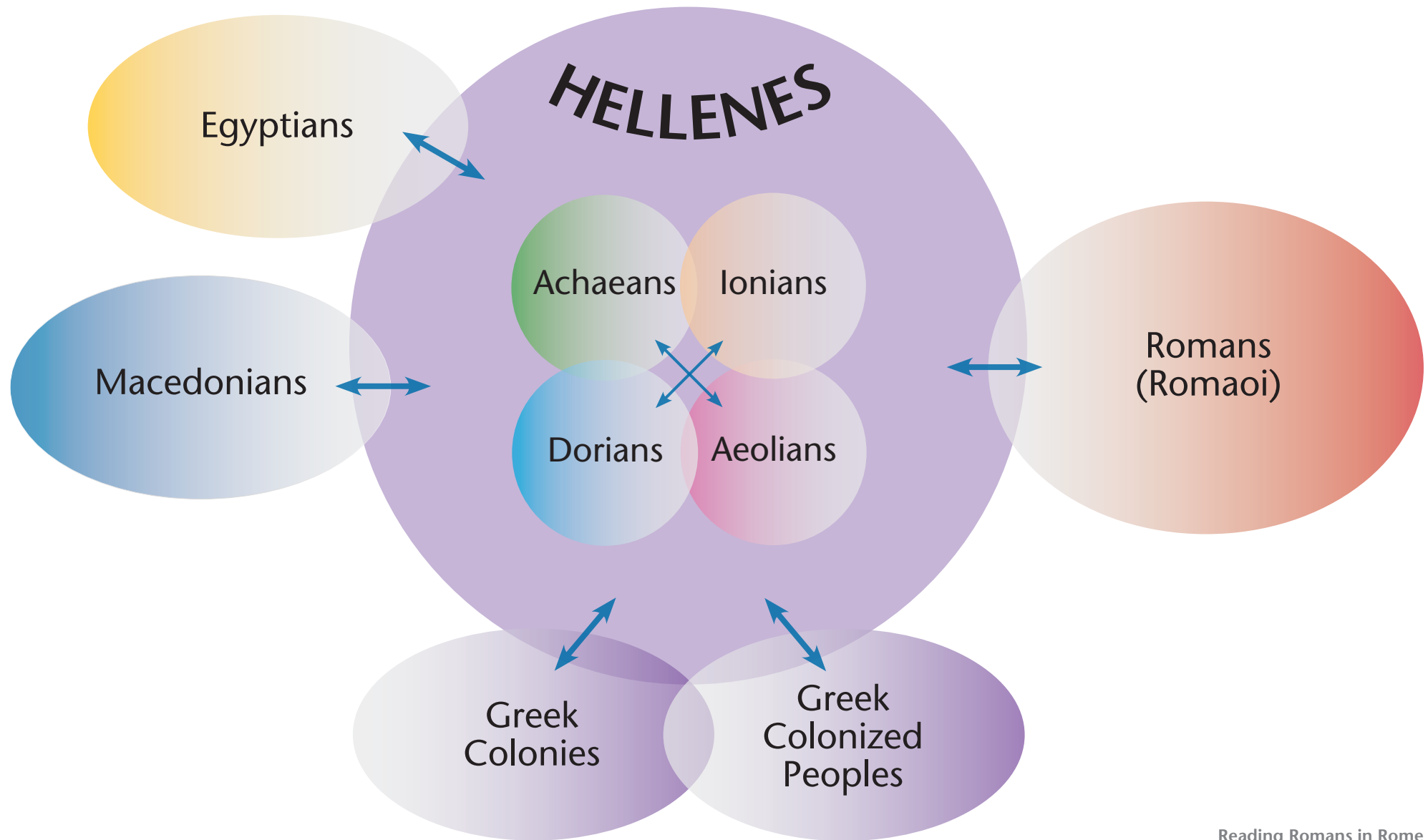
This work only cracks open the door on many directions of future research. Two potential streams of additional studies might be pursued as a result of this thesis:

First is an ongoing, progressive reading of Romans in Rome within its cultural context and in the way that the audience heard it, without heavy dependence on the rest of the NT. It is my desire to continue this progressive reading focused on non-Judean understandings to ascertain what else might enrich our perspective of Romans.

A second thread of future research, which other scholars are already beginning to engage in, is a close reexamination of words, phrases, concepts, or behaviors that have been perceived as predominantly Judean-influenced in NT use, which were utilized in Greco-Roman culture. John Barclay's recent and upcoming work on grace-reciprocity is one example of careful research by New Testament scholars interested in the intersection of early Christianity and multi-ethnic life in the Greco-Roman experience.

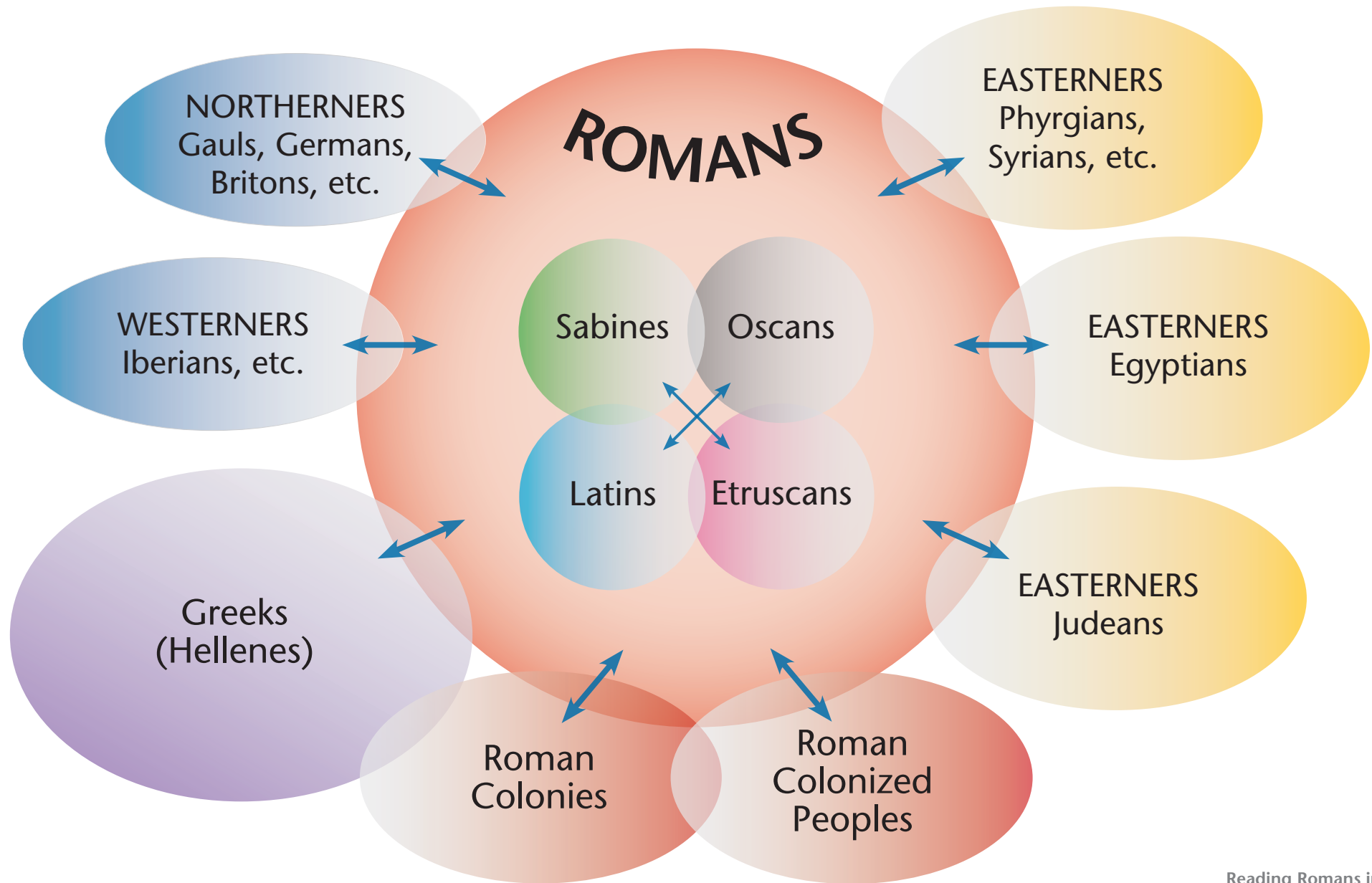
It is my hope that this research will add a small slice to the richness of our theological understanding of the epistle, and perhaps add to a new path of reading Romans through a multi-ethnic and Romanized lens for years to come, by “sitting in the audience.”

Hellenic ethnic identity negotiation*

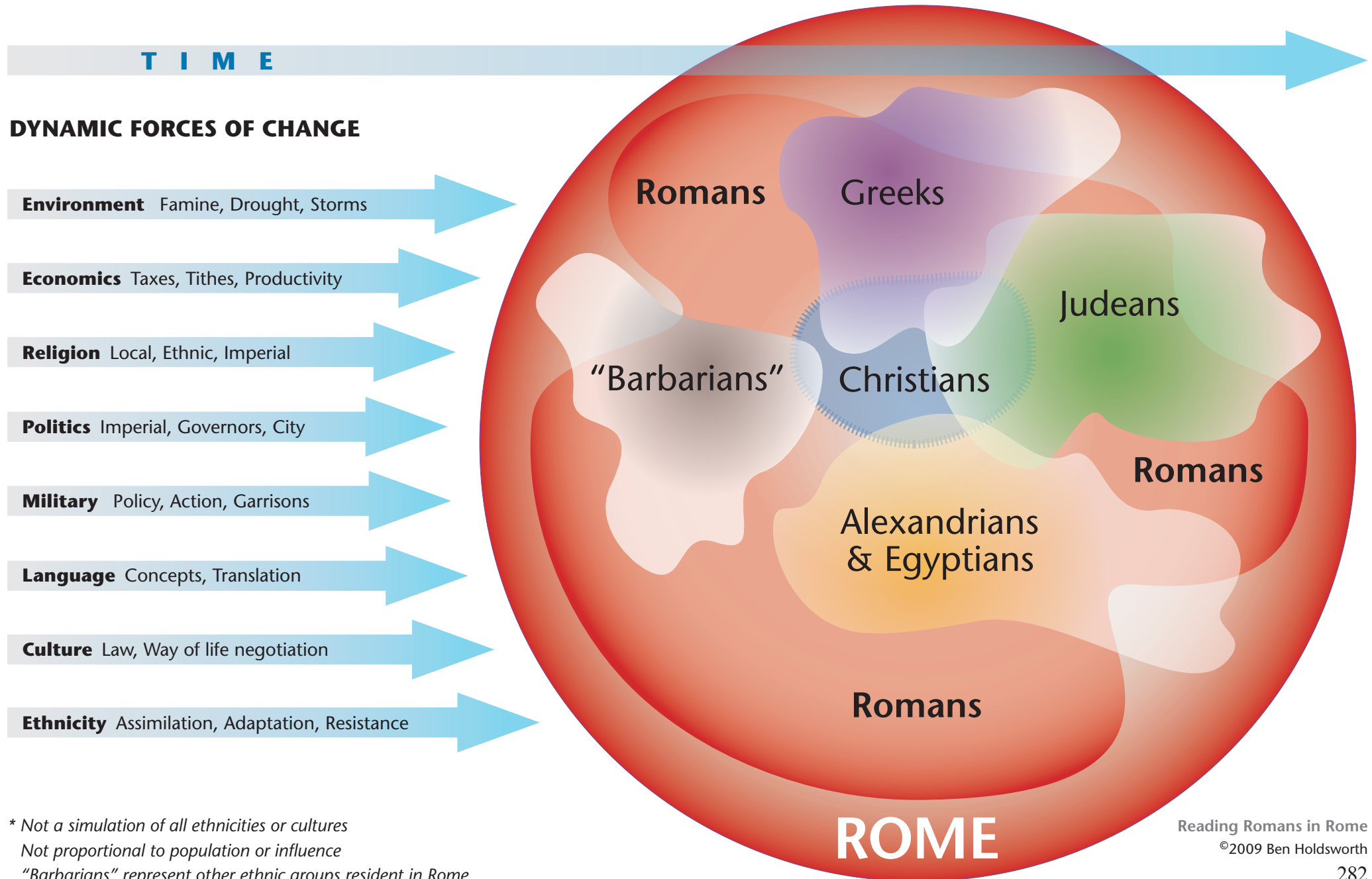


* Not a simulation of all ethnicities or cultures
Not proportional to population or influence

Roman ethnic identity negotiation*

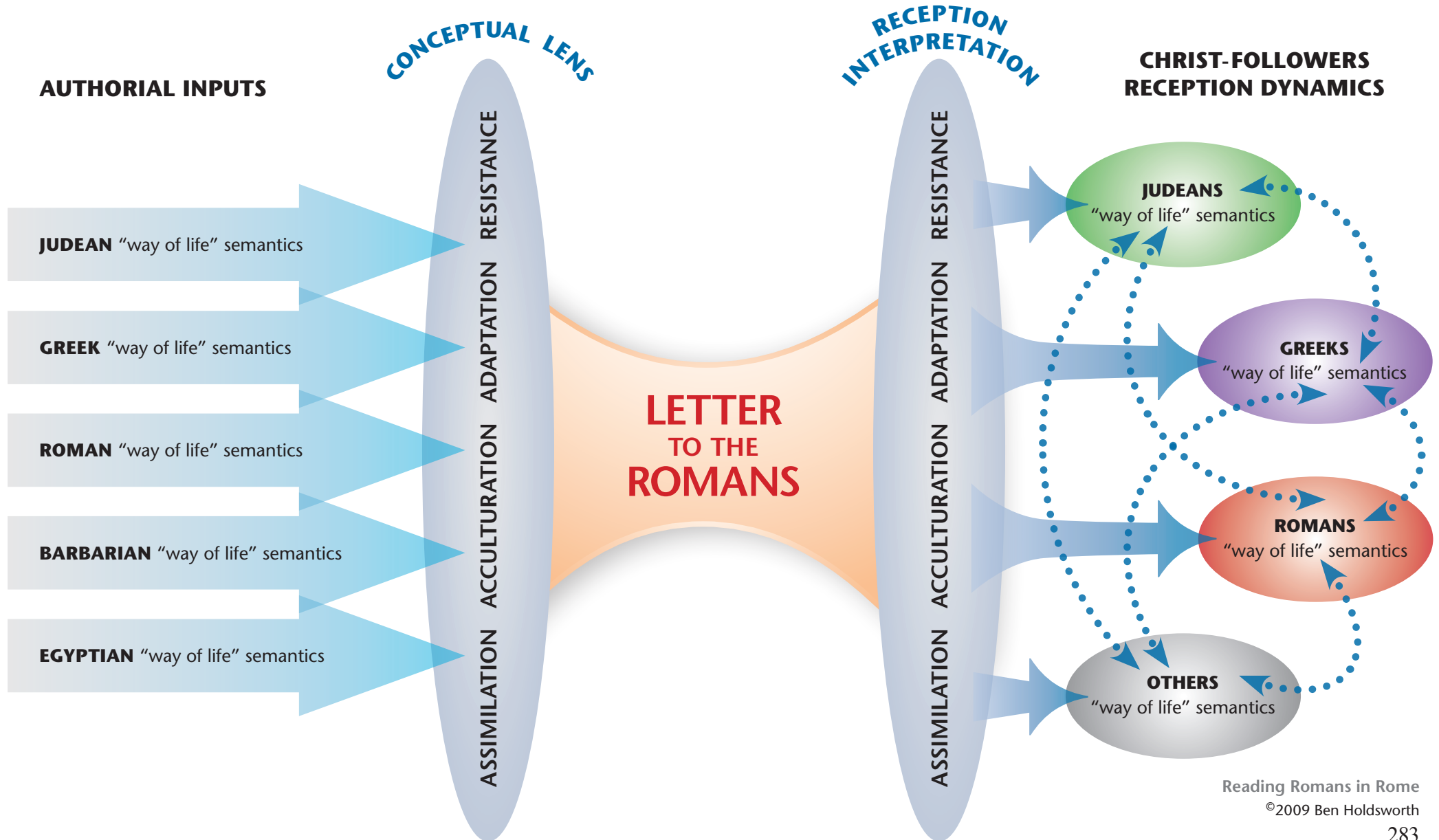


* Not a simulation of all ethnicities or cultures
 Not proportional to population or influence



* Not a simulation of all ethnicities or cultures
 Not proportional to population or influence
 "Barbarians" represent other ethnic groups resident in Rome

Ethnic semantic interaction in authorial transmission and audience reception



Reading Romans in Rome:

Appendix 2

The Judean Presence in Rome:

A Socio-Economic and Demographic Assessment

Appendix 2.1: Introduction

Most assessments of Judean demographic dispersion and socio-economic placement in Rome are highly influenced by a predominant reading of Philo's comments, that most were freedmen who lived in the Transtiber.¹²⁷⁶

For example, Lampe's evidentiary citation of the late second or third century Minucius Felix, projects a view of first century BCE/CE Judeans and Christ-followers as somehow restricted to the urban poor, with undue weight placed upon beggary.¹²⁷⁷ This is problematic. This is a later source that reflects circumstances after the second Judean war. It is not likely representative of first century Judean or early Christian economics or living situations.

What has been lacking in many assessments is consideration of how Judeans organically inter-related with the surrounding environment of Rome, as part of the Roman experience. The following sections provide a brief reconsideration of Judeans in Rome as ethnic group and Judean citizenry of Rome. It briefly examines their place and presence in the Transtiber, Subura, Campus Martius, and elsewhere in the city.

What becomes apparent from this assessment is that they were not isolated from Roman life, but were organically part of its socio-economic circumstances, and were distributed across the city in a number of regions and across economic and social strata, including relationships with Rome's elite as detailed in chapter 2.

¹²⁷⁶Philo, *Leg. Gaium*, 155.

