



HAL
open science

From Text to Relics: The Emergence of the Scribe-Martyr in Late Antique Christianity (fourth century-seventh century)

Sabrina Inowlocki Meister

► To cite this version:

Sabrina Inowlocki Meister. From Text to Relics: The Emergence of the Scribe-Martyr in Late Antique Christianity (fourth century-seventh century). *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, In press, 32 (3). <hal-04384276>

HAL Id: hal-04384276

<https://hal.science/hal-04384276v1>

Submitted on 10 Jan 2024

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



HAL Authorization

From Text to Relics: The Emergence of the Scribe-Martyr in Late Antique

Christianity (fourth century–seventh century)

SABRINA INOWLOCKI

ABSTRACT

This paper delves into the conflation of two prominent figures of authority in the early Christian world: the scribe-scholar and the martyr. While previous scholarship has largely examined these figures separately, this study focuses on their association and argues that they were meaningfully combined to establish a new form of textual authority. The motif of the scribe-martyr is explored in a series of Christian texts, from Pseudo-Pionius to John Moschus and late ancient hagiographic texts, tracing its origins to the fourth century. This development emerged from the growing association between the authority of written texts as physical objects and the rise of the cult of saints and their relics. In parallel with Foucault's concept of the author-function, a distinct Christian "scribe-function" emerged within this context, i.e., discourses of authority, fictitious or historical, involving the individuals who reproduced or corrected texts. The paper posits that the motif of the scribe-martyr was then strategically employed in legal, scholarly, and institutional contexts to express faithfulness, resistance, authorization, and legitimation. As a result, this conflation contributed significantly to the attribution of holiness and authority to texts, sacred places, and religious institutions. Thus, the scribe-martyr, connected to the revered relic-texts, assumed a particularly potent role as a figure of theological authority within late ancient Christianity.

INTRODUCTION

Since the pioneering work of Peter Brown, significant scholarship has been devoted to the concept of the “holy man,”¹ a now popular template to analyze figures of authority and holiness in late antiquity. Among such figures, that of the scribe-martyr has been paid little attention.² Yet Christian martyrdom literature in the Roman empire has been the subject of numerous publications in the last two decades.³ Likewise, scholarship on scribal and editorial practices, as well as on the social and cultural history and the materiality of the book has also flourished, following the influential works of Roger Chartier, Christian Jacob, and others.⁴ Yet these two universes hardly ever meet. And why would they? “What do martyrs have to do with scribes?” one might ask. More than meets the eye, it will be argued here, especially at a time when the status of the scribe is rapidly changing.

Indeed, major shifts in the construction of scribal work and authorship took place in the second–fourth centuries. First of all, as several scholars have pointed out, many characters of the Jesus movement became remembered anachronistically as literate “performers of written texts” as early as in the second century.⁵ Christian identity became connected with the possession of books, and “textual communities”⁶ or “reading communities”⁷ formed. Importantly, these early Christian circles were not only reading but also writing communities, in which texts could be copied by non-professionals for their own use.⁸

The rapid spread of the codex among Christians and the development of codex technology at Caesarea from Origen to Pamphilus and Eusebius⁹ are now traditionally seen as a major landmark of the developing Christian “bibliomania” in the fourth century. Pamphilus created an ascetic community devoted to the making and publishing of biblical copies, in which citations and textual reproduction played a central role.¹⁰ It is only in a Christian context that the figure of the holy scribe could re-emerge after the rabbis turned away from his Second-Temple avatars:¹¹ it took familiarity with Ezra, Enoch, Baruch and the Jewish

scripture to confer authority on a role which was reserved to slaves and freedmen in the Roman empire.¹² Only in such a context could Eusebius proudly boast about receiving an imperial order for biblical copies.¹³

In the fourth century, the combination between the tolerance enjoyed by the Christians after the Diocletianic persecutions following the edict of Milan in 313 C.E. and the emergence of a legal and scriptural canon,¹⁴ all provided the necessary conditions for the idealization of the scribe,¹⁵ faithfully and conservatively reproducing or revising sacred texts. In the late fourth century, I will argue here, the authority of the written text, associated with the cult of the saints and their relics,¹⁶ gives birth to a new figure of authority: the scribe-martyr.