¹²⁷⁷Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 36.3 in Tertullian, *Apology and De Spectaculis*, Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, T.R. Glover, and Gerald H. Rendall (trans). *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1931); Peter Lampe, 'Early Christians in the City of Rome: Topographical and Social Historical Aspects of the First Three Centuries' in Jürgen Zangenberg and Michael Labahn (eds.), *Christians as a Religious Minority in a Multicultural City: Modes of Interaction and Identity Formation in Early Imperial Rome*, JSNTSS 243 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 20-32, (22-24).

Also, this appendix provides a backdrop for the interplay between Judeans and Egyptians in Rome, their competitive interaction within Roman society, and their efforts to shape Roman culture and politics in ethnically favorable ways as discussed in chapter 2 and detailed in Appendix 1. The appendix first considers the environment of the Roman *Transtiber*, then the Suburan region of Rome and finally the Campus Martius and Judean elements that interact with these areas of the city.

Appendix 2.2: The Transtiber: a Microcosm of Rome's Superiority and Ethnic Rivalry

The *Transtiberum*, the district across the Tiber from the rest of Rome, has been of particular focus for New Testament scholars grappling with the parameters of Judean ethnic life. This interest is based upon the assumption that most Judeans lived in this district and not elsewhere in the cosmopolis. A fundamental supposition of many has been that the *Transtiberum* was poor, generally neglected, and seemingly isolated from the rest of the metropolis. It is imperative to retest these conclusions by opening consideration of Judeans as an ethnic community integrated into Rome's metropolis. Doing so dramatically reshapes a reading of Romans.

Appendix 2.2.1: The Transtiber: Urban Infrastructure

First, the *Transtiber* region was not isolated as some have imagined, but was organically entwined with the city by ferries and bridges. At least three bridges spanned the river in the mid-first century, the first built in the 600s BCE.¹²⁷⁸ The *Pons Sublicius* and *Pons Aemilius* facilitated travel to the *Forum Bovarium*, *Circus Maximus*, *Forum Romanum*, *Campus Martius*, and the Palatine on the opposite river bank. It linked the *Transtiberum* to Rome's massive markets and shipping area, especially the *Emporium* and *Horrea Galbae* stretching below the Aventine hill.¹²⁷⁹ These areas, essential to Rome's political, social, and economic vitality, were in easy reach of dwellings, shops, and warehouses across the Tiber.

¹²⁷⁸ The bridges include the *Pons Aemilius* from 142 BCE which was rebuilt by Augustus in 12 BCE, *Pons Cestius* (49 BCE) and *Pons Fabricius* (62 BCE), which tied the *Forum Holitorium* and *Transtiberum* districts together across the Tiber Island. Additionally, the *Pons Sublicius*, constructed as early as the 7th century BCE linked the *Forum Bovarium* to the *Transtiberum*, see Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 191-193.

¹²⁷⁹ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 192-193, 131-133, 118-119, 140.

The northern Transtiber was connected to the *Campus Martius* via the *Pons Agrippa*, possibly a semi-private bridge that eased access to Augustan and later era villas across the river, including the *Villa Farnesina*, known for its Egyptianized decoration, thought to be the villa of Agrippa and Julia.¹²⁸⁰ Potentially, the *Pons Agrippa* may have carried an aqueduct that provided water for Transtiber civilian and commercial use.¹²⁸¹ Judeans would have used these bridges, river transport, and water sources.

As part of his urban planning, Augustus constructed or preserved a wooded park (*nemus Caesareum*) in 2 BCE for public use behind the Transtiber's urban area. The *nemus Caesareum* contained a pool (*naumachia*) 1,800 by 1,200 feet constructed for enactment of a sea battle to honor the completion of the Temple of Mars Ultor, and other aquatic events.¹²⁸² By the mid-1st century CE, it was surrounded by brothels and small taverns.¹²⁸³ Augustus simultaneously constructed the *Aqua Alsietina* aqueduct to replenish the *Naumachia* and serve as the district's non-drinkable agricultural and commercial water supply.¹²⁸⁴ Excess flow from the aqueduct was used for irrigation of the Transtiber's estates, gardens, farms, wineries, and for industrial purposes, to power mills, supply a fish hatchery or tanneries in the Transtiber. Drinking water was supplied to the *Transtiberum* by springs and other aqueducts.¹²⁸⁵

The *Transtiberum* urban area was constructed along two major roads – the *Via Campana-Portuensis*, and the *Via Aurelia*. The *Via Campana* served partly as a partition between the urban areas along the Tiber and the groves and gardens of *Horti Caesaris*, the land formerly owned by Julius Caesar, which was contiguously south of the *nemus Caesareum*, and edged with funerary monuments and villas farther along the south Transtiber. The central urban area near the bridges was densely populated with shops and homes of people working in warehouses and industrial areas along the Tiber and across the river in the rest of Rome.

¹²⁸⁰ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 272-273.

¹²⁸¹ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 191.

¹²⁸² Augustus, *Res Gestae* 23; Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 179.

¹²⁸³ Tacitus, *Annals* 14.15.

¹²⁸⁴ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 23; Frontinus, *Aqueducts of Rome*, 11; also Harry B. Evans, *Water Distribution in Ancient Rome* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1994), 18-19, 111-113; also Rowell, *Rome in the Augustan Age*, 162.

¹²⁸⁵ Frontinus, *On the Aqueducts of Rome*, 11.

Appendix 2.2.2: The Transtiber: Economics, Business, and Housing

The southern Transtiber urban area contained manufacturing, shops for trading and warehouses for goods inventoried for the *Porticus Aemilia* and *Emporium* just across the river. There were also tanners, dyers, and clothmakers in facilities owned and operated by freedmen, linked by voluntary associations, *collegia* or guilds across the city that operated shop fronts selling their manufactured items.¹²⁸⁶

Garnsey makes the case that many Roman freedmen were likely members of its industrial, artisan, and agricultural workforce.¹²⁸⁷ He goes further, intimating that the numbers of independent freedmen was larger than often presumed including manumitted freedmen, and freedmen possibly dwelling or working within households of their patrons, "...in practice given a considerable measure of freedom, encouraged to accumulate wealth, and allowed to transmit it to heirs."¹²⁸⁸ The fact that this categorization has close similarities to Philo's later description of Roman Judean freedmen populating Rome creates the strong possibility that many were members of similar groups of independent freedmen employed or operating their own businesses throughout the city or in conjunction with their patrons. In fact, much of the topography reflecting presumed Judean residence reflect areas of industry and commerce essential for Rome's economic health and prosperity.¹²⁸⁹

Treggiari details 160 diverse urban occupations within Rome, with many clustered in "luxury trades." She continues: "This range of jobs contradicts once again the commonplace that the free population of the capital was largely made up of the idle poor, though it may provoke other reflections about the inclination of the richer classes to finance extravagant subdivision of labour and about the ingenuity of the poorer Romans in finding ways to earn a living."¹²⁹⁰ One example is a freedmen armpit hair-puller wealthy enough to dedicate a free-standing tomb for his wife and associated freedmen in early imperial Rome.¹²⁹¹ Even muleteers earned wages based upon contracts and operated within the realm of Roman law when transporting

¹²⁸⁶ Loane, *Industry and Commerce*, 69-79.

¹²⁸⁷ Peter Garnsey, 'Non-Slave Labour in the Roman World' in Peter Garnsey (ed.), *Non-Slave Labour in the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1980), 34-47, (42-44).

¹²⁸⁸ Garnsey, 'Non-Slave Labour in the Roman World,' 45.

¹²⁸⁹ On industry in Rome, see Loane, *Industry and Commerce*, 60-153.

¹²⁹⁰ Susan. M. Treggiari, 'Urban Labour in Rome: *Mercennarii* and *Tabernarii*' in Peter Garnsey (ed.), *Non-Slave Labour in the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1980), 48-64, (56).

¹²⁹¹ Treggiari, 'Urban Labour in Rome: *Mercennarii* and *Tabernarii*,' 56.

goods and persons around Rome, and many were probably freedmen.¹²⁹² If Judeans worked in the guilds, their own associations, or in these industries, it is likely they produced goods shipped to merchants across the Tiber with whom they did business, either Judean or non-Judean. Clearly, the Transtiber was an area of economic growth.

This growth is attested by the early second century CE inscription that lists 22 neighborhoods (*vici*) included in the Transtiber *Regio XIV*. It is not certain, but possibly fewer Transtiber *vici* existed in the mid-first century CE when the epistle was delivered to Rome than later described or depicted.¹²⁹³ However, what is important to consider is that the housing in the Transtiber was constructed to house those who lived and worked in an area of economic expansion. As this region of Rome expanded throughout the Augustan and later Julio-Claudian reigns, new buildings were constructed for housing, warehousing, and business, resulting in increased land values. It is a similar growth and redevelopment pattern compared to that of the Campus Martius through this period.

Often most commentators conclude, based upon Cicero's and later satirical comments, that Rome's housing was generally of poor quality, unkempt, subject to fire, collapse, and dangerous to occupants. However, Cicero's comments reflect the state of Rome's dwellings and general depredations being the norm in the Late Republic. The description substantiates the problems before Augustan building reform.

This decrepitness has not been borne out in remains of imperial period *insula* in Pompeii, Ostia, or Rome. The state of the city and knowledge of its structures and inhabitants was enhanced and standardized by Augustus' organization of the city in 7 BCE.¹²⁹⁴ In this process, records were created to confirm ownership and enforce housing standards.¹²⁹⁵ Its effectiveness is obvious in the compital altars recording those elected by their *vici* each year, as many as 1,000 freedmen *magisteri* and 1,000 slave *ministeri* annually.¹²⁹⁶ Moreover, the

¹²⁹² Susan D. Martin, 'Transportation and Law in the City of Rome' in Sheila K. Dickison and Judith P. Hallett (eds.), *Rome and Her Monuments: Essays on the City and Literature of Rome in Honor of Katherine A. Geffcken* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2000), 193-213, (210-213); Suetonius, *Vespasian* 18.

¹²⁹³ *CIL* VI 975, from 136 CE.

¹²⁹⁴ Cassius Dio, 55.8.6-7; Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, 276.

¹²⁹⁵ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, 292-294, 296-312.

¹²⁹⁶ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, 290.

detail assessment of housing in the *Transtiber* is evident in the pre-Severan marble map fragments which give glimpses of owners' names of warehouses and perhaps *insulae*.¹²⁹⁷

If most people lived in *insulae* in the *Transtiber*, and elsewhere, it is more likely that Vitruvius' claim that residents of *insula* in Rome were adequately, even comfortably housed, would have been plausible for Judeans as well.¹²⁹⁸ If we consider the *insula* housing of Ostia, it certainly is well-built and is characteristic of *insula* remains located in Rome.¹²⁹⁹ Moreover, evidence from the charters of the *municipium* of Tarentum, and the Roman *colonia* of Urso outline building restrictions and maintenance requirements in other cities, far less important than Rome.¹³⁰⁰ Thus, these provide solid ground to infer that similar building codes and standards were maintained in Rome. However, *insula* in Rome may have been crowded, given the value of space within the city, and taller buildings were likely the norm.¹³⁰¹

From the evidence, the *Transtiberum* was settled by numerous peoples from a mix of socio-economic levels, cultures, and ethnicities, similar to other regions of Rome. This population engaged in a broad range of arts, manufacturing, and trade. Given these characteristics, the *Transtiberum* naturally was an increasingly popular area for investment and commerce. The economic capabilities of the population likely improved, and the influence of the region within Rome increased as it developed through the first century CE. Housing was regulated, and although cramped, it had to meet the local standards.

Appendix 2.2.3: The Transtiber: Temples and Cults

A mix of temples graced the *Transtiber*. The *Horti Caesaris* included several temples to *Fors Fortuna*, including one constructed by Tiberius in 16 CE.¹³⁰² A shrine to *Bona Dea*, a private cult for women, was situated in one neighborhood (*vicus*). In another, a statue base of *Iuppiter Dolichenus* may have marked a shrine to a Commagenean cult founded for immigrants from provincial Asia.¹³⁰³ Additionally, each *vicus* had its own *compitum*, or

¹²⁹⁷ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, 303-308.

¹²⁹⁸ Vitruvius 2.8.17.

¹²⁹⁹ J. Packer, 'La casa di Va Giulio Romano', in *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologia del Comune di Roma* 81 (1968/1969), 127-148.

¹³⁰⁰ *CIL* i² 590.27.25-38; 594.70-71, 75; *CIL* i² 594.77-78.; Lomas, 'The idea of a city,' 35.

¹³⁰¹ Ray Laurence, 'Writing the Roman Metropolis', in Helen M. Parker (ed.), *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 1-20, (13).

¹³⁰² Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 126-127.

¹³⁰³ Price, 'Religions of Rome', 290-291.

neighborhood shrine, as the center of its local cultic and civic life integrated with the imperial cult.¹³⁰⁴ Shrines of a plethora of eastern cults lined the *Via Campana*. Finally, on the slope of the *Ianiculum* Hill overlooking the *Naumachia* and Transtiber, stood the sanctuary of the Syrian gods, the largest for the Syrian *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus* within a sacred grove, the *Lucus Furrinae*, watered by sacred springs.¹³⁰⁵

Much has been made of the issues of Judean dietary habits as a point of communal criticism or ostracism, with the general assumption that Judeans singularly maintained some form of dietary restrictions, or traditions regarding ritual cleanliness. Other ethnicities practiced similar habits and expected comparative standards of adherence to deity-dictated laws in worship and way of life. According to Plutarch, it was common knowledge that Egyptian priests of Isis and Osiris would not use salt on their tables, and avoided eating fish.¹³⁰⁶

The dietary and behavioral worship of another eastern cult, the worship of the Phrygian god, Men, set forth requirements seen from the Attic attestation of the cult, which state, “You are to be pure from garlic, and pork and women: after washing with water poured over your head you may enter (the temple) on the same day.” For women, menstruation required a wait of seven days to regain purity, contact with a corpse, ten days, an abortion, forty days before being able to wash and enter the Phrygian temple.¹³⁰⁷ A number of cults in Rome likely had a range of dietary and cleanliness laws which those of the associated ethnicity or adherents of that cult practised in Roman life. Thus the issue is one of ongoing discussion and contention.

Appendix 2.2.4: The Transtiber: Security and Military Presence

A measure of the Transtiber’s wealth, importance, and integration with the rest of the city is evidenced by the region’s security arrangements. In addition to the nine praetorian military cohorts, there were three urban cohorts directly responsible for security in Rome, and seven cohorts of *vigiles*, formed of freedmen serving six year enlistments. They were formed after 6 CE to protect from fire, verify buildings met local regulations and prevent or stop local disturbances. Each cohort was responsible for two city regions. Augustus constructed the

¹³⁰⁴ See Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*.

¹³⁰⁵ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 247-248, 161.

¹³⁰⁶ For not using salt, see Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 32.363 E, 5.352 F. For not eating fish see Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 32.363 F, and 7.353 D.

¹³⁰⁷ E. Lane, *Corpus Monumentorum Religiones Dei Menis*, Vol. 1: *The Monuments and Inscriptions*, EPRO 19, (Leiden: Brill, 1971) 8-10, nr. 13.

castra Ravennatium barracks (*stationes*) and watchstations (*excubitoria*) to house a cohort of approximately 500 *vigiles* freedmen responsible for public order and firefighting in two of Rome's administrative regions, including the Transtiber.¹³⁰⁸ Additionally, the Ravenna fleet headquarters was located in the same region as was a garrison for its naval detachments associated with Rome, which may have made use of the Augustan *Naumachia* for training.¹³⁰⁹

Appendix 2.3: Judean Presence in the Transtiber: Synagogues

As often argued from the Monteverde catacomb evidence and Philo's brief comment, it is assumed that a substantial number – if not most – Judeans resided in the Transtiber, forming at least four synagogues.¹³¹⁰ The Transtiber Judean settlement commenced by the late Republic, given the Monteverde catacomb brick stamps.¹³¹¹ If so, they were not ethnically isolated, but a segment of Rome's multi-cultural spectrum, intimately embedded within its economic life and one strand of Roman and non-Roman "easterners" leaving their cultural imprint on the *Transtiberum*.

If we follow the standard assumption process of Roman Judean settlement and infrastructure development in the Transtiber, the arrival of a larger Judean population, and their manumission led to foundation or expansion of one or more early Judean synagogues located within areas that granted Judeans easy access to ethnic facilities. Perhaps the first synagogue was the "Synagogue of the Hebrews," given ethnic, linguistic, or geographic reasons, plausibly located in the Transtiber, in Rome's southwest, where according to Philo the majority of freed Judeans settled.¹³¹² The burgeoning Judean population led to additional synagogue construction, including the "Synagogue of the Vernaclesians," assumedly located in the Transtiber, for previously established Roman Judeans speaking Greek or Latin, or acculturated Roman Judeans who quickly adjusted to life as residents and citizens of Rome.¹³¹³

¹³⁰⁸ Nippel, *Public Order in Ancient Rome*, 90-98; Coulston, 'Armed and Belted Men', 84.

¹³⁰⁹ Bohec, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 160, plate 3.

¹³¹⁰ The four are usually assumed to be the *Agrippesians*, *Augustesians*, *Volumnesians* and *Hebrews*, see Leon, *Jews of Ancient Rome*, (1960), 135-159.

¹³¹¹ Smallwood, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 519.

¹³¹² *CIJ*, I, nos. 291, 371, 510, 535; Richardson, 'Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome,' 19-20; for geographic, linguistic or ethnic origin arguments regarding the synagogue designation, see Lo Lung-kwong, *Paul's Purpose in Writing Romans: The Upbuilding of a Jewish and Gentile Christian Community in Rome* (Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 1998), 97, n. 26.

¹³¹³ *CIJ*, I, nos. 318, 383, 510, 535; Penna, 'The Jews in Rome,' 29-30.

Another may have been the “Synagogue of *Calcarenses*,” or limekiln workers, given its close proximity to mines, such as those near the Quirinal, for *pozzolana*, the volcanic ash mined for making waterproof cement, a key ingredient enabling Rome’s Augustan and later urban renewal.¹³¹⁴ However, given that three of five inscriptions mentioning this synagogue are found in Monteverde, it is quite possible this synagogue was in the Transtiber.¹³¹⁵

Two other synagogues have high probability of existence in the Transtiber by the mid-first century CE. The synagogue of the Tripolitans, of Judeans from Tripolis in Africa, may have been founded early. The synagogue of the Elaeans, was assumedly formed by Judeans from Elaea in Mysia, was perhaps also located in the Transtiber.¹³¹⁶

Appendix 2.3.1: Conclusions about Judeans in the Transtiber

Given the above, it is apparent Judeans were able to be involved with many classes of people and in trade and economics across Rome. The Transiber was not the geographic extent of Judean residence and it is likely Judeans lived elsewhere in the city. As argued in Chapter 2.3, other synagogues were located elsewhere in Rome, at minimum the Porta Collina, Subura and perhaps on part of the Campus Martius. Judeans were an integral part of Rome by 57 CE, and arrival of the letter to Rome’s Christ-follower’s.

Appendix 2.4: Judeans in the Porta Collina, Quirinal Hill, and Subura

An alternative perspective of Judean settlement is reinforced by recent catacomb research. Radiocarbon dating suggests that as early as 50 BCE, a Judean catacomb was located northeast of Rome at Villa Torlonia, on the *Via Nomentana*, the road that entered Rome’s northeast corner through the *Porta Collina*. This catacomb was situated at the opposite extreme of Rome’s urban area from the Transtiberum.¹³¹⁷

If we presume that synagogues were situated in areas with catacomb accessibility as community facilities for ethnic Judean burials, then this finding reinforces an argument for

¹³¹⁴ Dumser, ‘Quirinalis, Collis,’ 213.

¹³¹⁵ Smallwood, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 521.

¹³¹⁶ Leon, *Jews of Ancient Rome*, 153, 145-146.

¹³¹⁷ Leonard V. Rutgers, Klaas van der Borg, Arie F. M. de Jong and Imogen Poole, “Radiocarbon dating: Jewish inspiration of Christian catacombs” in *Nature* 436, (21 July, 2005), 339.

earlier construction of a *proseucha* or synagogue near the *Agger*, in association with the Villa Torlonia catacomb and mentioned in a non-Judean inscription.¹³¹⁸ Following the logic, that synagogues are placed in proximity to Judean residents and in reasonable distance to a catacomb for communal burial, it seems conclusive that northeast Rome had a substantial Judean population no more than 20-30 years after 63 BCE, possessing Roman legal rights, financial resources to acquire land for synagogues and catacomb, and manpower and capital to build. It implies sufficient reason to assume earlier and substantial Judean settlement in the north and east of Rome near the Quirinal hill and possibly in the Subura region of Rome.¹³¹⁹

The Subura was potential home to an early synagogue, and a Jewish population. If this is true, then Judeans lived in a section of Rome described in the Augustan era by Propertius as “sleepless” and its streets for its illicit affairs and Horace commented on its noise.¹³²⁰ Livy intimates it was a violent area.¹³²¹ The Subura was presumably inhabited by the lower classes, described as loud, noisy, filthy, wet, lively, violent, and home to numerous tradesmen, artisans, produce vendors, and brothels by Juvenal, Martial, Propertius, and Livy.¹³²² No doubt, its main thoroughfare, the *Argiletum*, thronged with people and traffic traveling to and from the Roman Forum, and the Forums of Julius and Augustus.

However, the *Subura* was also the urban residence of a portion of the Roman elite including the early home of Julius Caesar, the *gens Mamilia*, and the *domus* of C. Sestius, whose Egyptianized pyramidal tomb adorned the *Via Appia* into Rome.¹³²³ Roman Judean residents would have been part of Rome’s *Regio IV* and members of the *tribus Suburana* when dealing with public matters, if Roman citizens.¹³²⁴ From this brief review, it is apparent the Judeans residing in this area would have been intertwined with individuals of all classes and ethnicities, and in direct connection to the traditional center of Roman ethnicity.

¹³¹⁸ David Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe* (JIWE), 2 Vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2005), II, 602; Roman P. Corfidius Signinus’ epitaph, *CIL* VI, 9821; Penna, ‘The Jews in Rome,’ 37.

¹³¹⁹ K. Welsh, s.v. “Subura” *LTUR* IV, 379-383.

¹³²⁰ “Faithless man, from whom no girl can hope for better, can sleep already have power over you? Are the tricks of sleepless Subura now forgotten, and my windowsill, worn by nocturnal guile? From which I so often hung on a rope let down to you, and came to your shoulders, hand over hand. Often we made love at the crossroads, and, breast to breast, our cloaks made the roadways warm. Alas for the silent pact whose false words the uncaring Southwest Wind has swept away! Propertius 4.7.15-16; Horace, *Epist.* 5.58.

¹³²¹ Livy 3.13.2.

¹³²² Martial, 5.22, 12.18, 6.66, 7.31, 10.94, 11.61, 11.78 in Martial, *Epigrams*, D.R. Shackleton Bailey (trans.), *LCL* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1993); Juvenal 3.5-9, 11.51; Propertius 4.7.15-16; Livy 3.13.2; for tradesmen, *CIL* VI 1953, 9284, 9399, 9491, 9526, 33862.

¹³²³ Suetonius, *Iul.* 46.

¹³²⁴ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 237, 115.

Given the earlier date for Villa Torlonia catacomb construction, the synagogue of the *Siburenses* was likely constructed early in the Judean experience in Rome, likely during the late republic, nestled somewhere in the Subura between the Quirinal, the Esquiline and the Viminal hills, able to serve Roman Judeans living not only in the valley, but those resident in wealthier patron households on the three surrounding hills.¹³²⁵ Given Judean support for Julius, visibly demonstrated at his funeral pyre, it is possible that in the late Republic and under Augustus, Judeans were permitted to worship in a synagogue near Iulius' household, and perhaps in an area where Judean elite from Judea, held as hostages in Rome and later befriended by Julius resided.¹³²⁶

Furthermore, another synagogue, the *Libertini*, likely existed in Rome at this time. Its members were Judean freedmen, implying early foundation which honored its members' status as freedmen and Roman citizens. It is not easily positioned, perhaps in the Transtiber, but also perhaps in the *Subura*, or near the *agger*, in northeast Rome.¹³²⁷ Finally Smallwood includes mention of the synagogue of the *Secenans*, which given its sole inscription is found in the Via Torlonia catacomb, which might also have been located in northeast Rome by reception of the epistle.¹³²⁸

Appendix 2.5: Judeans on the Campus Martius

The Campus Martius was an area of Rome thought inhabited by a concentration of Judeans and plausibly contained one or more synagogues. Ostia's synagogue may provide insight into its style and structure.¹³²⁹ Yet as I have demonstrated in Chapter 2, current research reflects the Campus Martius as being the center of first century Roman economic, and religious life. A synagogue and Judean community geographically located on the Campus Martius would

¹³²⁵ *CIJ*, I, nos. 18, 22, 67, 140, 380 and perhaps 37; Dumser, 'Subura,' 'Quirinalis, Collis', 'Viminalis Collis', 'Domus: Viminalis (1), (2), (3), and (4),' *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 213, 237, 273-274, 116-17; A.G. Thein, "Esquilae" in Lothar Haselberger, David Gilman Romano, Elisha Ann Dumser, (eds.), *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 119-120; Penna, 'The Jews in Rome,' 37.

¹³²⁶ On the *pomerium* argument restricting the Suburan synagogue to 2nd cent. CE, see Lung-kwong, *Paul's Purpose in Writing Romans*, 100, n. 32.

¹³²⁷ Acts 6:9; Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 206-207.

¹³²⁸ Smallwood, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 521.

¹³²⁹ For a brief summary of Ostia in the context of first century synagogue evidence see Lee I. Levine, "The First Century Synagogue: Critical reassessments and assessments of the critical" in *Religion and Society in Roman Palestine: Old questions, new approaches* (London: Routledge, 2004), 70-102, (89-90).

have been a Judean communal institution with dimensions of worship and education integrated in the center of Roman life, likely until the extension of the *pomerium* in 49 CE.¹³³⁰

Given Volumnius' friendship with the Herods, both in Rome and as legate in Syria, as suggested by Smallwood, it was during the 10's BCE that he became the contributing patron to construction of a "Synagogue of the Volumnians," most likely named after, or one related to, the Volumnius mentioned in Josephus as governor of Syria.¹³³¹ Whether this synagogue was situated in the *Transtiberum* is conjecture. It may have been since initial inscriptions naming it are from the Monteverde catacomb.¹³³² However, this synagogue may alternately have been on the Campus Martius, since it is mentioned with *Campenses* in one Monteverde inscription.¹³³³ Its construction may have been incorporated in the new urban core on the Campus Martius, similarly to the temple of Apollo Sosianus, and others, including the Egyptian *Iseum*.

This construction of synagogues bearing names of elite Romans further demonstrates the *xenos* friendship which bound together Rome's elite and elite Judeans in Rome, and Roman Judeans, as reciprocal expression of patronage in Rome and friendship with Judean elite, in Rome and Judea. Perhaps one or more synagogues bearing Rome elite names were sponsored in reciprocity for Herod's patronage of the new Roman *colonia* of *Julia Augusta Felix Berytus* after 15 BCE.¹³³⁴

Richardson argues that a fragmentary catacomb inscription and a commemorative marble slab provide a compelling case for a synagogue of the Herodians.¹³³⁵ Given Herod's work for Judeans in the Diaspora, and years spent by Herod's numerous relatives in Rome, it is quite reasonable to conclude that Herod patronized a Judean synagogue or *proseucha* in Rome by the 10s BCE, as he was benefactor of the Jerusalem temple. While Herod may have sponsored construction of this synagogue in the Transtiber, given his relationship with Agrippa and

¹³³⁰ For a synagogue definition as a communal institution with religious dimension, see Levine, 'The First Century Synagogue,' 93-95.

¹³³¹ Richardson, 'Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome,' 22; Josephus, *Antiquities*, 16.277-283, 16.344-369, *War* 1.535-542; Smallwood, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 138.

¹³³² Frey, *CIJ*, I, nos. 343, 402, 417, 523; on the inscriptions location see Lung-kwong, *Paul's Purpose in Writing Romans*, 97, n. 25. Smallwood, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 520.

¹³³³ Frey, *CIJ*, I, no. 523.

¹³³⁴ Avidov, 'Peer Solidarity and Communal Loyalty,' 266-267.

¹³³⁵ Richardson, 'Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome,' 23-28.

Augustus, it is as likely that it may have been built on the Campus Martius or in an area with Palatine access.

Appendix 2.6: Judean Presence Elsewhere in Rome

Two smaller catacombs were perhaps in use in the first century, but the evidence is inconclusive. The catacombs at the *Via Labicana* and also *Vigna Cimarra* near the Appian Way provide indirect evidence of Judean presence in the south of Rome.¹³³⁶ This area may have had Judean inhabitants by the mid-first century, given their existence and prior to second century expansion of Judean presence in Rome's southern areas.

Nor is it known where the Judean elite who resided in Rome in more than one household lived within the city during the first century. They too were part of the fabric of Rome, and cannot be ignored as part of Judean life in the city.

Appendix 2.7: Conclusions:

This Appendix has argued that the Transtiber region of Rome was integral to the city, given its economic support of areas across the Tiber, its transportation network of bridges, its attractiveness as a newer settlement area, and its proximity to amenities, including the Naumachia, and parkland along the Tiber and its surrounding hills.

The Judean presence in the Transtiber was only one ethnicity among many, who shared its economic benefits, places of worship and living areas. Judeans constructed synagogues and catacombs that demonstrate the vibrant growth of the Judean community, and its ability to raise capital, and control property as religious interests matched its economic capabilities. It is of note that many Judean synagogues in the Transtiber and elsewhere in Rome were named after Roman or Herodian elite who may have been patrons of these communal facilities. Given the distribution of synagogues and catacombs in the southwest and northeast of Rome, it is quite plausible that Judeans were inhabitants of numerous sections of Rome.

¹³³⁶ Smallwood, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 520.

Reading Romans in Rome:

Appendix 3

The Cult of Isis and the Egyptianization of Rome

Appendix 3.1: Introduction: Egyptian Influence in and Egyptianization of the Eastern Mediterranean

Egyptian culture and religious practice shaped other eastern Mediterranean cultures for millennia before the rise of Rome. After Alexander's conquest of Egypt, the worship of Isis and Egyptian cultural influence in Greek-speaking regions was enhanced under the Ptolemies. This ethnic interaction and assimilation was enabled by adaptation of Hellenistic characteristics, imagery, hymnody, and social concepts in Ptolemaic Egypt.¹³³⁷ Additionally, Egyptian ethnic characteristics impacted Hellenistic culture in Egypt. The cult rituals, imagery, inscriptions, and ceremonies of Isis were assimilated into Ptolemaic Greek culture. This Hellenistic adaptation facilitated the spread of the Isis cult into Greece itself, including Thrace and Athens.¹³³⁸ Even more important for Rome was the Isis cult foundation on Delos. Rome gained control of the Greek sanctuary in 166 BCE, and used the island as an economic hub for trade in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Delos temple of Isis influenced the introduction of her cult in Rome, in the 80s BCE. The cult's adoption, adaptation, and integration into Hellenistic culture was one significant aspect of what I term Egyptianization of the Greek world, both within and outside Egypt. Isis cult practices were molded into Greek society, and in turn that of Rome.

Appendix 3.2: Egyptian Beginnings in Rome

Egypt had considerable impact on Rome in the late Republic and early imperial period. Even before her conquest, Egypt was a critical grain source, conveyer of luxury goods, and a source of ethnic and cultural influence in Rome's existence. Over time, Egyptian materials, artwork, sculpture, culture, and religion shaped the culture and religious practice of the city

¹³³⁷ Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, "The Hellenistic Face of Isis: Cosmic and Savior Goddess" in L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys, & P. G.P. Meyboom, (eds.), *Nile to Tiber: Egypt in the Roman World, Proceedings of the IIIrd International Conference of Isis Studies, Leiden, May 11-14, 2005* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 40-72, (50-51).

¹³³⁸ *RICIS* 114/0202 in L. Bricault, *Recueil des Inscriptions Concernant les Cultes Isiaques* (Paris, 2005); Gasparro, 'The Hellenistic Face of Isis,' 41-43.

of Rome. Whether these items and practices were actually from Egypt, or copied, or created in Rome to appear or perceived as Egyptian, they were integral to Rome's Egyptianization, the term that describes the adoption, adaptation, and assimilation of *Aegyptiaca* into Rome's experience, including religious or cultic practices.¹³³⁹

The conceptual division of culture and religion was generally foreign to Egyptian or Roman existence. Thus, Egyptian religion was not generally separated from Egyptian ethnicity, culture, or way of life, but was perceived as an integral aspect of being Egyptian. Thus, the Egyptianization of Roman culture through practice of the Isis cult is substantiated by numerous examples of numismatics, inscriptions, temples, statues, artwork, and literature in Rome, peninsular Italy, and elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world.

Appendix 3.3: Isis, Osiris, and Serapis: Identity and Characterization as Deities

The Maroneia stele in Thrace, Diodorus of Sicily and Isidorus of Fayum in Egypt provide insight into how Isis was perceived, or trumpeted as an epitome of Egyptian ethnic superiority during the Hellenistic era, the Republic, and early Roman Empire. Many hymns and aretologies in praise of Isis were copied from Egypt and re-recorded elsewhere.¹³⁴⁰ Plutarch provided detail of praise to Isis in *Moralia*, substantiating that her influence and worship continued similarly to that expressed by earlier writers.¹³⁴¹

By all, Isis was praised as preeminent and superior, as the true, universal savior, creator-god in the heavens, the one who gave “all eternity eternally” — the supreme god.¹³⁴² She was the sovereign goddess over the heavens, the earth, and the underworld. Her sovereignty was due to her origination of the realms of space and time, “having brought them into existence,

¹³³⁹ Molly Swetnam-Burland, ‘Egyptian Objects, Roman Contexts: A Taste for Aegyptiaca in Italy’ in L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys, & P. G. P. Meyboom, (eds.), *Nile to Tiber: Egypt in the Roman World, Proceedings of the IIIrd International Conference of Isis Studies, Leiden, May 11-14, 2005* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 113-136.

¹³⁴⁰ RICIS 303/0204, 1-2, lines 3-4; Diodorus Siculus 1.273-4; Gasparro, ‘The Hellenistic Face of Isis,’ 59, 59 n. 56.

¹³⁴¹ Plutarch, *Moralia V*, Frank C. Babbitt (trans.), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1936).

¹³⁴² The proclamation, “I am the oldest daughter of the youngest Cronus.” from Diodorus Siculus 1.13; 1.27.4, makes Isis the older sister of Zeus, Friedrich Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1979), 47; “Osiris when translated is Dionysus, and Isis is more similar to Demeter than to any other goddess” Diodorus Siculus 1.13.; “All eternity eternally” is part of a first person proclamation of Isis at Fayum: “I give all life and happiness eternally. I give all eternity eternally. I give all good fortune eternally.” Vera Frederika Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus and the Cult of Isis* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), 6; Also Isis is described as “Creator of both earth and starry heaven,” Isidorus, *Hymn II*, 11.

through what her heart conceived and her hands created.”¹³⁴³ As narrated by Diodorus and hymned by Isidorus, other manifestations of female deity, such as Demeter, Selene, Hecate, Aphrodite, and Astarte were considered inferior expressions given to other ethnic groups, but truly revealed in fullness as everlasting and ancient Isis to the Egyptians.¹³⁴⁴ An Isaic aretology inscription from Ios proclaims, “I am Isis....I gave and ordained laws unto men, which no one is able to change.... I divided the earth from the heaven...I ordered the course of the sun and moon...I made strong the right. I brought together woman and man...I ordained that parents should be loved by their children...I taught men to honour the images of the gods...”¹³⁴⁵

Solmsen notes Isidorus provided the Egyptian epithet of Isis; however, it is not “Isis” but *Thiouis*, Egyptian for “the only one,” because Isidorus claimed, she alone was all other deities combined.¹³⁴⁶ Yet, Isis was not distant from her adherents, but immanent, most present, exemplified in her first utterance in revelation to Appelius’ Lucius, “Behold! I am present.”¹³⁴⁷

Plutarch universalized Isis and her associated deities. “Isis and the gods related to her belong to all men and are known to them.” Although they were not known by their Egyptian names, they were still the deities honored by others.¹³⁴⁸ Furthermore, the concept of deity swearing faith with humanity would have been familiar to Isis adherents in this universalization. Priests of the cult recognized Isis requiring their oath of faith about the burial of Osiris’ body, before his return to life.¹³⁴⁹

Plutarch simply called Osiris “the Benefactor.”¹³⁵⁰ He determined Osiris’ name was a compound of ὅσιος (holy) and ἱερός (sacred), “common to the things in heaven and in

¹³⁴³ *Philae Hymns* 4.4-5 in Louis V. Žabkar, *Hymns to Isis in Her Temple at Philae* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 1988), 46-54.