In this context, both martyrdom narratives (some of them at least) and ancient testimonies on Christian scribes and scholars share one thing, namely a concern for the document and its textual accuracy: martyrdom narratives, because they either include, rely on, or represent themselves as court transcripts;¹⁷ scribalism and editorial practices, because their purpose is to make the text as accurate as possible. The fact that *martus* means both witness and martyr, and *marturia*, testimony and martyrdom, is telling in this respect. In this paper, I contend that the association between scribalism and martyrdom is more than a random juxtaposition. This motif, I argue, is used in certain legal, scholarly and institutional contexts in order to express faith-fulness, resistance, authorization and legitimation. Indeed, the document reproduced with precision is not only seen as a historical proof but also as a powerful theological device.¹⁸ As the book *qua* material object becomes endowed with authority,¹⁹ its craftsman starts to benefit from its status, especially in times of persecution. As a result, the “secondary autograph”²⁰ becomes endowed with the same prestige as a primary autograph.²¹ The language of faith starts to be aligned with the language of scribal practice. In these circumstances, similarly to the “author-function: delineated by Foucault, a

specifically Christian “scribe-function” emerges, i.e., discourses of authority, fictitious or historical, involving the individuals who reproduced or corrected texts. In such a context, as we shall see, the scribe-martyr becomes a particularly potent figure of theological authority.

My goal in this article is not to focus on the chronological development of this motif by drawing linear relationships between various Christian sources. Rather, it is to approach this motif as a theological and literary trope in order to understand its functions in a network of Christian discourses about textual and bookish authority. This paper will therefore be divided into three parts: the first one concerns textual transmission; the second one, Christian *excerptores* and the Donatist controversy; and the last one, scribal activity in the context of Roman papacy.

SCRIBALISM, MARTYRDOM AND THE POETICS OF TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

While scribal activities associated with the idea of revelation appear among Jesus followers as early as in the fourth gospel and the Shepherd of Hermas, the figure of the scribe-martyr is first attested in the colophon appended to the Martyrdom of Polycarp ascribed to Pseudo-Pionius.²² It is an important instance of the way in which the textual transmission of martyrdom narratives could be “staged,” associating teaching lineages and revelatory experiences. Later figures such as those of Pamphilus of Caesarea, Eusebius’s teacher and companion, and Lucian of Antioch, also exemplify this new role as authoritative transmitters of knowledge. Let us begin with Pseudo-Pionius.

Pseudo-Pionius and the Martyrdom of Polycarp

The colophon appended to *MPol* is a detailed description of the Martyr of Polycarp’s textual transmission.²³ It claims that the final form of the *Martyrdom* was transcribed by a certain Pionius, presenting the following textual genealogy:²⁴

Ταῦτα μετεγράψατο μὲν Γάϊος ἐκ τῶν Εἰρηναίου, μαθητοῦ τοῦ Πολυκάρπου, ὃς καὶ συνεπολιτεύσατο τῷ Εἰρηναίῳ. ἐγὼ δὲ Σωκράτης ἐν Κορίνθῳ ἐκ τῶν Γάϊου ἀντιγράφων ἔγραψα. ἡ χάρις μετὰ πάντων. Ἐγὼ δὲ πάλιν Πιόνιος ἐκ τοῦ προγεγραμμένου ἔγραψα ἀναζητήσας αὐτά, κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν φανερῶσαντός μοι τοῦ μακαρίου Πολυκάρπου, καθὼς δηλώσω ἐν τῷ καθεξῆς.

These words have been transcribed by Gaius from the archive of Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, who lived in the same city as Irenaeus. And I, Socrates, wrote it down in Corinth from the copies of Gaius. Grace be with everyone. And I, Pionius, wrote this same account down again from the previously written copy, after I searched for it following a revelation of the blessed Polycarp who had appeared to me, as I will explain in the sequel.

Virtually all scholars have identified this “Pionius” with the third-century Smyranean martyr whose devotion to Polycarp figures prominently in the opening paragraphs of his own martyrology.²⁵ Pionius, it is said, was himself arrested “on the anniversary of the blessed martyr Polycarp.”²⁶ In addition to the textual and datation problems of *MPol*,²⁷ the colophon itself poses problems of datation and historicity. It is often regarded as a fourth-century authorizing device for *MPol* and the collection of Polycarpiana.²⁸ However, Harry Gamble, Cyril Richardson, and Musurillo have defended the historicity of the transmission narrative preserved in *MPol* 22.2,²⁹ against Lightfoot’s argument that the *Life* and the *Martyrdom* both appeal to fictitious documentary pedigrees.³⁰ Others, such as Barnes, Moss and, most recently, Zwierlein, have sided with Lightfoot.³¹ I also accept a dating to the fourth century, notably in view of the development of the motif of the scribe-martyr in this period which I uncover in what follows.