¹³⁴⁴ Diodorus Siculus, 1.11.4; Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 49-51, 50 n. 51; also Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus*, 4-5, 86.

¹³⁴⁵ IG 12.5.14, inscription from Ios, second or third century CE, trans. A. Deismann, *Light from the Ancient Near East: the New Testament Illustrated by recently discovered texts of the Graeco-Roman world*, Lionel R. M. Strachan (trans.), (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1911).

¹³⁴⁶ Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 51; “But the Egyptians call You ‘Thiouis’ (because they know) that You, being One, are all.” Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus*, 18.

¹³⁴⁷ *En adsum*. Apuleius, *Metamorphosis* 11.5.

¹³⁴⁸ Plutarch *De Iside et Osiride*, 66.377 B-D, in Gasparro, ‘The Hellenistic Face of Isis,’ 44.

¹³⁴⁹ Diodorus Siculus 1.21.5-6.

¹³⁵⁰ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 42, in Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 185.

Hades,...”¹³⁵¹ He perceived Osiris as the soul of the universe, and “leader and lord of all the best things, is the mind and reason; in the earth, the winds, the waters, the heavens and the stars, it is the efflux of Osiris and his manifest image that comprise the ordered...”¹³⁵² Osiris or Serapis, Isis’ consort, was personified as the sun, and one who saw and heard all things.¹³⁵³

The benefits of Isis and Osiris were a long list of gifts granted to men. Osiris taught man to cultivate, make beer, and to worship the gods, civilizing the world.¹³⁵⁴ Both Osiris and Isis were credited as the original lawgivers, establishing justice and law for society and family.¹³⁵⁵ Osiris created cities, temples, priesthoods, metallurgy, the arts, music, and wine making, and founded Egypt.¹³⁵⁶ Osiris competed with Greek deities as discoverer and creator of trees beneficial to humanity. Diodorus reported Egyptian claims that Osiris discovered the olive tree and made it useful to humanity, not Athena, as argued by the Greeks, who claimed her as initial discoverer, by the sacred olive’s presence on the Athenian Acropolis.¹³⁵⁷

Pertinent to Rome’s unending demand for grain, Isis was deemed discoverer of wheat and barley, and was honored every harvest with a title of grain, at the *Panegyrie*.¹³⁵⁸ Isis caused the Nile to rise, brought abundance to feed Egypt, and ultimately, Rome.¹³⁵⁹ She invented navigation for ocean travel, entitled “Mistress of the Seas” or “Our Lady of the Seas”

¹³⁵¹ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 61, in Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 215.

¹³⁵² Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 49, in Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 197.

¹³⁵³ Diodorus Siculus, 1.11.1-3.

¹³⁵⁴ Diodorus Siculus, 1.14,17-18; 20.4; Plutarch *De Iside et Osiride*, 13, in Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 137.

¹³⁵⁵ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 3, 13 in Griffiths, *Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride*, 121,137; “Isis also established laws, they say, in accordance with which the people regularly dispense justice to one another and are led to refrain through fear of punishment from illegal violence and insolence.” Diodorus Siculus, 1.14. Solmsen translates part of an *Isean* aretology, “I have established laws that no man can undo.” Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 42.

¹³⁵⁶ Diodorus Siculus, 1.15-17.

¹³⁵⁷ Diodorus Siculus, 1.16.2

¹³⁵⁸ “Even yet at harvest time the people make a dedication of the first heads of the grain to be cut, and standing beside the sheaf beat themselves and call upon Isis, by this act rendering honour to the goddess for the fruits which she discovered, at the season when she first did this. Moreover in some cities, during the Festival of Isis as well, stalks of wheat and barley are carried among the other objects in the procession, as a memorial of what the goddess so ingeniously discovered at the beginning.” Diodorus Siculus, 1.14; Isidorus, *Hymn II*. 23-24 in Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus*, 36.

¹³⁵⁹ “For the festival marking the rising of the most sacred Nile, the festival with its sacred rites of abundance. The water has come. Hail to the streams at the rising of the freshet of Isis. Rule the streams, O Nile of many floods, of great name. From Meroe flow down to us, gracious and welcome, and spread the fruitful silt in your abundant freshets. May you sweeten the whole of Egypt, fertilizing it each year in due season... ‘Rise, O Nile, mount up to the joyous six and ten cubits.’” *P. Lond. Lit.* 239; translation from Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 95.

(*Pelagia*), and was praised for calming them for trade to occur.¹³⁶⁰ Furthermore, she was “Goddess of the Lighthouse of Alexandria,” Isis *Pharia*, who guided ships at sea in trade.¹³⁶¹

Most importantly, according to Isidorus, Isis saved. She saved those struggling in storms at sea, in shipwreck, in foreign countries, suffering disease or lack of sleep. In war, she saved cities, citizens, wives, children and possessions.¹³⁶² In papyri, and inscription, she was proclaimed or worshipped as the Holy, as Truth, the Savior of man, “Deathless Saviour,” “Omnipotent (*pantokrator*),” *Agatha-Tyche*, Victory, Nemesis, as *Phronesis* and Providence.¹³⁶³

Finally, Isis established righteousness or justice for humanity, and the laws which governed human relations.¹³⁶⁴ “Isis makes righteousness stronger than gold or silver...She assigns vengeance on those who were unjust. With her, right prevailed and like Demeter and Persephone, she is the “Law-giver.”¹³⁶⁵ Furthermore, she was named *Isis Dikaiosyne*; Isis Justice or Righteousness.¹³⁶⁶ As Isis Righteousness, she was the attributor of the Egyptian deification of Maat, who signified truth, justice, and right order in the innermost element of Egyptian ethics adapted, resisted, and adopted in Rome.¹³⁶⁷

Worship of animal forms was both a core cultural element of the Isis cult, and also a point of ethnic critique. Plutarch cautioned the Egyptians or Isis adherents because they venerated animals truly as gods, bringing scorn on the sacred rites of the Isis cult.¹³⁶⁸ He illustrated the basis of the inter-ethnic scorn by citing how different groups of Egyptians have divinely

¹³⁶⁰ Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 42; “And as many as sail on the great Sea in winter, when men may be destroyed and their ships wrecked and sunk... All (these) are saved if they pray that you be present to help.” Isidorus, *Hymn I*, 32-34. Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus*, 18.

¹³⁶¹ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 79-80.

¹³⁶² Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 50-51; Isidorus, 1.26, 34; 2.5-8. Also Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 70-71, 107; C.J. Bleeker, ‘Isis as Saviour Goddess’, in S.G.F. Brandon, (ed.), *The Saviour God: Comparative Studies in the Concept of Salvation Presented to Edwin Oliver James* (Manchester: Manchester University, 1963), 1-16, (10).

¹³⁶³ *Pap. Ox.* XI. 1380. 22.31; 18.46; 55.43; 123; 61; *hymn and* 145-152; Isis as Savior, see Bleeker, ‘Isis as Saviour Goddess’, 1-16; Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 56-57; Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus*, 18; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 82.

¹³⁶⁴ *RICIS* 114/0202, lines 24-34.

¹³⁶⁵ Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 106.

¹³⁶⁶ Diodorus Siculus, 1.14.3-4; Also similarly named in Athens, Walters, *Attic Grave Reliefs of Women and Isis*, 31.

¹³⁶⁷ Ladislaus Vidman, *Sylloge inscriptionum religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae* (Berlin: Berolini, 1969), *VS* 6; Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 3; Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, Ann. E. Keep, (trans.), (London: Methuen, 1973), 265, 112-130; also on Maat, see Jan Bergmann, *Ich bin Isis* (Upsala: Stockholm University 1968), 176; Solmsen, *Isis Among Greeks and Romans*, 57-58.

¹³⁶⁸ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 71, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 230-231.

honored one animal above another, with the resulting conflict requiring Roman intervention.¹³⁶⁹ However, he also recognized that through the animate the divine was mirrored: "...in my view we should love the distinct qualities found in natures that have perception and soul, susceptibility and character; nor should we honor these (animals), but rather the divine through them, as being very clear mirrors which natures provides; (for these animals) should be regarded as (clearly) the instrument or art of the God who orders everything...The nature...derives its lot from the intelligent being 'by whom the universe is guided' according to Heracleitus"¹³⁷⁰

Juvenal is bluntly sarcastic, "Who knows not what monsters demented Egypt worships? One part reveres the crocodile, another stands in awe of the ibis, devourer of snakes....Here they venerate cats, there fish, and there a whole town venerates a dog."¹³⁷¹

Appendix 3.4: Isis and Osiris: Cult Practice, Adherent Way of Life, and Worship

As personified Righteousness, impiety toward Isis was sin. Ovid witnessed a man prostrate at the altar of Isis confessing aloud his offending the goddess, and a blind man who proclaimed he deserved his loss of sight due to impiety toward the goddess.¹³⁷² Juvenal mocked a female Isis adherent who, naked and cold, penitently crawled around the Temple of Isis on the Campus Martius on bleeding knees.¹³⁷³ However, in answering prayer Isis was perceived as "the Merciful."¹³⁷⁴ She was called upon to forgive sins committed against her.¹³⁷⁵ Plutarch summed up the worship of Isis and Osiris as "venerating and honoring the well-ordered, the good, and the useful as the image (εἰκονος), the imitation and reason (λόγος) of Osiris."¹³⁷⁶ For Plutarch, the adherent's response to Isis and Osiris is plain, "for these (people) hearing (the gods Isis and Osiris) have love and faith (ἀγαπῶσι καὶ πιστεύουσιν)."¹³⁷⁷ Plutarch

¹³⁶⁹ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 72, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 230-233.

¹³⁷⁰ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 76, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 241.

¹³⁷¹ Juvenal, *Satires* 15.1-8, translation from Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 90.

¹³⁷² Ovid, *Letters from the Black Sea* 1.1.51ff; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 21.

¹³⁷³ Juvenal, 6.522ff.

¹³⁷⁴ Isidorus, *Hymn I*, 36, *Hymn III*, 34 in Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus*, 19, 51.

¹³⁷⁵ 'Cyprian', *Carm.* 4.36; *FRA* 441, 31; The ex-consul, now a minister of Isis, is heard confessing: "I have sinned; Goddess, forgive me; I have turned back." Also Ovid, *Ex Ponto* 1.1.50; *FRA* 153, 35; Juvenal 6, 535; *FRA* 281, 24; Also Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 286, n. 59.

¹³⁷⁶ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 64, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 219-221.

¹³⁷⁷ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 65, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 221.

aply summarizes Price's argument that the Isis cult was one that encouraged exclusive adherence or allegiance to the Egyptian goddess and her cult.¹³⁷⁸

While many Romans and Greeks derided Isis worshippers for inclusion of animal deities in the Egyptian pantheon, in some circumstances their veneration was held as admirable.¹³⁷⁹ In *De Natura Deorum*, Cicero, during critique of Roman destruction of divine representations in sanctuaries and statues, lauded the Egyptians. "No one has ever even heard of an Egyptian laying profane hands on a crocodile, ibis, or cat."¹³⁸⁰ In another passage, the speaker contended in discussion about deification, that if traditional Roman gods are worshipped, including Honor and Faith, then "what reason can you give why we should not include Isis and Osiris in the same category?"¹³⁸¹ If Isis was accepted, her accompanying animal deities, deemed unacceptable by Roman tradition, would be considered divine as well. However, in later critique of deity, Cicero's character derided Syrian fish worship, and the "Egyptians' deification of almost every species of animal..."¹³⁸² Thus, deification of Isis, and her characteristics of worship were both lauded or derided in Rome, dependent on the purpose, place, and timing of individuals or groups involved.

The worship of Isis involved a number of practices affecting her adherents and priests that have a bearing on the Pauline epistle being heard in Rome. First, her priests are known for 'holy living' and being unblemished in body.¹³⁸³ Like Judeans, they practiced circumcision as a mark of hygiene and purity.¹³⁸⁴ The priest performed baptism or sacramental immersion for an initiate to enter the cult, possibly with the initiate almost naked at baptism, engaging in the symbolic death of the individual and restoration to life with Osiris.¹³⁸⁵ Isiac priests led out in hymns of worship sung by those in attendance in Rome several times daily.¹³⁸⁶ Isis' priests and adherents practiced a range of dietary restrictions, which included abstaining from pork,

¹³⁷⁸ Price, 'Religions of Rome', 298-300.

¹³⁷⁹ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.36.101.

¹³⁸⁰ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1.29.81-82.

¹³⁸¹ Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 3.19.47.

¹³⁸² Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 3.19.47; 3.15.39.

¹³⁸³ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 6, 79; *FRA* 222, 5; *BGU* 347; Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 93.

¹³⁸⁴ *FRA* 352, 7; Herodotus remarks that their circumcision was for hygiene, Herodotus, 2, 37; *FRA* 7, 14.

¹³⁸⁵ *FRA* 381, 21-22, for ritual baptism chambers see Reinhold Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (München: Beck, 1962), 23, 200. Also Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 160-163.

¹³⁸⁶ Tibullus, 1.3.31; *FRA* 147, 21; For women choristers called *paeanistae*, see *VS* 384.

salt, mutton, fish, wine, and many vegetables.¹³⁸⁷ At Pompeii, the Isiac priestly diet included eggs, lentils, and nuts.¹³⁸⁸ However, sacred meals, possibly with initiates or congregants, were also eaten within the temple using special tables, at least one of which at Delos was dedicated to *Chrēstē Isis*.¹³⁸⁹

Isis veneration called for honoring her sacred days and annual calendar. March 5th was the *Navigium Isidis*, the sailing of Isis' ship. In Apuleius' 2nd century work, the event included a procession of initiates clothed in white linen and priests carrying objects sacred to the cult, including a left hand with fingers extended to represent Isis Righteousness. It was a day of joyful veneration of the goddess that marked the initiation of merchant sailing season.¹³⁹⁰ The Isiac Festival of Lights took place on August 12.¹³⁹¹ The "seeking and finding" of Osiris was celebrated for a week from 28 October to 3 November. The final day was a public spectacle and time of joy marking the *Hilaria*.¹³⁹² As Price notes, one funerary inscription, lauds one woman as a "chaste and attentive worshipper of the Pharian goddess [i.e. Isis], with whom I spent 30 years of happiness."¹³⁹³

Plutarch encouraged his readers to not doubt Isis' power or accounts about her, but remonstrated "...nothing is more pleasing to the gods, whether sacrifice or ritual enactment, than the true belief (glory) about them (τοῦ δ' ἀληθῆ δόξαν ἔχει περὶ θεῶν)."¹³⁹⁴ The purpose of the rites, calendar, and processions was to experience of a pattern of piety, praise, and encouragement that commemorated Isis' and Osiris' virtue, giving them honor for their powers "above and below the earth."¹³⁹⁵

In summary, Isis and Osiris were portrayed as intimately involved in the creation and sustainment of all elements of civilized life, including those essential to Rome's survival; its commerce and grain supply. The adoration of cosmic Isis was a core element of the

¹³⁸⁷ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 5, 6, 7, 8, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 125-129; That pork was eaten only once a year by the priests of Isis, Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 8; Also for a list of food restrictions, see *FRA* p. 900, col. 2.

¹³⁸⁸ Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 98.

¹³⁸⁹ Roussel, *Les cultes égyptiens à Delos*, 20, 99.

¹³⁹⁰ Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 167, 178.

¹³⁹¹ *FRA* 525.

¹³⁹² Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 178-180.

¹³⁹³ Price, 'Religions of Rome', 300.

¹³⁹⁴ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 11, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 135.

¹³⁹⁵ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 27, in Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride*, 159.

Egyptianization of Rome, and a threat to Roman ethnic superiority claims, and a challenge to differentiate those of Judeans.

Difficulty in differentiation of Judeanism from the Egyptian cult and way of life is apparent in Diodorus' linkage of Judean ethnic characterizations with those of Egypt. He reported that the Jews had emigrated from Egypt, placed them in the list of ancient Egyptian colonies, based upon observation of their common practice of circumcision that presumably bound Judeans and Egyptians together in common heritage.¹³⁹⁶ Diodorus further substantiated this ethnic connection based upon the practice of circumcision between the Egyptians and Colchis in the Black Sea.¹³⁹⁷ It is mentioned here since circumcision returns in Romans 2-3 as a Judean ethnic marker in dispute with non-Judean Christ-followers in Rome.

Appendix 3.5: The Egyptian Cults in Italy and Rome before 60 BCE

Egyptian cultural influences were present in Rome by the second century BCE, not long after the early Ptolemaic era.¹³⁹⁸ This can be presumed based upon playwright Ennius' inclusion of *Isaici coniectores* (interpreters) among *augures*, *haruspices*, *astrologi*, and *interpretes somniorum* (dream interpreters) in his play *Telamo*.¹³⁹⁹ The "Isis seers" were depicted as defrauding Roman women, who may have been participants in her cult practice.¹⁴⁰⁰ As intimated by Ennius, the primary social framework by which Egyptians influenced life in Rome was worship practice and way of life adopted by adherents to Isis and her associated deities.

Romans would have known the Isis cult from Greek cities where they traded, including Chalcis and Eretria.¹⁴⁰¹ Inscriptions on Delos from the second century BCE name Roman participants. Isis comes to Rome by trade, with a *Serapeum* in Puteoli and an *Iseum* at Pompeii used by Greeks, slaves and Roman freedmen by 105 BCE.¹⁴⁰²

¹³⁹⁶ Diodorus Siculus 1.28.2-3.

¹³⁹⁷ Diodorus Siculus 1.55.4-5.

¹³⁹⁸ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 32-34.

¹³⁹⁹ It is of interest to note that this list becomes, or already may be, the list of cults and practices that are later listed as religious *superstitiones* by Valerius Maximus. Quintus Ennius, *The Tragedies of Ennius*, H.D. Jocelyn (ed.), (London: Cambridge University, 1969), 127-128, frg. 134; and 396-397.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Cicero, *On Divination* 1.32.

¹⁴⁰¹ Heyob, *Cult of Isis Among Women*, 11.

¹⁴⁰² Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 204-205; 204 n. 6; Heyob, *The Cult of Isis Among Women*, 12.

The first evidence of the Isis cult in Rome is visible on coinage minted between 90 and the 60s BCE, with Isean characteristics.¹⁴⁰³ The coins depict Isis symbols or elements involved in her worship. Furthermore, at least one Isis priestess, Usia Prima, daughter of Rabirus Postums Hermodorus, was in Rome in this period.¹⁴⁰⁴ Another, Polla Caellia, is mentioned in inscriptions in Rome and Thessalonica as involved in the cult, or making dedications to Serapis and Isis.¹⁴⁰⁵ A funeral inscription from the late Republican Capitoline Hill, dated between 90 and 60 BCE, provides early corroboration of a cult association or *collegium* of *pastophori* of Isis in Rome.¹⁴⁰⁶ The names listed are not Egyptian, but individuals of Roman elite families, lower status citizens, freedmen, and women. Of significance is that some hold prestigious religious offices as priest or priestess in the *Isidis Capitolinae*.¹⁴⁰⁷ The inscription is evidence of the penetration of Isis worship through many segments of Rome's society. This group likely worshipped Isis in a shrine or temple within the *Arx* on the Capitoline, within the Roman *pomerium*.¹⁴⁰⁸

The initial public location of the Isis temple and cult on the Capitoline and within the *pomerium* by the 60s BCE, assists conceptualization of the flow of actions and reactions towards the cult and Egyptians during late Republic and Early Empire, which encompass political, military, economic, and religious circumstances concerning Egypt. The most significant aspects of Egyptian and Roman ethnic rivalry were the preservation of the dominance of Rome's gods and maintaining *pax deorum*, and the economics of Rome's grain consumption and Egypt's supply. As Kehoe aptly summarizes the situation, the "ability of the Roman Empire to exploit the resources of its provinces was particularly vital for maintaining an adequate supply of food for the city of Rome."¹⁴⁰⁹ As observed earlier, Isis played a key role as the goddess of grain production and transport, encompassing the fertility of the land of Egypt, the rising and falling of the Nile, and the calming of the sea for grain transport at the beginning of each shipping season.¹⁴¹⁰ Thus friction and rivalry between the

¹⁴⁰³ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 41-51; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 85-86.

¹⁴⁰⁴ *CIL* 6.2246; Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 205.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Heyob, *Cult of Isis Among Women*, 86.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Located in Rome's later *Regio VIII* on the Capitoline. See Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments*, 37; Lucian, *Metamorphosis* 11.30.

¹⁴⁰⁷ The list contains thirteen individuals, all with Roman names from six *gens*. They included patricians, plebs, and an equestrian *gens*. They ranged from 8 being *liberti* and 5 *ingenui* who were members of at least four Roman *tribus*. Two had been *sacerdotes* – or priest and priestess. Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 51-57.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 57; Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 51-57.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Kehoe, *Economics of Agriculture*, 1.

¹⁴¹⁰ For Isis as the goddess of grain, see Diodoros Siculus, 1.14; Also Pliny writes: "A rise of sixteen cubits is just right....Less water does not irrigate all places, and a greater abundance delays too long in receding, thus

role of Isis and traditional Roman deities, such as Quirinus, and Ceres, among others are evident in this tumultuous period in Rome.

Appendix 3.6: Egyptian Cults in Italy and Rome 63 to 31 BCE

The flow of economics, ethnic rivalry, and contention over Isis worship between Romans and Egyptians commenced in 62 BCE, during which Cato expanded the number of grain distribution recipients at Rome.¹⁴¹¹ This recipient increase boosted the demand and cost of grain. The popularity of the Isis cult increased with the clamor for grain, and led to cult banishment in 59 BCE, but the resolution was short lived.¹⁴¹² Through the next 40 years, the Isis cult temples and adherents experienced repeated persecution in Rome. Attacks upon Isis and her cult and temples occurred in late Republican Rome in 59, 58, 53, 50, 48 BCE.¹⁴¹³

Shortly thereafter, on January 1, 58, the temple of Isis and the altars of Serapis, Isis, Harpocrates and Anubis which assumably stood on the Capitoline, were destroyed by Senatorial command, due to the Isis adherent's interruption of the New Year's sacrifice to the traditional Roman gods, within Rome's *pomerium*.¹⁴¹⁴ It seems the Senate did not desire Isis to be attributed with the grain supply or surplus in Rome, but it was to be credited to Ceres and the blessing of traditional Roman deities, on whom Rome's survival and greatness depended.¹⁴¹⁵

Later in 58 BCE, Clodius further extended the grain benefit by abolishing all payment for grain by Rome's citizens, and placed control of its purchase and distribution under one person.¹⁴¹⁶ In addition, he renewed rights to operate *collegia* in Rome, which increased public legitimacy of Isis worshippers.¹⁴¹⁷ Almost immediately, an opposing Senatorial decree

cutting into sowing time by keeping the soil soaked, while the opposite makes for no sowing season at all where the soil is parched. Egypt reckons as follows: with twelve cubits it faces famine, at thirteen it still goes hungry, fourteen brings happiness, fifteen freedom from worry, sixteen delight." Pliny, *Natural History* 5.58; Naphtali Lewis, 'The Romanity of Roman Egypt: A Growing Consensus' in *On Government and Law in Roman Egypt: Collected Papers of Naphtali Lewis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1995), 300.

¹⁴¹¹ Plutarch, *Cato Min.* 26, *Caesar* 8.6.

¹⁴¹² Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen*, 205 n. 1.

¹⁴¹³ In 59, see Cicero, *Atticus* 2.17.2; in 58, see Tertullian, *Apol.* 6.8; *Nat.* 1.10-17-18; in 53, see Cassius Dio, 40.47.3-4; in 50, see Valerius Maximus, 1.3.3; in 48, see Cassius Dio, 42.26.1-2.

¹⁴¹⁴ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 62-63; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 86; Varro's account of the Senatorial decree was preserved by Tertullian in *Ad Nat.* 1.10.

¹⁴¹⁵ Koch, 'Roman State Religion,' 327-328.

¹⁴¹⁶ Cicero, *De Domo* 25. Also Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 52-53.

¹⁴¹⁷ Nippel, *Public Order in Ancient Rome*, 73.

commanded a new destruction of Isis' temple and an end to her public worship, since the cult altars had been rebuilt *per ium popularium*. It seems a significant portion of Rome's populace desired to continue to entreat Isis on the Capitoline for restored or increased grain shipments, and relief from potential famine. In response, in 58-57, the consul Gabinius heeded the crowd's request for preservation of the Isis cult and overrode the command of the Senate. In retaliation, Clodius threatened to consecrate to Ceres, the Roman goddess of grain, the goods of the consul Gabinius.¹⁴¹⁸

Gabinius' action permitted the Egyptian deities and their worship site to remain active on the Capitoline, continuing either in place or through their restoration, by a decree which remained unchanged until 53 BCE.¹⁴¹⁹ In fact, coinage minted in 55 BCE depicts *Isis Panthea*, in response to the popular support of the cult.¹⁴²⁰ Thus from 57-53 BCE, Isis worship continued unhindered in Rome, and as the Egyptian grain supply ebbed and flowed, so did public perception and supplication that Isis enabled successful grain arrivals in Rome in divine rivalry to Roman Ceres.

Dio Cassius recorded the Senate's decree of 53 BCE to destroy the privately built temples of Isis and Serapis, and likely those on the Capitoline.¹⁴²¹ Most certainly, these actions are taken in light of Crassus' defeat at Carrhae by Parthia, and the need to restore *pax deorum* with Rome's traditional gods in the face of defeat, in addition to political upheaval in the city.

Additionally, the sanctity of Rome's *pomerium* cannot be underestimated, as the sacred precinct of the city in which foreign cults were banned or heavily regulated. The whole of Rome within and outside the *sanctum*, negotiated and managed the place and time of each god's worship through religious law, rites, and days, and Roman actions and observations, especially augury.¹⁴²² As Varro noted, the whole city contained sacred buildings and *sedes*, residences of the gods revealed by their image.¹⁴²³ An example of a goddess revered in Rome

¹⁴¹⁸ Cicero, *De Domo* 124; Nippel, *Public Order in Ancient Rome*, 74.

¹⁴¹⁹ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World*, 57, 64-65.

¹⁴²⁰ Heyob, *Cult of Isis Among Women*, 16-17.

¹⁴²¹ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 86; Cassius Dio, 40.47. For Dio, the portents of 52 BCE seemed to indicate that Rome had offended Isis and Serapis. However, given that Rome had not officially adopted these deities as acceptable, but viewed them as *superstitiones*, it is more likely that the Senate regarded the portents of the owl seen and caught in the city, the perspiring statue, a meteor, and thunderbolts, stones and blood flying through the air as continuation of the displeasure and anger of the Roman gods.

¹⁴²² Ando, 'A Religion for the Empire,' 231, 235.

¹⁴²³ Varro, *Ant. Div.* fr. 70; Camillus' speech summarizes Livy's view of Rome: "We inhabit a city founded after auspices were taken and rites of inauguration were performed; no place in it is not full of religious

from its earliest days was Diana on the Aventine, whose cult was governed by Roman law. Its ancient rites and regulations became a paradigm for Romanization of provincial cities including promulgation of the imperial cult.¹⁴²⁴ Thus, the removal and destruction of the Isis and Serapis temples would have been viewed as the appropriate traditional step in Roman religious life to restore the relationship with its gods and reunite a divided citizenry, and restore the sacredness of the *pomerium*.¹⁴²⁵ While destruction of the Isis temples and altars seemed to occur, it is not long before restored rites return, triggering further senatorial reaction.

Valerius Maximus gave further account of senatorial action against the Isis cult in 50 BCE. He related that consul L. Aemilius Paullus, when no others would carry out the Senatorial decree to destroy an Isis temple in Rome, laid aside his official consular robes when workers refused to act, and singly beat down the temple doors with an axe.¹⁴²⁶ The presence of workers (*opifices*) strongly intimated that temple restoration had been undertaken after prior destruction ordered by the edict issued in 53 BCE. I suggest this Isaic temple was the one under contention on the Capitoline, within Rome's *pomerium*. It is a continued focal point in the conflict between Egyptianization and the preservation of Rome's traditions and way of life.

The Roman Civil War in 49 BCE emphasized the importance of grain shipment to Rome. Caesar seized Sicily and Sardinia to supply grain to the starving city.¹⁴²⁷ In these circumstances and in response to omens recorded by Dio, further action was taken against the Isis cult in Rome in 48 BCE.¹⁴²⁸ Again, the Senate action called for destruction of Isis cult sites, probably including those on the Capitoline.¹⁴²⁹ Their destruction was to restore right

associations *religionum* and of gods; as many days are fixed for solemn rites as there are places in which they are performed.”; Livy, *History of Rome* 5.52.2.

¹⁴²⁴ Dionysius of Halicarnassus 4.26-4-5; 4.49; *ILS* 112 side B; *ILS* 4907; *CIL* 11.361; Ando, ‘A Religion for the Empire,’ 235-236.

¹⁴²⁵ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 65.

¹⁴²⁶ Valerius Maximus 1.3.4. Although one scholar places the event as an action of an earlier Roman senator of the same name. Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 57; Also, Nippel, *Public Order in Ancient Rome*, 50-51; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 86.

¹⁴²⁷ Cicero, *Ad Att.* 9.9.4; *Fam.* 14.7.3; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 2.48; Caesar, *B.C.* 1.30; Cassius Dio, 41.16.1, 41.18.

¹⁴²⁸ “...bees had settled next to a statue of Heracles in the Capitoline region. Since rites (*sacra*) for Isis happened to take place (or cult-images or – objects happened to be there at that time), the soothsayers were of the opinion that the precincts of the temples of Isis and Serapis had to be razed to the ground once more.” Cassius Dio, 42.26. Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 65; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 87.

¹⁴²⁹ The arrival of the bees was interpreted as the violation of the sacred precinct of Rome by the foreign Egyptian deities and their cult. For bees as a bad omen, see Cicero, *De Har. Resp.* 25, Livy, 21.46.2, 24.10.11, 27.23.4, and Valerius Maximus 1.6.13.

relationships with the recognized gods of Rome, who preserved her from her enemies. The decision was influenced by the events unfolding between Caesar, Senate, and Pompey in 49-48 BCE.

During Caesar's dictatorship, the numbers of Rome's eligible grain recipients increased to 320,000. Recognizing the unsustainability of these numbers, Caesar decreased the total to 150,000 by founding numerous colonies that settled at least 80,000 people from Rome into the provinces, including the colonization of Corinth, of interest as the *colonia* of origin of Paul's Roman epistle.¹⁴³⁰ A factor in this dispersal in colonization may have been a drop in grain shipped from Egypt due to the low Nile summer flood in 48 BCE, essential to cultivation of grain, resulting in smaller shipments to feed Rome's population, in 47.¹⁴³¹

After Caesar's death, and to assuage public clamor, in 43 BCE the Second Triumvirate voted to reverse the Isis cult's earlier persecution and to rebuild a temple in Rome in honor of Isis and Serapis, to gain popular support.¹⁴³² This official approval of Isis, a temple in her honor and cult is characterized as a "shameful act" by Valerius Maximus. The aedile of 43 BCE, M. Volusius, donned the Anubis mask in cultic rites, prompting Valerius' comment, "Can there be anything more deplorable than a Roman magistrate having to disguise himself in the trappings of a foreign religion?"¹⁴³³ It is not apparent from our evidence that this construction was undertaken during their rule, or if the cult was restored on the Capitoline, since Augustus likely opposed the cult.¹⁴³⁴

However, not all Isis worship locations were under contention in Rome during this period. Furthermore, Isis, Serapis, and associated Egyptian deities and cult practices were not isolated to a few locations. Some were built and operated unhindered within the city. In addition to the Isis temple that existed for brief periods on the Capitoline, other shrines were scattered throughout the city.¹⁴³⁵ The *Isis Athenadoria* was located in *Regio XII*, or southern Rome, perhaps including a statue of Isis by a Greek sculptor, Athenodorus created in the

¹⁴³⁰ Suet. *Caesar* 42.1; At least 17 cities are founded in the east by Julius Caesar or Mark Anthony, MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, 7-10, 9. Also Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 176.

¹⁴³¹ Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 110.

¹⁴³² Cassius Dio., 47.15.4-47.16; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 87.

¹⁴³³ Valerius Maximus, 7.3.8.

¹⁴³⁴ Heyob, *Cult of Isis Among Women*, 19-20.

¹⁴³⁵ For the *Isis et Serapis in Capitolio*, in Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 286; Price, 'Religions of Rome', 291, 295-296, 298-300.

early first century BCE within a shrine located near the Via Appia.¹⁴³⁶ The *Isis Curiana* constructed by Q. Curius was another possible shrine alluded to by a number of ancient authors, which may have been constructed in the first century BCE.¹⁴³⁷ The *Isis Patricia* stood in eastern Rome, in *Regio V*, in an area outside the Servian walls.¹⁴³⁸ The *Isis Pelagia*, was an *aedes* or temple of Isis, protectress of sailors, which given the name, was likely located in the Transtiber, if associated with the navy, or proximity to the docks.¹⁴³⁹

Also, during the Senate proclamations and reversals regarding the preservation or destruction of the Isis temple and cult on the Capitoline, another *Iseum* likely stood in Rome's eastern area that dwarfed it in size. The *Iseum Mettelinum*, a late Republican and Augustan temple complex included temples for both Isis and Serapis.¹⁴⁴⁰ Later Augustan construction included a triportico, which enclosed a large central water installation (*piscina*), and other water storage facilities located within the eastern walls of Rome near the Esquiline along the Via Labianca.¹⁴⁴¹ The *Iseum Metellinum* was important enough to be a landmark for a region of the city. It was so renowned in Augustan Rome; its name was assigned to its city region in Augustus' urban reform.¹⁴⁴² Located in *Regio III* in the southeast section of Republican and early imperial Rome, it was associated with the street which approached the *Iseum*.¹⁴⁴³ Given its archaeological evidence, it likely was in operation in the late Republic, yet it seems to have avoided being the target of Senatorial edicts, since it is not mentioned in earlier decrees, or historical records, since it stood outside the *pomerium*. The Republican and early Augustan construction of the *Iseum Mettelinum* strengthens the view that what was primarily at issue in the Senatorial decrees against Isis worship was the *pomerium* of the Capitoline and not the entire walled city of Rome.

¹⁴³⁶ Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 286.

¹⁴³⁷ Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 286.

¹⁴³⁸ Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 286.

¹⁴³⁹ Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 286.

¹⁴⁴⁰ The complex also included statues of various Egyptian deities including the Hathor cow, sphinxes, and lions. Roullet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 35-36, 129, 132.

¹⁴⁴¹ It is estimated this complex was over 260 meters in depth, the water pool in the center of the portico measuring about 37 x 7 meters. Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 148-152. Based upon the early relationship between the *Iseums* at Delos, with each having underground or lower level water installation, and the presence of a major water installation at the *Iseum Mettelum*, it is not unreasonable to assume that a *hydraeum* for water storage and use by *therapeutai*, or by priests and priestesses of the Isis cult in Rome. See Robert A. Wild, *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 34-39; for the water installations at the *Iseum Mettelum*, Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 148-152; For its location on the Via Labianca, see Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 285.

¹⁴⁴² *Regio III: Isis et Serapis*; CIL VI 2234, 32462, and people living in the region may have been labeled *Isiaci*.

¹⁴⁴³ Platner, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 285-286.