In the text as we have it, “Pionius,”³² a future martyr, presents himself as the copyist of the text,³³ the ultimate link of its transmission, and the recipient of a revelation from

Polycarp.³⁴ The break between the mention of the copy by Socrates and that by Pionius (separated by the “Grace be with everyone”) suggests that Pionius’s status is different from that of his predecessors: he does not claim to be part of the textual lineage connecting Irenaeus and Socrates, but he makes up for it by claiming to have benefitted from a direct revelation from Polycarp.

Claims about the discovery of hidden texts in order to give new documents an air of legitimacy is a widely attested phenomenon, starting no later than with 2 Kings 22.³⁵ “Archival pedigree”³⁶ and “authenticating device,”³⁷ are used as appellations to describe paratexts such as the Pionian colophon. Yet the claim of the discovery of the text may be more than just an authenticating device meant to explain the sudden appearance of a text.

Taking the name of the martyr Pionius, the compiler/interpolator represents himself as a scribe-martyr, connected to Polycarp. In this context, his scribal activity is intimately connected to his authorial practice: he is both the copyist of *MPol* and the author of his own martyrdom narrative in *MPion* (however implausible that may be).

MPol also happens to be our earliest Christian testimony on martyrs’ relics and their cult.³⁸ The colophon also implies a connection between Polycarp’s bodily remnants and the text: just as the gathering of the martyr’s bodily relics allows the participants to venerate his memory, his textual relics, i.e., the document discovered by “Pionius,” himself a martyr-to-be, allows for the accurate remembrance of Polycarp the martyr. While Polycarp’s martyrdom has been textualized in the narrative of his death, that is in *MPol*, in turn, the narrative of his death is now relicized through the narrative included in Pseudo-Pionius’s colophon. The colophon, in other words, does not only turn *MPol* in the textual relics of Polycarp, but it also becomes itself a textual relic of “Pionius,” the martyr-to-be who hand-copied *MPol* following the miraculous vision of Polycarp.

In this context, the motif of the scribe-martyr and of the textual relics are not only textual pedigrees conferring legitimacy on the text of *MPol*.³⁹ As Eva Morczek points out in an article on discovery of Jewish texts and paratexts that “the discovery story is not authorizing the theology: it is the theology.”⁴⁰ This may also be the case here. The colophon has its own purpose: at some point in the fourth century, it aims to establish an explicit linkage between scribal activity and martyrdom, suggesting that a proper memorialization of martyrdom is not only performed through the cult of the physical relics but also through textual transmission embodied in scribal activity. As we shall see now, other texts of the same period attest to the same confluence of martyrdom and scribalism.

Pamphilus of Caesarea

A similar phenomenon is attested at Caesarea around the end of the third century where the transmission of a martyr’s *corpus* by another martyr also occurs: Pamphilus’s handwritten copy of the Origenian corpus provides an interesting parallel to that of Pseudo-Pionius’s activity. While Origen is traditionally not considered a martyr, according to Photius, Pamphilus did consider him as such.⁴¹ As Origen was tortured during the Decian persecutions,⁴² it can be argued that the fact that he did not die does not make him any less of a martyr.

Jerome’s *Vir. ill.* 75 and a dozen of colophons in the Septuagint and the Syro-Hexapla, as well as in New Testament manuscripts,⁴³ promote Pamphilus’s image as a holy scribe-martyr, suggesting that his autographic copies and corrections of Origen’s textual work on scripture are tantamount to textual relics.⁴⁴ I have argued that Pamphilus’s signed subscriptions did not only serve as an authenticating device, but also as a means to claim for himself Origen’s textual heritage.⁴⁵ As in the Pionian colophon, a textual genealogy is traced in the subscription, which allows Pamphilus to self-fashion as Origen’s direct disciple (which

he was not historically) and privileged heir. In one famous subscription to Esther, Pamphilus claims to have corrected the text in jail, while his collating assistant Antoninus is described as a confessor.⁴⁶ The connection between martyrdom and scribalism could hardly have been made more obvious. If this is not a later interpolation,⁴⁷ it may well attest to the fact that the motif emerges in the context of one of the last waves of the Diocletianic persecutions in Caesarea.⁴⁸

The Greek and Syriac colophons citing Pamphilus's own subscriptions, which can be dated to the sixth and seventh centuries,⁴⁹ clearly amplify this motif. These citations enable the later scribe to inscribe his own copy in an authoritative textual tradition. His/her emphasis on the hand of the martyr may also have guaranteed the orthodoxy of the copy in a climate of suspicion towards Origen during the controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries.⁵⁰ In this respect, the linkage of the copy to Pamphilus the scribe-martyr, a cipher for Origen, produces the same effect as an amulet protecting from heresy.⁵¹ The scribe-martyr and his textual relics serve not only to authorize or authenticate the text copied, but also to trace textual lineages that benefit both the most recent copy of the text and its copyist.

Lucian of Antioch

The same phenomenon can be observed for copies made by Lucian of Antioch who died a martyr in 312 CE under Maximinus Daia⁵² and was a contemporary of Pamphilus of Caesarea. Lucian's reception includes the same motif of scribal martyrdom as Pamphilus. Whether the two traditions cross-fertilized or influenced one another is hard to tell but a connection between the two is undeniable.⁵³

Little is known of the life and work of Lucian and even his identity is a controversial subject.⁵⁴ Apparently an influential teacher at Antioch and a biblical scholar, he was allegedly Paul of Samosata's student and the teacher of Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia. Therefore,

there were many reasons for “orthodox” Christians to be suspicious of him. He died a martyr presumably at Nicomedia during the Great Persecution,⁵⁵ and was a subject of veneration, notably by the empress Helena.⁵⁶

The earliest trace of Lucian as a scribe and a martyr can be found in Jerome, both in the *Vir. ill. 77* and the preface to *Chronicles* in which he ascribes to Lucian’s Septuagint recension the primacy in a territory extending from Antioch to Constantinople.⁵⁷ However, Jerome does not clearly connect his activity as a scholar and his death as a martyr, on the contrary: in the *Vir. ill. 77*, composed in 392/393 C.E., he subtly implies that some exemplars were fictitiously attributed to him: “he [Lucian] labored on scriptures with so much zeal that to this day some exemplars of the scriptures are called *Lucianea* (*tantum in scripturarum studio laboravit ut usque nunc quaedam exemplaria scripturarum Lucianea nuncupentur*).⁵⁸ The suffix *-ea* brings them close to the *Tironiana*, or “the *Callinia*, the *Atticana*, the *Peducinia*” described by Galen as “books named after the men who wrote them or corrected them.”⁵⁹ Yet Jerome seems to hint that these *Lucianea* were pseudepigraphic.

Notably, Jerome does not link this attribution to Lucian’s martyrdom but to his *studium scripturarum*, while just before (*Vir. ill. 75*) he had strongly emphasized the connection between Pamphilus’s death as a martyr and his autographs. This certainly confirms Jerome’s subtle dismissal of this text.⁶⁰

In the first half of the fifth century, Sozomen’s testimony supports Jerome’s suspicion towards the attribution of documents to Lucian. In his *Hist. eccl.*, he clearly questions the fictitious attribution of documents to a martyr as a practice aiming to enhance a text’s authority and prestige.⁶¹ In a passage on the council of Antioch in 341, he claims:

ἔλεγον δὲ ταύτην τὴν πίστιν ὀλόγραφον εὐρηκέναι Λουκιανοῦ τοῦ ἐν
Νικομηδεῖα μαρτυρήσαντος, ἀνδρὸς τὰ τε ἄλλα εὐδοκιμωτάτου καὶ τὰς ἱεράς

γραφὰς εἰς ἄκρον ἠκριβωκότος· πότερον δὲ ἀληθῶς ταῦτα ἔφρασαν ἢ τὴν ἰδίαν γραφὴν σεμνοποιοῦντες τῷ ἀξιώματι τοῦ μάρτυρος, λέγειν οὐκ ἔχω.