Thus, the contention between Roman and Egyptian ways of life and cult seemed to center on the ongoing threat to Roman traditional gods and their worship within the sacred precinct, and the resultant potential practice of Egyptian morals, virtues, and way of life in light of the economic and military challenges to Rome by Egypt, and within the politics of Rome. This contention operates as a backdrop to the religious challenges regarding the religio-ethnic supremacy of the traditional Roman gods that triggered the series of Senatorial actions in the late Republic against Isis veneration. With the funerary inscriptional evidence cited earlier, Roman citizens are at the center of the support of the Egyptian cult; and lead the opposition. This fluid state of affairs regarding the worship of Egyptian deities and way of life being assimilated in Rome's culture changed with the rise of Augustus.

Appendix 3.7: Egyptian Cult in Rome 31 BCE to 19 CE

Given the conflicts during the Triumvirates, and Roman enmity created towards Egypt and Cleopatra until the conquest of Egypt post-Actium, any immediate major regrouping of the Isis cult in Rome is doubtful from 43 to 31 BCE. That this might be the case is borne out fifteen years later when in 28 BCE, only three short years after Actium, Augustus's first action was against the Egyptian cult in Rome. He enacted a prohibition of Egyptian *sacra* inside the Roman *pomerium*, including the Capitoline, the location that had caused conflict during the late Republic.¹⁴⁴⁴ While the basis for the action was likely a deep dislike for the Egyptians and Cleopatra's support for Mark Anthony at Actium, it must also be considered an element of Augustus' Roman cultural renewal and efforts to reestablish Rome's *pax deorum*.¹⁴⁴⁵ By this act, he also reestablished the non-volatility of the sacred realm of Rome's traditional gods, a significant step in his cultural restoration of Rome's traditions and moral values.¹⁴⁴⁶

This action occurs in conjunction with a grain shortage in Rome, given Augustus' largesse to the public by gifts of grain in 28 BCE, and money granted to needy senators.¹⁴⁴⁷ Additionally, it was a crucial time of consolidation of Augustus' power. It was essential for him to espouse Roman traditions and demonstrate benefactory superiority.

¹⁴⁴⁴ Cassius Dio, 53.2.4.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World*, 75.

¹⁴⁴⁶ Cassius Dio, 53.2.4.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Cassius Dio, 53.2.1-2.

There is a nuanced complexity played out in the edict, since Dio Cassius added that while rites and images were banned in the *pomerium*, it allowed for Isis temple restorations in other sections of Rome.¹⁴⁴⁸ Takács argues this edict accomplished three Augustan objectives. First, Augustus took a political and religious stand against perceived Egyptian public influence. Second, the decree is an element in protecting and furthering the Roman cultural revolution, and preservation of Roman moral values. Third, it removed Egyptian-honoring processions from public streets, curtailed large gatherings in public of *Isean* supporters, yet permitted worship of Isis in private or within her temples.¹⁴⁴⁹ Furthermore, the conquest of Egypt provides Augustus a new source of taxes and grain for feeding Rome, a reality of Roman superiority over Egypt, strengthened by edict, yet dependent on Egyptian grain.¹⁴⁵⁰

The early Augustan years faced further grain crisis. Egyptian grain sources fail at least once between 25 and 21 BCE.¹⁴⁵¹ In Africa, war is waged in Mauretania, in 23 to 22 BCE, disrupting grain shipment.¹⁴⁵² In 23 and 22 BCE, Rome flooded, plague stalked across Italy, fields were not cultivated, which precipitated a food shortage and the specter of starvation.¹⁴⁵³ In 23, according to the *Res Gestae*, Augustus fed a significant portion of Rome's population, possibly as many as 250,000 people, from his own funds.¹⁴⁵⁴ The next year, 22 BCE, he reluctantly accepted responsibility for control of the corn supply, which resulted in restructuring its administration and issuance of tickets or official documents to limit the population receiving the corn ration.¹⁴⁵⁵ It is likely in 22, that Alexandrian sailors hailed Augustus as benefactor for his support of trade in grain shipments to Rome.¹⁴⁵⁶ Yet, in response to this crisis a resurgence of Isis veneration can be detected, for in 21 new action was taken against the cult.

In 21 BCE, Agrippa reiterated the Augustan decree of 28 against the worship of Isis, by restricting assemblies in veneration of Isis. However, it is a specific prohibition of Egyptian

¹⁴⁴⁸ Cassius Dio, 53.2.4-5.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World*, 76.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Suetonius. *Augustus* 18.2; Dominic Rathbone, 'The Grain Trade and Grain Shortage in the Hellenistic East' in Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (eds.), *Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1983), 45-55, (52-53).

¹⁴⁵¹ Strabo, 17.1.3.

¹⁴⁵² Garnsey, *Famine and Food Suppl.*, 228-229.

¹⁴⁵³ Cassius Dio, 54.1; Augustus, *Res Gestae* 5; Almost simultaneously there is a famine in Judea in 24/23 BCE, which Herod alleviates by purchasing grain from Egypt. Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.299-316.

¹⁴⁵⁴ Augustus, *Res Gestae* 15.1.10-12. Also, Brunt and Moore (eds.), *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 59-60.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 62-63.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Suetonius, *Aug.* 98.2; 42.3.

cult's public practice. It maintained it must not be practiced within the *pomerium* or part of the *proastion*, within approximately 34 feet of the walled section of Rome.¹⁴⁵⁷ Again, the issue seems to be curtailing crowds or groups from gathering in the sacred sections of Rome, such as the Capitoline or Roman Forum, or the city's narrow streets, which would be visible public competition with processions and events associated with the traditional Roman cults and deities.¹⁴⁵⁸ Thus, the annual *Navigium Isidis*, and the processions of initiates would not be allowed by Agrippa within the confines of the *pomerium*, and public venues of the city of Rome, likely to preserve public order and maintain the visible supremacy of traditional Roman festivals and deities.¹⁴⁵⁹ However, this would not have restricted them from occurring outside the *pomerium*, for example, on the Campus Martius.

Simultaneously with these prohibitory decrees and restrictions, Augustus' development of the Campus Martius progressed as described chapter 1.2.4.5 and included construction of a new expansive *Iseum*, built under his auspices, standing outside the *pomerium*. The *Isis Campensis* becomes the primary Isis temple complex for worship of Egyptian deities and practice of its way of life in Rome from the Augustan era until the 4th century CE.¹⁴⁶⁰ It was erected on the eastern side of the *Saepta Julia*, and may have tied directly to this facility central to daily Roman life.¹⁴⁶¹ Its courtyard structure is similar to that of the *Iseum* at Delos, the major center of Hellenised worship of Isis and Serapis, which had influenced Rome's adoption of the Isis cult.¹⁴⁶² Yet, the temple complex proper was influenced in architecture and structure by an earlier *Iseum* located at Memphis in Egypt.¹⁴⁶³ The Isis Campensis courtyard may also have held a fountain or basin, highly significant for its possible use of Nile water imported from Egypt for ritual purification, as implied by Juvenal's satire.¹⁴⁶⁴ In

¹⁴⁵⁷ Cassius Dio, 54.6.6.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 76-77.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Plutarch links this with the search for Osiris. Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*. 39.366 D-F.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Haselberger, Romano, Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 152; Plotinus, the Egyptian philosopher of the third century CE even then regarded the Iseum, "the one unspoiled spot in Rome." Porphyry, *Vit. Plotinus* 10; Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 138.

¹⁴⁶¹ The Isis Campensis lay on a north-south axis, parallel to the Saepta Julia with a semicircular southern end potentially enclosing an inner sanctuary for Isis. See Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 25, 347-348; Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 152, 219.

¹⁴⁶² Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 25.

¹⁴⁶³ Martial terms this temple a "*memphitica templa*", Martial 2. 14.7; Also Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 24-25.

¹⁴⁶⁴ The practice of exporting Nile water from Egypt seems to underlie his satire that the pious female devotee of Isis-Io would travel to Meroe to return with water for use on the Campus Martius. Juvenal 6.526-529. Erik Iversen, *Obelisks in Exile* (Copenhagen: Gad, 1968), 78-80; also for the fountain in the Isis Campensis. See Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 25-26. For Nile water exported from Egypt for use in purification in Isis worship and the use of Nile water in conjunction with the dead, life-giving Osiris viewed as embodied in the Nile water carried in pitchers, the burial of *Osiris Hydreios* figures with the dead,

addition, the courtyard likely held statues honoring both the Nile and the Tiber rivers, possibly alluded to in Propertius' elegies.¹⁴⁶⁵

The *Isis Campensis* contained temples for both Isis and Serapis, with the Isis temple on the north, nearest the Pantheon, and the semicircular Serapeum on the southern end, the courtyards filled with alcoves and chapels containing statues and obelisks honoring a host of other Egyptian gods, and animalistic incarnations of Isis.¹⁴⁶⁶ The statues included an Apis bull, Hathor cows, baboons, crocodiles and falcons, all dedicated to Horus, Isis, Osiris, Bes, and Sekhmet.¹⁴⁶⁷ The obelisks honored Isis and her Egyptian origin.¹⁴⁶⁸ On the other hand, the public use of obelisks as Egyptian art in Rome proclaimed final Roman power and superiority within the Romano-Egyptian ethnic rivalry now resolved in Roman dominance, yet also symbolic of Rome's Egyptianization.¹⁴⁶⁹ Additionally, the obelisks were a physical aspect of Augustan cultural renewal, erected during the same period as those in the *Iseum*.

Simultaneously with the restriction of the public worship of Isis of 28 and 21 BCE, Egyptian art and possibly worship flourished in the construction and remodeling of Augustus' and Livia's homes on the Palatine, in still preserved wall frescos. Even more interesting is the *Aula Isiaca*, a room in the Augustan Palatine complex. It dates to approximately 20 BCE, making it contemporary with the Agrippa decree, yet its frieze is painted in the Egyptianized style found nearby in the House of Livia, and depicts the sacred cult objects of Isis worship.¹⁴⁷⁰ This Egyptianized artwork is similar to that within the *Villa Farnesina*, the assumed villa of Agrippa and Julia.¹⁴⁷¹ While some decoration might be purely aesthetic, the concentration in a specific room may point to Egyptian and other household members utilizing the space for Isis cult practice.

which may have represented means by which the dead might conquer death, see Wild, *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis*, 69-70, 92, 127-128, 143-148.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Wild, *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis*, 186, map insert.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 80.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 25-32, 34-35, 347-348. The zoomorphic images of deities included the Apis bull, 124; baboons, 125-126; crocodiles, 127; falcons, 348; and Hathor cows, 129; lions, 130-131; and sphinxes, 132-134.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Zanker, *Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, 144; Also, Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 79, n. 23; 80.

¹⁴⁶⁹ "Monoliths... were made by the kings (Egyptian), to some extent in rivalry to one another.... There are two other obelisks at Alexandria in the precinct of the temple of Caesar near the harbor." Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 36.14.64; Also, Ammianus Marcellinus, 17.4.7; Roulet, *Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, 13-14; Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 87.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 88; Michel Malaise, *Inventaire préliminaire des documents égyptiens découverts en Italie*, EPRO 19, (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 215-219.

¹⁴⁷¹ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 88; Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 272-273; Price, 'Religions of Rome', 297.

It may be that architectural Egyptianization was linked again to Isis as grain provider for in 18 BCE Rome experienced another grain shortfall. Augustus again distributed grain and money, possibly to purchase Egyptian wheat for 100,000 citizens.¹⁴⁷² Thereafter, Egyptian architectural assimilation continued in Rome, including funerary monuments. One well-known example was the pyramidal monument of C. Cestius, which stood along the *Via Ostiensis*, constructed in approximately 12 BCE.¹⁴⁷³

The Roman poet, Propertius, provided unique insight into Roman ethnic perspectives of Egyptian images, artwork, and Isis worship during early Augustan rule. He likely wrote his elegies between 25 and 16 BCE, during Augustan urban expansion on the Campus Martius and construction of the new *Iseum*. Propertius defended Roman ethnic supremacy and proclaimed Egyptian and Alexandrian ethnic inferiority in morality, military prowess, and religion. He especially denigrated the worship of Isis in Rome.

As a symbol of Egyptian and Alexandrian ethnicity, he lambasted Cleopatra's moral inferiority, titling her a "whore," and "queen of incestuous Canopus," and while alluding to her, would not pen her name and described her as one who insulted the Roman army. Additionally, he portrayed Cleopatra's threat to Rome in religious terms: through "yapping Anubis." He maligned Alexandria as "noxious" and "skilled in deceit."¹⁴⁷⁴

¹⁴⁷² Augustus, *Res Gestae* 18.

¹⁴⁷³ Haselberger, Romano, and Dumser, *Mapping Augustan Rome*, 223.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Most often Propertius only terms Cleopatra, "the woman." Propertius, III.II:1-72, A.S. Kline (trans.), *Sextus Propertius: The Love Elegies*, (Liberty Publications, 2001), <http://www.tonykline.co.uk/Browsepages/Latin/Prophome.htm>; "She who dared to pit the barking Anubis against our Jupiter, and force the Tiber to endure the threats of the Nile, to drive back the Roman bugle with the rattling sistrum and chase the Liburnian prows with Egyptian puntpoles, and cast the vile mosquito nets towards the Tarpeian rock, and lay down the law between the statues and trophies of Marius. Propertius, *Elegy* 3.11.41-46. Also Fantham, 'Images of the city: Propertius' new-old Rome,' 124-125; "Why Cleopatra, who heaped insults on our army, a woman worn out by her own attendants, who demanded the walls of Rome and the Senate bound to her rule, as a reward from her obscene husband? Noxious Alexandria, place so skilled in deceit, and Memphis so often bloody with our grief, where the sand robbed Pompey of his three triumphs. Rome, no day will ever wipe away the stain. Better for you Pompey, ill at Naples, if your funeral procession had crossed the Phlegraean Plain, or that you had bowed your neck to Caesar, your father-in-law.

Truly that whore, queen of incestuous Canopus, a brand burned by the blood of Philip, dared to oppose our Jupiter with yapping Anubis, and forced Tiber to suffer the threats of Nile, and banished the Roman trumpet with the rattle of the sistrum, and chased the Liburnian prow with a poled barge, and spread her foul mosquito nets over the Tarpeian Rock, and gave judgements among Marius's weapons and statues.

The city, high on its seven hills, that directs the whole Earth, was terrified of a woman's power and fearful of her threats. What's it worth now to have shattered Tarquin's axes, whose life branded him with the name of 'Proud', if we have to endure a woman? Celebrate a triumph Rome, and saved by Augustus beg long life for him! You fled then to the wandering mouths of frightened Nile: your hands received Romulus's chains. I saw your arms bitten by the sacred asps, and your limbs draw sleep in by a secret path. And your tongue spoke

Furthermore, Propertius described Egypt as a threat to Roman superiority, through his portrayal in verse of Cleopatra's involvement with Mark Anthony and his poetic account of the battle of Actium.¹⁴⁷⁵ The threat to Rome encompassed its gods, topography, and institutions: Jupiter, the Tiber, the city walls, its military, statues and trophies of past glory and additionally, Roman law. However Actium's battle and victory, Octavian's praises are sung; Palatine Apollo titles Augustus "world-deliverer," and Apollo's actions which precipitated Augustan victory at Actium are lauded. Propertius summarized the results: Rome was divinely granted victory – by "Apollo's faithfulness (*uincit Roma fide Phoebi*)."¹⁴⁷⁶

overpowered by endless wine: 'This was not as much to be feared, Rome, as your fellow-citizen!' ... Apollo of Actium will speak of how the line was turned: one day of battle carried off so vast a host. But you, sailor, whether leaving or making for harbour, be mindful of Caesar through all the Ionian Sea." Propertius, III.II:1-72, Kline, *Sextus Propertius: The Love Elegies*.

¹⁴⁷⁵ "Muse, we will speak of the Temple of Palatine Apollo: Calliope, the subject is worthy of your favour. The song is created in Caesar's name: while Caesar is sung, Jupiter, I beg you, yourself, to listen. There is a secluded harbour of Phoebus's Athamanian coast, whose bay quiets the murmur of the Ionian Sea, Actium's open water, remembering the Julian fleet, not a route demanding of sailors' prayers. Here the world's forces gathered: a weight of pine stood on the water, but fortune did not favour their oars alike.

The enemy fleet, was doomed by Trojan Quirinus, and the shameful javelins fit for a woman's hand: there was Augustus's ship, sails filled by Jupiter's favour, standards now skilful in victory for their country. Now Nereus bent the formations in a twin arc, and the water trembled painted by the glitter of weapons, when Phoebus, quitting Delos, anchored under his protection (since, uniquely floating, it suffered the South Wind's anger), stood over Augustus's stern, and a strange flame shone, three times, snaking down in oblique fire.

Phoebus did not come with his hair streaming around his neck, or with the mild song of the tortoise-shell lyre, but with that aspect that gazed on Agamemnon, Pelop's son, and came out of the Dorian camp to the greedy fires, or as he destroyed the Python, writhing in its coils, the serpent that the peaceful Muses feared.

Then he spoke: 'O Augustus, world-deliverer, sprung from Alba Longa, acknowledged as greater than your Trojan ancestors, conquer by sea: the land is already yours: my bow is on your side, and every arrow burdening my quiver favours you. Free your country from fear, that relying on you as its protector, weights your prow with the State's prayers. Unless you defend her, Romulus misread the birds flying from the Palatine, he the augur of the foundation of Rome's walls. And they dare to come too near with their oars: shameful that Latium's waters should suffer a queen's sails while you are commander. Do not fear that their ships are winged with a hundred oars: their fleet rides an unwilling sea. Though their prows carry Centaurs with threatening stones, you'll find they are hollow timber and painted terrors. The cause exalts or breaks a soldier's strength: unless it is just, shame downs his weapons. The moment has come, commit your fleet: I declare the moment: I lead the Julian prows with laurelled hand.'

He spoke, and lent the contents of his quiver to the bow: after his bowshot, Caesar's javelin was next. Rome won, through Apollo's loyalty: the woman was punished: broken sceptres floated on the Ionian Sea. But Caesar his 'father' marvelled, out of his comet released by Venus: 'I am a god: and this shows evidence of my blood.' Triton honoured it with music, and all the goddesses of the sea applauded, as they circled the standards of freedom. The woman trusting vainly in her swift vessel headed for the Nile, commanding one thing only, not to die at another's order. The best thing, by all the gods! What sort of a triumph would one woman make in the streets where Jugurtha was once led!