They [the bishops gathered at Antioch] claimed that they had found this formulary of faith, a holograph of Lucian who died a martyr in Nicomedia, a man most approved for other reasons and highly accurate in the sacred Scriptures. I cannot tell whether they spoke the truth or whether they sought to endow their own document with authority through its association with the dignity of a martyr.⁶²

This passage suggests that Lucian's image as a scribe-martyr was exploited in conciliary contexts, three decades after his death.⁶³ Since the council was located at Antioch, the city where Lucian lived and died according to Rufinus,⁶⁴ the discovery could appear as plausible.⁶⁵ The narrative of the finding of this holographic formulary, albeit really succinct, also has a taste of relic *inventio* because the document was supposedly entirely handwritten by the martyr. Sozomen, however, does not completely buy it and proceeds to tell us explicitly that the name of a martyr could be used to give weight to a document. When the martyr was also a scribe-scholar expert in scriptures, a formulary of faith written *sua manu* conferred on him the additional authority of textual relics. While Lucian possibly authored the creed some time in the second half of the third century,⁶⁶ in 341, his authority as a biblical scribe-martyr was boasted in order to reinforce that of the creed; Sozomen, around a century later, was clearly doubtful about the authenticity of its authorship.

Later appraisals of Lucian as a scribe-martyr turned out to follow the endorsement of the scribe-martyr by the Antiochene bishops. The so-called *Synopsis scripturae sacrae* of Pseudo-Athanasius, which compiles materials gathered about the books of the Bible and their contents, and dated by Theodor Zahn not later than the sixth century,⁶⁷ ascribes to Lucian a seventh recension of the LXX, the *Septima*.⁶⁸

Ἐβδόμη πάλιν καὶ τελευταία ἐρμηνεία ἢ τοῦ ἁγίου Λουκιανοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου ἀσκητοῦ καὶ μάρτυρος, ὅστις καὶ αὐτὸς ταῖς προγεγραμμέναις ἐκδόσεσι καὶ τοῖς Ἑβραϊκοῖς ἐντυχῶν, καὶ ἐποπεύσας μετὰ ἀκριβείας τὰ λείποντα, ἢ καὶ περιττὰ τῆς ἀληθείας ῥήματα, καὶ διορθωσάμενος ἐν τοῖς οικείοις τῶν Γραφῶν τόποις, ἐξέδοτο τοῖς Χριστιανοῖς ἀδελφοῖς· ἥτις δὴ καὶ ἐρμηνεία μετὰ τὴν ἄθλησιν καὶ μαρτυρίαν τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἁγίου Λουκιανοῦ, τὴν γεγονυῖαν ἐπὶ Διοκλητιανοῦ καὶ Μαξιμιανοῦ τῶν τυράννων, ἤγουν τὸ ἰδιόχειρον αὐτοῦ τῆς ἐκδόσεως βιβλίον, εὑρέθη ἐν Νικομηδεῖα ἐπὶ Κωνσταντίνου βασιλέως τοῦ μεγάλου παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις ἐν τοίχῳ πυργίσκῳ περικεχρισμένῳ κονιάματι εἰς διαφύλαξιν.

And again a seventh and final translation by the Holy Lucian, the great ascetic and martyr, who himself having read the editions written before as well as the Hebrew, and having studied with accuracy the others, or even words greater than truth, and having corrected them in his own passages of scripture, he published it for the Christian brothers. And indeed this translation, after the contest and martyrdom of this same holy Lucian, which happened under the tyrants Diocletian and Maximinus, or rather the book of his edition, *written in his own hand*, was found in Nicomedia under the reign of Constantine the great, among the Jews in a cupboard in a wall covered in stucco.⁶⁹

Notwithstanding Eusebius's and Jerome's testimonies, scholars doubt the existence of this Septima.⁷⁰ Its authenticity and attribution need not detain us here. My point is that in this document, Lucian was received as a prominent example of scribe-martyr, the author of a dignified biblical recension. Just as Pamphilus's autography was stressed in colophons from the sixth century on, Lucian's holographic "recension" was also received with praises.

An eighth-century colophon to IV Kings in a Syriac manuscript heavily relies on the *Synopsis* for the part devoted to Lucian.⁷¹ Devreesse also records a different version of this text, in the manuscript Coislin 251.⁷² Certain Psalms catenary manuscripts (Ra 292, 1138, et al.) include references to it: Ἐβδόμη τοῦ μεγάλου ἀσκητοῦ καὶ μάρτυρος Λουκιανοῦ,⁷³ as in Ps.-Athanasius. These testimonies indicate that the portrayal of Lucian as an ascetic scribe-martyr, “authoring” the *Septima*, enjoyed a certain success in late antiquity.

The *Synopsis*, as the Pionian colophon, suggests an association between a newly found handwritten manuscript and narratives of relics *inventio*. In this case, the book is said to have been written in the own hand of Lucian. The discovery of the text among the Jews is reminiscent not only of the discovery of scriptural recensions by Origen in Eusebius’s *Hist. eccl.*,⁷⁴ but also of one of the *inventio crucis* narratives of the cross by Helena⁷⁵ according to which the Jews had hidden the relics since Jesus’s death.⁷⁶ Paradoxically, the presence of the text among the Jews also endowed it with great textual authority.⁷⁷

The emphasis on Lucian as a venerated scribe-martyr also finds a parallel in the *Chronicon Paschale* (c. 630 CE),⁷⁸ perhaps due to the Chronicler’s use of an “Arian” source,⁷⁹ also promoting Eusebius of Nicomedia as the baptizer of Constantine, contrary to Nicene sources.⁸⁰ This passage of the *Synopsis* seems to have emerged, if not from the same source, at least from the same Lucianic, Antiochian/Nicomedian milieu. Just as Pamphilus’s martyrdom and work was used by Eusebius to increase the visibility and prestige of Caesarea on the Christian map, the figure of Lucian may have been used to similar ends for Nicomedia and Antioch. This passage of the *Synopsis* perhaps aimed to authorize the *Septima*, if it ever existed. However, simultaneously, this *inventio* narrative of Lucian’s textual relics (i.e., the *Septima*) also contributed to glorifying Lucian himself as a holy ascetic scribe-martyr as well as his last home: Constantinian Nicomedia.

This motif gained some success. According to Metzger, the *Menaion* of the Greek Church, under the fifteenth of October, records that Lucian made a copy *in his own hand* of both the New and Old Testament in three columns, which belong to the Church in Nicomedia.⁸¹ Hexaplaric features were apparently applied to Lucian's work, perhaps also in the context of the promotion of local traditions in Nicomedia.

Another testimony on Lucian as scribe-martyr is found in the *Vita Luciani*, which is difficult to date because the reference edition by Joseph Bidez is a reconstruction based on various late Byzantine texts, in Appendix 6 to his edition of Philostorgius's *Ecclesiastical History* in the GCS.⁸² It recounts that "he [Lucian] practiced stenography, his earnings from which provided food both for himself and for the poor. Indeed, he thought it wrong that he himself should partake of food before others had been provided for from the work of his hands."⁸³

According to a tradition reported by Symeon Metaphrastes (d. c.1000), after an ascetic life and admirable martyrdom, the martyr was thrown at sea but a dolphin brought his whole corpse back, except for one part, his hand:

Συνέβη δὲ τὸ περὶ τὴν χεῖρα πάθος, τοῦ Θεοῦ, μοι δοκῶ, τιμῆσαι ταύτην ἰδίως βουλευθέντος, ἅτε τὸν διὰ ταύτης ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν Γραφῶν ἐπανορθώσει γενόμενον πόνον ἀποδεξάμενον. Ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ πάθεσι τὸ βαρύτερον ἐντιμότερον.

The accident (πάθος) of the hand happened, it seems to me, because of God's desire to show her particular honor, since he approved of the work accomplished through her regarding the revisions of the sacred scriptures. For among the sufferings (πάθεσι) undergone for Christ, the heavier, the more honorable.⁸⁴

Further on, it is added that "Now, however, wishing to endorse the man's fervor for the sacred scriptures and to guarantee the great value of his labor, he [God] granted the hand

that had especially served him in this to be honored by special sufferings, just as, I think, spectators festoon the arms of athletes.”⁸⁵

This excerpt shows particularly well how text and body became intertwined in martyrdom narratives: the relic of Lucian’s scribal hand remained lost at sea, while, presumably, the emended Lucianic text survived, an embodiment of the lost hand. Lucian’s work of emendation signified by his hand (or the lack thereof) is directly linked to his martyrdom. His work as a corrector is not interpreted only as a scholarly achievement, but as a holy work, because he died a martyr. God himself shows his approval of his scribal work, in the same way as a master would approve of the editorial work performed by his enslaved worker. The testimonies examined above confirm the conclusions of Claudia Rapp on holy texts: a man (or a woman) could make a text holy but a text could equally make a man (or a woman) holy.⁸⁶ In later hagiographic narratives, such a pattern was re-iterated in relation to lesser-known saints.