So Apollo of Actium gained his temple, each of whose arrows destroyed ten ships." Propertius, 4.6:1-86, Kline, *Sextus Propertius: The Love Elegies*.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Propertius, 4.6.57, Kline, *Sextus Propertius: The Love Elegies*.

Furthermore, Propertius, in turn, derided and encouraged the worship of Isis in his treatment of the actions of Cynthia, his paramour. When she fell ill, he urged her to repay “the heifer,” a clear reference to a vow to Isis, the ten night vigil in the Isean temple that she evidently had oathed in return for healing.¹⁴⁷⁷ He described Cynthia’s allegiance to Isis in derogatory terms, calling the repayment of the vow, “wretched rites.” He further disparaged the Isean sacraments as those that “separate lovers.” The highlight of his derogatory barrage was his threat to chase Isis from the city proclaiming, “Surely you’ve enough swarthy acolytes in Egypt? Why take such a long journey to Rome? What good is it to you that the girls sleep alone? Believe me, your horns will be back again, or we’ll chase you, savage one, from our city: there was never friendship between the Tiber and the Nile.”¹⁴⁷⁸ Propertius’ observation of swarthy acolytes would likely hold true as an aside in her worship in Rome, since the involvement of Ethiopians and Egyptians in cult leadership and involvement were depicted in art in Herculaneum.¹⁴⁷⁹ Thus, in Propertius’ attitudes we may recognize a forerunner of the opinions and moral teaching of the later Valerius Maximus who regaled Roman moral and ethnic superiority through traditional labeling of Egyptian beliefs as “superstitions.”

Additionally, Propertius’ contemporary, Vitruvius, cemented this disdain for Isis and Serapis in topographic terms when he lauded the temples of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva whose temples crowned the Arx, and derided the Egyptian goddess’ temple for being built in the marketplace, the Campus Martius.¹⁴⁸⁰ Thus, Rome’s traditional gods reign socially, architecturally, and topographically superior to potential Egyptian usurpers.

However, Tibullus supplied an alternative view, as Isean supplicant. He prayed to Isis for healing, based upon the dutiful observance of her rites by his paramour, Delia, citing the

¹⁴⁷⁷ “Since you have escaped, *mea lux*, out of great danger pay Diana the gift of the song and dance you owe her, and keep vigil as well for that heifer, now a goddess; and, for my sake, give her the ten nights you vowed.” Propertius, 2.28A:47-62. Kline, *Sextus Propertius: The Love Elegies*.

¹⁴⁷⁸ “The wretched rites are back again: Cynthia’s been occupied these ten nights. And I wish they’d end, these sacraments Inachus’s daughter sent from tepid Nile to Italy’s women! This goddess, whoever she was, who so often separates lovers, was always ill-natured. Surely Io you learnt from hidden couplings with Jove, what it is to go many ways, when Juno ordered you, a girl, to wear horns, and lose your speech to the harsh sound cows make. Oh, how often you galled your mouth on oak-leaves, and chewed, in your stall, on once-eaten strawberry leaves! Surely, it’s not because Jupiter removed the wild aspect from your face, you’ve for that reason been made a proud goddess? Surely you’ve enough swarthy acolytes in Egypt? Why take such a long journey to Rome? What good is it to you that the girls sleep alone? Believe me, your horns will be back again, or we’ll chase you, savage one, from our city: there was never friendship between Tiber and Nile.” Propertius, II.33:1-22. Kline, *Sextus Propertius: The Love Elegies*.

¹⁴⁷⁹ Snowden, Jr., ‘Greeks and Ethiopians,’ 120-121.

¹⁴⁸⁰ Vitruvius, 30; *FRA* 154, 3.

paintings of Isis' divine acts on temple walls, and claiming Delia will repay her vow by praising Isis for his healing and safe return from travel.

“What help does thy Isis, Delia, now give me? What the bronze instruments (*sistra*) so often clashed in thy hands? What avails it that in dutiful observance of her rites thou didst bathe in clean water and – I remember well – slept apart on a chaste bed? Now aid me goddess, now – for that thou canst heal is shown by the crowd of painted panels in thy temples. Then my Delia will pay the debt of her vow, sitting all clad in linen before thy door and twice a day chant thy praises, conspicuous in the Egyptian thron^g.¹⁴⁸¹

More importantly, Tibullus marked the celebration in Rome of Isis' intervention and rescue from shipwreck by the votive paintings in her temples expressing gratitude for her salvation.¹⁴⁸² In addition, Tibullus effusively wrote a vibrant outpouring of praise to Osiris.¹⁴⁸³ Tibullus provides insight into those Romans committed to worship of Isis, because of her mighty deeds, and honoring vows of her adherents. It hints at exclusive honoring of Isis by devoted adherents, as argued by Price.¹⁴⁸⁴

Ovid, another early Augustan contemporary of Tibullus, remarked about the groups of penitents near her temples. “These are people who have sinned against the goddess, punished by blindness, prepared to do penance to remove the cost of sin.”¹⁴⁸⁵ He may have become an adherent himself, since he once begged Isis for the recovery of his lover Corinna, with the fervor of an Isis follower.¹⁴⁸⁶ Ovid provides us a hint of how an ethnic Roman became involved in the Isis cult; they were in a relationship with someone who was involved with Isis, who powerfully acted in the world.

While the Egyptianization of Rome progressed, Augustus reacted against increased numbers claiming grain dole eligibility. The worship of Isis may have strengthened again when the Nile over-flooded in 5 BCE, which enabled a grain surplus to reach Rome in 4 BCE.¹⁴⁸⁷ Yet the increased draw was not sustainable and in 2 BCE, Roman manumission laws were restated.

¹⁴⁸¹ Tibullus 1.3.23-32.

¹⁴⁸² Tibullus, 1.3.28; *FRA* 147, 18.

¹⁴⁸³ Tibullus, 1.7.23-54.

¹⁴⁸⁴ Price, ‘Religions of Rome’, 299-300.

¹⁴⁸⁵ Ovid, *ex Ponto* 1.51 ff.

¹⁴⁸⁶ Ovid, *Amores* 2.13; Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 88.

¹⁴⁸⁷ As recorded at Elephantine in 5 BCE, Lewis, *Life in Egypt*, 111.

The *Lex Fufua Caninia* provided new restrictions on granting manumission, thus limiting improper manumission by current Roman citizens and reducing the numbers of future new citizens eligible for the grain dole.¹⁴⁸⁸

Less than a decade later the swollen population of Rome faced famine and attractiveness of the Isis cult was likely strengthened. In 5 CE, flood and potential starvation again prowled Rome's metropolis. Further military action had occurred in Africa, with agrarian territory being destroyed in Proconsularis.¹⁴⁸⁹ The grain shortage in Rome became more severe in 6. In response, Augustus formed fire brigades that also doubled as a riot control force.¹⁴⁹⁰ Also, grain shortfalls in 6-9 CE may have been partially caused by changes in the provincial Roman taxation system, from collecting a tithe of grain from a province, to collecting coinage as a fixed tax. Grain price speculation increased, resulting in withholding grain in years when it was plentiful, and also scarcity in poor years would have increased prices on the open market. In other words, private traders now purchased the corn, leaving the pressures of supply and demand to dictate price and delivery.¹⁴⁹¹

The threat of famine returned in 7 CE and likely continued into 8, with resultant mob violence and an Augustan evacuation from Rome of all classes of people.¹⁴⁹² Gladiators and slaves for sale were banished to further than 100 miles from the city. All foreigners: Judeans, Egyptians, and all other foreigners were expelled, including non-citizens of all ethnicities, except doctors and teachers. Large portions of Roman elite households, including those of Augustus, judges, and senators left the capital. Augustus supported the remaining population with his own funds and grain.¹⁴⁹³ No doubt, given prior behavior of Rome's population, adoration of Isis increased among the remaining populace. That a woman prophet was stirring up the city decrying the displeasure of the gods in 7 only added to communal disturbance.¹⁴⁹⁴ Needed re-regulation of grain taxation was recognized and addressed by Augustus in 7 and thereafter. However, the action did not curtail Rome's grain shortages during these years.¹⁴⁹⁵

¹⁴⁸⁸ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 184-185. Also Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 331-334; Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply*, 236-238.

¹⁴⁸⁹ Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply*, 228-229.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Cassius Dio, 27.1-2; Suetonius, *Aug.* 25.2; Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply*, 240-241.

¹⁴⁹¹ Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 64-65.

¹⁴⁹² Cassius Dio, 55.26, 55.31.3-4, 55.33.4; Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply*, 220-221, 229.

¹⁴⁹³ Cassius Dio, 55.22.3; 26.1-3; 28.1; Suetonius, *Augustus* 42.3; Garnsey, 'Famine in Rome,' 60-62.

¹⁴⁹⁴ Potter, *Prophets and Emperors*, 172.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Cassius Dio, 55.31.4.

Appendix 3.8: Egyptian Cult in Rome 20 to 41 CE

The actions of Tiberius in relation to the Isis cult and Judeans in Rome in 19 CE is detailed in chapter 2, yet as evidenced in this excursus, that event was only one of a long interaction of Roman, Egyptian and Judean ethnic rivalry in the city. This rivalry did not end with these events.

Pressure to restore the Isis cult, if not already done during 23 in Rome, may have increased in 32, when grain supply was short, and prices were high, instigating riots in Rome that bordered on insurrection.¹⁴⁹⁶ Yet this crisis passed without drastic Roman action towards Judeans or Egyptians, who were likely as affected by these depredations as the rest of Rome's residents.

During the later years of Tiberius' reign, there was a warming in Roman-Egyptian/Alexandrian relations. There was considerable Egyptian and Alexandrian influence on the young Gaius. Helicon an Egyptian, served as his chamberlain.¹⁴⁹⁷ Later, Helicon and the Ascalonite, Apelles encouraged Gaius to erect his statue in the Jerusalem Temple in 39-40.¹⁴⁹⁸ While emperor, Gaius did institute some initiation rites and foreign cults. However, it is not certain which they were. Witt assumes they included the Isis cult.¹⁴⁹⁹ Turcan concurs that Gaius may have celebrated the Isiac ceremonies, but that the official restoration and elevation as an official *religio* in the Roman calendar came later. Turcan further claims that Gaius rebuilt the *Iseum* on the Campus Martius, previously destroyed by Tiberius and also commemorated Isis on the Capitoline, bringing the cult unofficially into Rome's *pomerium*, an Isis styled upon his sister, Agrippina the Younger, and Claudius' last wife.¹⁵⁰⁰ Thus, it is unlikely Gaius granted the Isis cult official status, but may have taken steps towards the cult's further public popularization and restoration in Rome during 38-41. These actions substantiate Philo's recitation of Gaius' friendships with Helicon, and the Egyptian's influence on imperial policy.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 6.13.

¹⁴⁹⁷ Barrett, *Caligula*, 84.

¹⁴⁹⁸ Philo, *Ad Gaium*, 166-172; 202-205; 331-337; Barrett, *Caligula*, 85.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 19.30; Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 104.

¹⁵⁰⁰ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 89-90.

Appendix 3.9: Egyptian Cult in Rome 41 to 50 CE

When Claudius became emperor in 41, Rome had only 8 days grain supply. One early imperial action was to deal with the shortage by grant of economic privileges to incentivize those who placed a ship in service to ship grain to Rome for at least six years.¹⁵⁰¹ The grain shortage probably triggered heightened religiosity as divine assistance was sought during this economic hardship. Given what is known of Judean trading and the relationships between Claudius, Agrippa I, and the Judean ethnarch in Alexandria, it is plausible Judean-owned ships took part in this economic boom as well as Alexandrian. However, their potential involvement was complicated by interaction of the grain shipment to Rome with the Alexandrian conflict and the cult of Isis. Claudian indemnification would have applied to all willing to take part in grain shipment, and his desire to overcome any instability would have made further conflict between the two groups unattractive.

As proposed in Chapter 2.6.1.5 it is probable, in light of Claudius' need to stabilize Rome, that he granted the Isis cult official *religio* status, in time to celebrate commencement of the sailing season or its end in relation to Isis as protectress of sailors and goddess of Egypt's grain. If early, recognition would have coincided with the *Navigium Isidis*, held on March 5, 41. However, if recognized at the end of successful sailing season, it may have coincided with the *Isia* in November, 41.

Lucan provided the first Roman literary evidence of the *Isia* festival.¹⁵⁰² Plutarch added that the festival, which celebrated the search and discovery of Osiris, and Isis' official nativity celebration, lasted four days in the Roman public calendar, the same as in Egypt.¹⁵⁰³ Barrett, in his work on Caligula, reassesses the calendrical reconciliation of the *Isia* dating in the Roman and Egyptian public calendars. He determines the co-incidence of the two calendars, which reconciled Egyptian dating with the Roman calendar, placed the initial official Roman public celebration of the *Isia* between 40-43.¹⁵⁰⁴ Warrior assumes the temple of Isis and Serapis on the Campus Martius was established in 43.¹⁵⁰⁵

¹⁵⁰¹ Suetonius, *Claudius* 18-19.

¹⁵⁰² Lucan, *Pharsalia* 8.831-3.

¹⁵⁰³ Plutarch, *Moralia* 366e.

¹⁵⁰⁴ Barret, *Caligula*, 220-221. Also, Takács, *Isis and Sarapis*, 90-91.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 91.

I suggest it was more compelling to grant this honor in 41, at the height of crisis and reestablishing stability in Rome and Alexandria. It is possible that the Egyptian temple on the Campus Martius was reconstructed earlier – perhaps under Tiberius as early as 23. If the dates of March or November, 41 are assumed, the correlation gives credence for compelling grounds for early Claudian inclusion of the cult of Isis in the Roman public calendar as state sanctioned rite (*sacra publica*). In either case, the addition to the Rome’s sanctioned sacred worship was of high significance to Alexandrians and Judeans. It affirmed Egypt’s important contribution to Rome’s existence, and would have been an affront to Judeans still incensed by the circumstances of 38-40 in Alexandria and in relation to Jerusalem.

Appendix 3.10: Egyptian Cult in Rome 51 to 64 CE

Despite the religious fervor for Isis, Claudius and Rome suffer the indignity of another grain shortage in 51, an event that triggered a mob response of hissing and throwing bread scraps at the emperor in the Forum.¹⁵⁰⁶ Isis was likely worshipped intensely at that time, and was invoked in prayer in conjunction with the divinized god Claudius especially after his death in 54, but perhaps even before. Both are addressed in prayer in an offering commemoration in Rome, in request of divine intervention for famine relief. The freedman M. Aedius Amerimnus, made an offering to *Isis Invicta* in 51 CE, in Rome addressing both Claudius and Isis in prayer. Aedius is an associate of M. Acilius Aviola, consul in 54 CE.¹⁵⁰⁷

However, a portion of the Roman citizenship, including Egyptian and Judean freedmen, were eligible for the grain ration, as earlier established by Augustus. Persius’ satire on freedom penned during this time continues to link manumission to the corn ration.¹⁵⁰⁸ Seneca clarified this generosity further, stating that the grain ration was given, no matter the morals of the individual recipient.¹⁵⁰⁹

¹⁵⁰⁶ Tacitus, *Annals* 12.43.2; Suetonius, *Claudius* 18-19.

¹⁵⁰⁷ VS 402, See Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, 317, n.22.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Persius 5.74. “What we want is true liberty; not by that kind is it that any Publius enrolled in the Velina tribe becomes the possessor of a *tesserula* for a ration of mangy corn (grain).”

¹⁵⁰⁹ “...the thief no less than the perjurer and the adulterer and everyone, without distinction of character, whose name appears on the register (*incisus*) receives grain from the state; whatever else a man may be, he gets that, not because he is good, but because he is a citizen, and the good and bad share alike.” Seneca, *De Benef.* 4.28.2.

The Roman anxiety over the Egyptian grain fleet departure from Alexandria and celebratory relief over its arrival at Puteoli still existed in the mid-first century CE, as evidenced by Seneca.¹⁵¹⁰ The Egyptian ships likely organized as a fleet, or *classis* by Alexandrian shippers who brought the grain tribute, imperial grain, and supplies for private sale to satisfy Rome's needs.¹⁵¹¹ Egypt in the 50s supplied Rome with one-third of its annual grain consumption. By implication, the cult of Isis and its growth, increased in status and religious value in Rome were directly related to the transport and arrival of Egyptian grain, given Rome's dependence for food security.¹⁵¹²

Finally, the worship of Isis was official *religio* in the 50s, with public rites celebrated in Rome when the epistle of Romans arrived. Egyptians deeply involved in the Isis cult still influenced and were members of Rome's elite. Chaeremon of Alexandria, an Egyptian Isiac priest and astrologer, was appointed to instruct Nero as a youth.¹⁵¹³ Nero's expert astrologer, Balbillus, was also an adherent and priest of the Egyptian cults.¹⁵¹⁴ Poppea's extended family in Pompeii maintained an extensive household shrine to Isis and her accompanying Egyptian deities.¹⁵¹⁵ Otho, friend of Nero and Poppea's first husband, also led Isis cult devotions and ceremonies, which would have required his adoption of Egyptian garb, diet, and shaved head. One of Galba's freedmen was a sacristan of the Roman Isis cult.¹⁵¹⁶

Appendix 3.11: Conclusion

Thus, the Egyptian and Alexandrian foreign superstition was inextricably woven into the fabric of official Roman public life as part of the Egyptianization of Rome. Its assimilation was replete with ethnic competition with Rome's traditional culture, religion, and ethnic identity, into which it was fully adopted. However, Juvenal still sarcastically lambasted Roman women devotees of Isis, whom he represented as ready to leave husbands for Egypt to "bring back water to sprinkle the Temple of Isis."¹⁵¹⁷ At the reception of Romans, the Isis cult and Rome's Egyptianization remained in competition with other ethnicities, cults, and religions, including Judeanism and Christ-followers in Rome.

¹⁵¹⁰ Seneca, *Ep.* 77.

¹⁵¹¹ Seneca, *Ep.* 77.1, Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 129.

¹⁵¹² Rickman, *Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 118.

¹⁵¹³ P.W. van der Horst, *Chaeremon, Egyptian Priest and Stoic Philosopher, EPRO 101*, (Leiden: Brill, 1984).

¹⁵¹⁴ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, Antonia, 90.

¹⁵¹⁵ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 90.

¹⁵¹⁶ Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 94.

¹⁵¹⁷ Juvenal, *Satires* 6.527-529.

Appendix 4.1
From the Transtiber
Towards the *Forum Romanum*



Capitoline

Temple of Jupiter
Optimus
Maximus

Temple of Fides

Roman
Forum

Basilica
Julia

Temple of
the Divine
Augustus

Palatine

Domus
Tiberiana

Domus
Augustus

Forum Boarium

Tiber River

Pons
Aemilius

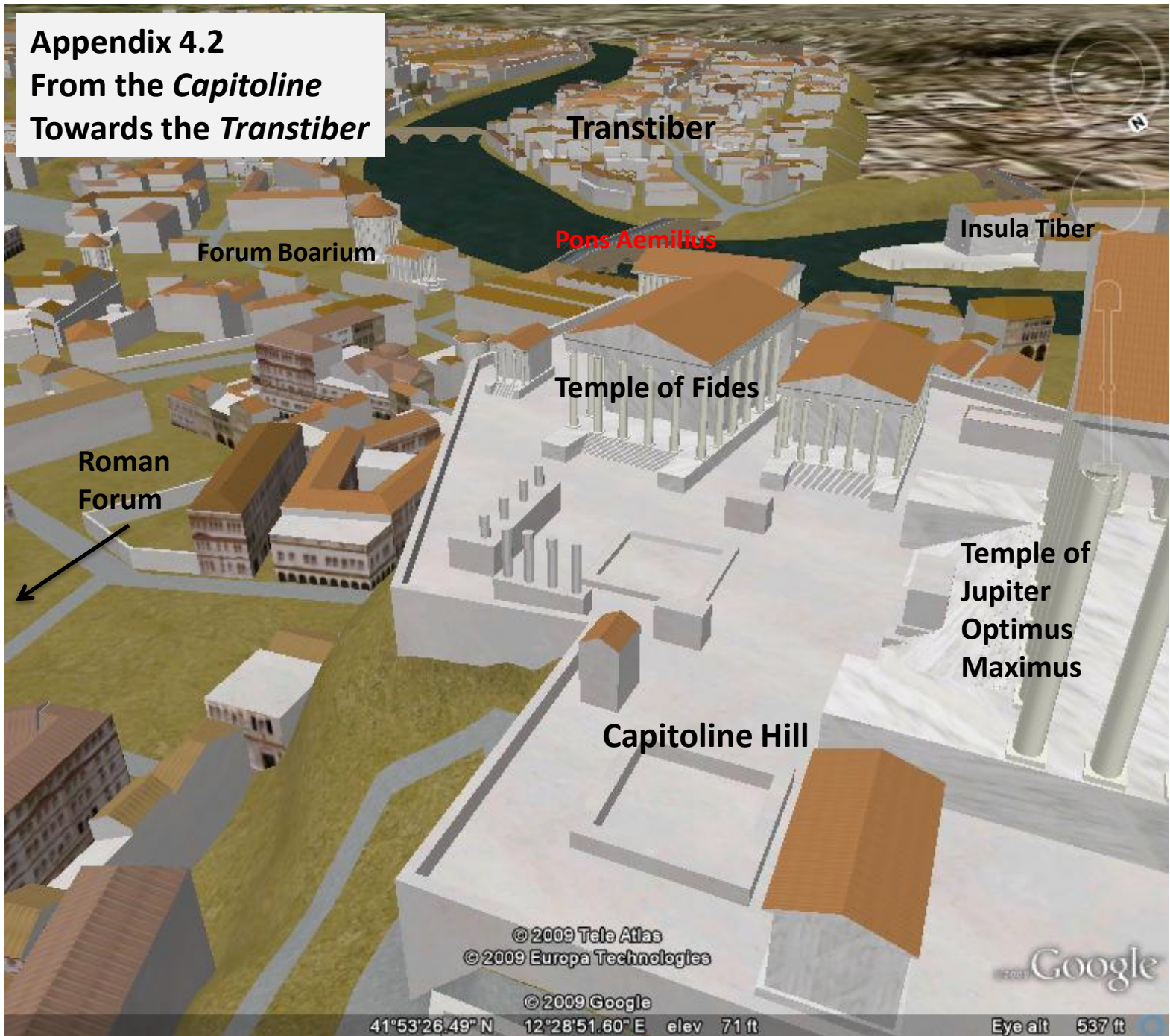
Transtiber

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Eye alt 234 ft

Appendix 4.2
From the *Capitoline*
Towards the *Transtiber*



Transtiber

Forum Boarium

Pons Aemilius

Insula Tiber

Temple of Fides

Roman
Forum

Temple of
Jupiter
Optimus
Maximus

Capitoline Hill

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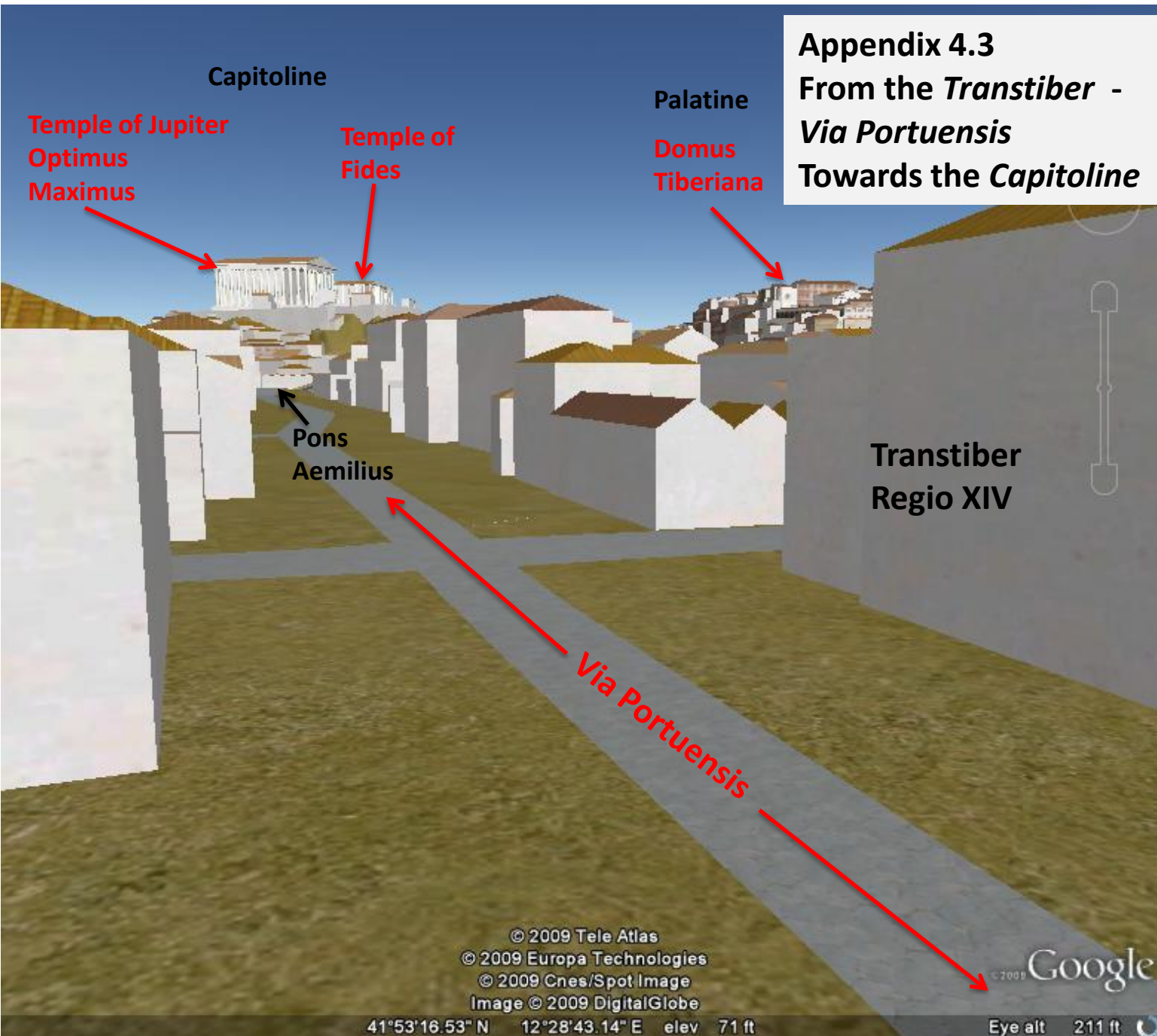
Google

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41°53'26.49" N 12°28'51.60" E elev 71 ft

Eye alt 537 ft

Appendix 4.3
From the *Transtiber* -
Via Portuensis
Towards the *Capitoline*



Capitoline
Temple of Jupiter
Optimus
Maximus

Temple of
Fides

Palatine
Domus
Tiberiana

Pons
Aemilius

Transtiber
Regio XIV

Via Portuensis

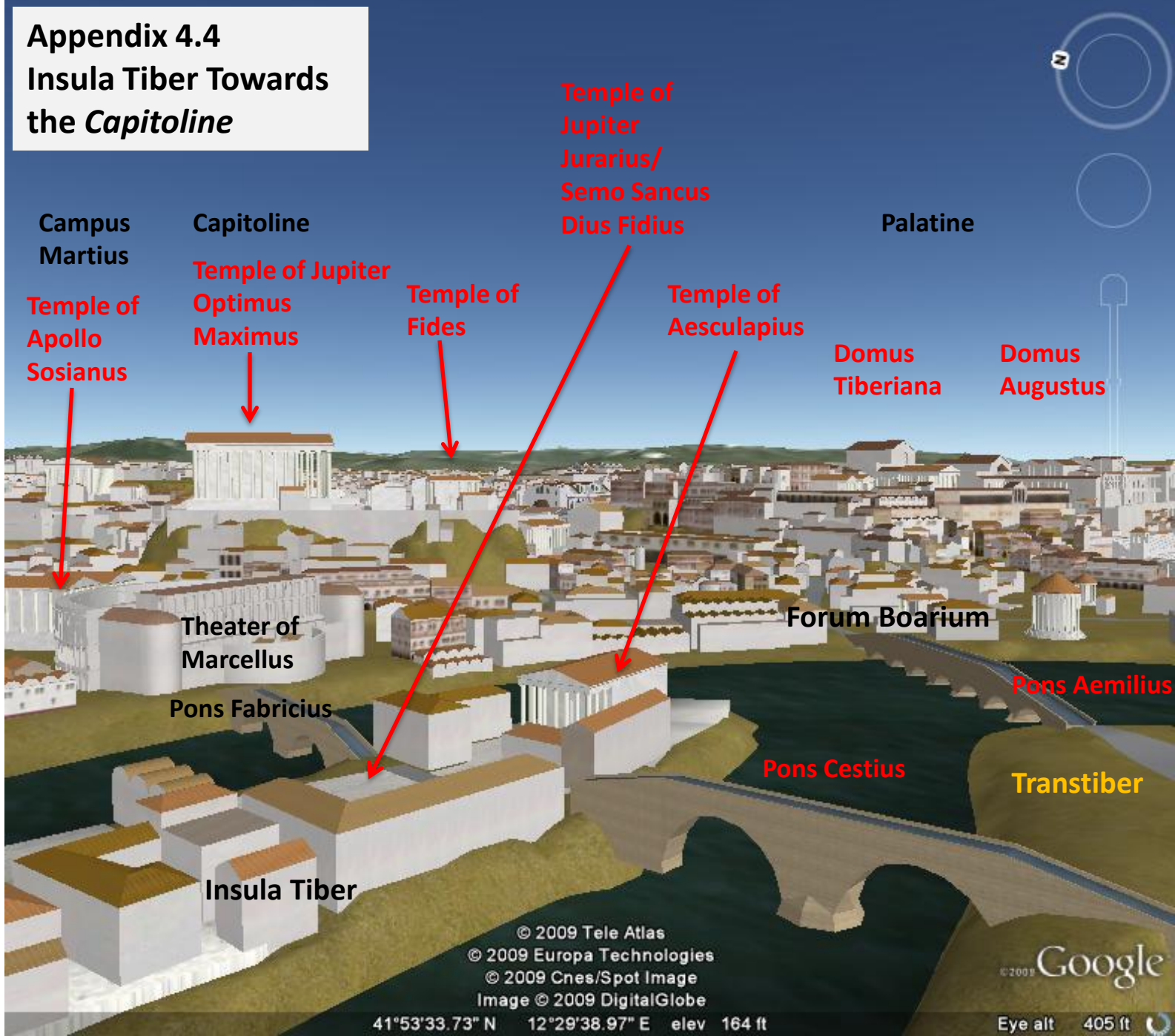
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41°53'16.53" N 12°28'43.14" E elev 71 ft

Eye alt 211 ft

Appendix 4.4 Insula Tiber Towards the *Capitoline*



Campus Martius
Temple of Apollo Sosianus

Capitoline
Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus

Temple of Fides

Temple of Jupiter Jurarius/Semo Sancus Dius Fidius

Temple of Aesculapius

Palatine

Domus Tiberiana

Domus Augustus

Theater of Marcellus

Pons Fabricius

Forum Boarium

Pons Aemilius

Pons Cestius

Transtiber

Insula Tiber

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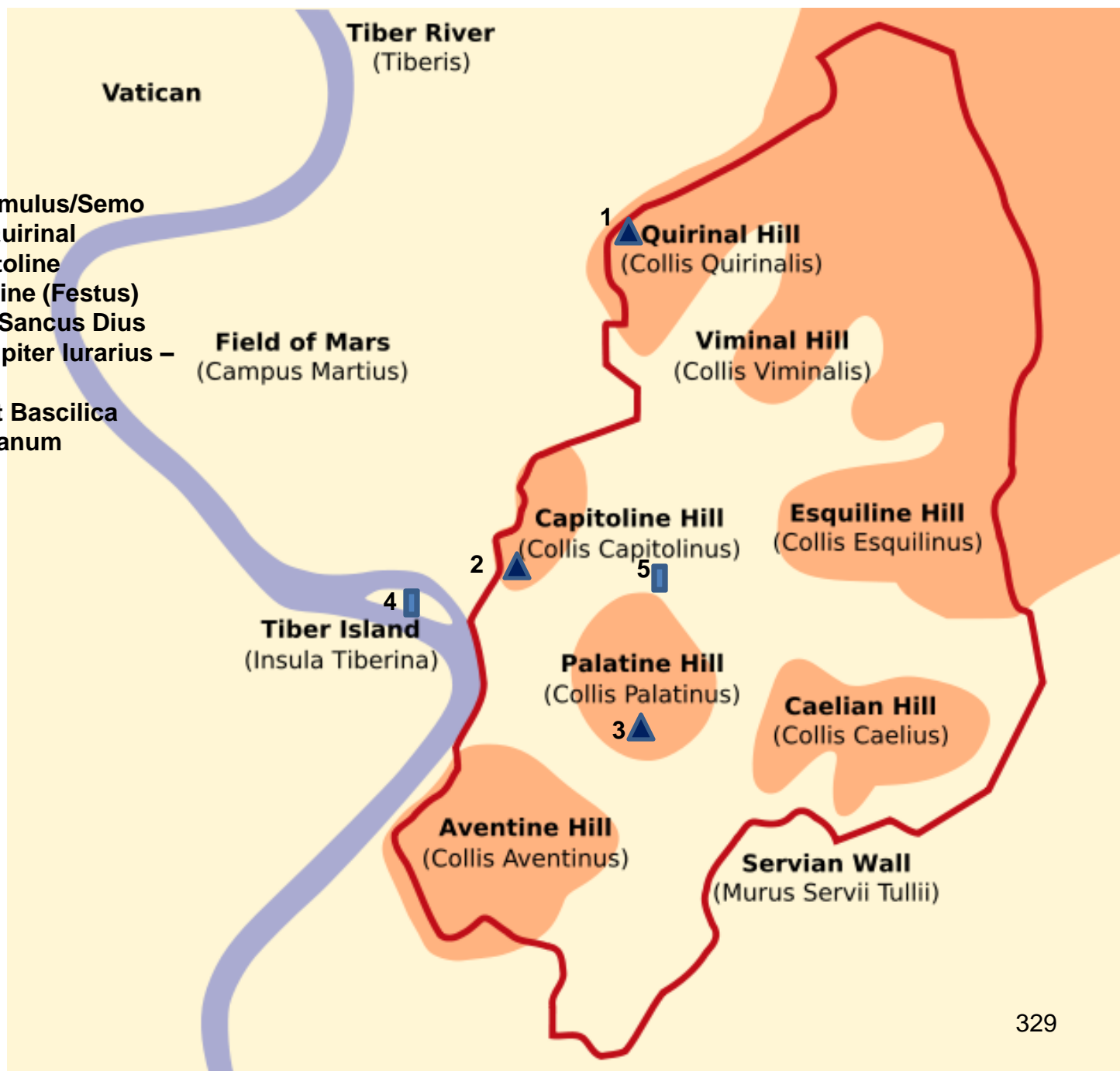
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41°53'33.73" N 12°29'38.97" E elev 164 ft

Eye alt 405 ft

**Appendix 4.5
Temples or Altars of
Faith in Claudian
Rome**

1. Temple of Quirinius/Romulus/Semo Sancus Dius Fidius – Quirinal
2. Temple of Fides – Capitoline
3. Temple of Fides – Palatine (Festus)
4. Statue/Shrine of Semo Sancus Dius Fidius and Temple of Iupiter Iurarius – Insula Tiberina
5. Shrine of Dius Fidius at Basilica Aemilia – Forum Romanum



Appendix 4.6
Temples or Altars of
Faith in Rome



Aedes Quirinius-Fidius
Quirinal Hill,
Andre Caron, www.maquettes-historiques.net

Appendix 4.7
Temples or Altars of
Faith in Rome



Temples of Jupiter and Fides
Capitoline Hill,
Andre Caron, www.maquettes-historiques.net

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Abbreviations

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