Alphius and his Brothers, Theodore the Scribe

An episode of the *Vitae Sanctorum Alphii, Philadelphi et Cyrini* (BHG 62e), a rather fanciful narrative perhaps to be dated to the second half of the seventh century,⁸⁷ recounts how Vitalius, the father of the three martyrs, received his sons’s cloths imbued with their blood as well as the “books from the Old Testament and the New Testament which the saints had written in their own hand.”⁸⁸ Indeed, the martyrs “were calligraphers illuminated with divine knowledge” (ἦσαν γὰρ καλλιγράφοι καὶ γνώσει θεία κεκοσμημένοι). The text, playing with the verb κοσμέω, “to decorate” and “to illuminate (a manuscript),” associates their selfhood with their texts: just as they illuminated the sacred manuscripts they copied, they were themselves illuminated with divine knowledge. The *Vitae* thus proposes an identification between the scribes and their books, subtly suggesting that the manuscripts left behind

following their martyrdom are ciphers for their relics: they are their textual relics. The fact they were handwritten allowed for this transition from body to text. The trace of their hand on the book is not only a physical remnant of their holiness: the manual copy of the text, these Acts suggest, is also an embodiment of their divine knowledge.

Other scribe-martyrs of the Diocletianic persecutions are remembered in various synaxaries. For instance, this seems to be the case with Theodore of Cyrene, a scribe and bishop (unless two individuals have been confused), whose tongue was cut-off when he refused to hand over his copies of the sacred book.⁸⁹ In this case the motif of the scribe-martyr is embedded in an account influenced by the Donatist controversy and the narratives about the North African *traditores*, i.e., those Christians accused to have handed over the holy books to avoid martyrdom. These cases are also relevant to this study, as we shall see now.

MARTYRES-NOTARII AND TEXTUAL RESISTANCE IN A JUDICIAL CONTEXT

In a recent study, Jeremiah Coogan has drawn attention on the way in which, in the Donatist controversy, the sacred book functions as a metonym for Christian confession and an avatar of divine presence.⁹⁰ In what follows, I build on his case by examining how these texts also create a linkage between scribalism and martyrdom.

At the center of the controversy was the alleged betrayal of those who had handed over the scriptures to the Roman authorities during the great persecutions in the years 303–305 C.E. As Shaw has noted, “the history of this betrayal was incessantly asserted and denied, extended and elaborated by both dissidents and Catholics.”⁹¹

A connection between scribal activity and martyrdom appears in the *Acts of the Abitinian Martyrs* (BHL 7492), a fifth-century Donatist text from Abitina (Avitina), about fifty miles to the southwest of Carthage.⁹² Re-enacting events that had occurred more than a

century earlier, it is emblematic of the way in which the past was manipulated in order to maintain a strict boundary between the *traditores* whose heirs were identified with the Catholics, and the faithful martyrs, ancestors of the “dissident” Christians. Importantly, the record was read aloud every year in Donatist churches throughout Africa.⁹³ The impact of the Diocletianic persecution in Africa turned *traditio* into a central tenet to all subsequent Christian identity in Africa.⁹⁴

The *Acts of the Abitinian Martyrs* offer an interesting passage for my reasoning. Using an *a fortiori* argument (*tali comparatione*), *Act. Abit.* 21 declares that if, according to Rev 22.18–19 (cf. Matth. 5.18), those who only add or take away even a single letter or stroke of a letter from the sacred text⁹⁵ will be blotted out of the Book of Life, how much more will the *traditores*, who have given away the scripture, will suffer in the fire of hell.⁹⁶ In other words, the *traditores* of the sacred scriptures, avoiding martyrdom, are compared to their detriment with unfaithful copyists damaging scripture.⁹⁷ In both cases, the accusation is that of un-faith-fulness, both to the text, and to Christianity. This subtle allusion is a testimony of the way in which scribal practices started to be metaphorically used in early Christian texts to talk about faith. *Fides*, and its contrary, *perfidia*, designate both Christian faith and textual un/faitfulness.⁹⁸ In these martyrdom narratives, the discourse of faith is aligned with the discourse of editing.⁹⁹ In a Donatist context, *traditor* and scribe-martyrs become contrary terms in the equation: the *traditor* embodies betrayal, both towards the sacred text and towards the Christian faith, while the scribe-martyr embodies true faith. In this context, the motif is not used as a means to authorize teaching or scholarly lineage, as was the case with Pamphilus, but to articulate ideas of “orthodoxy” in a context of theological conflict.

Other martyrdom narratives *de facto* associated martyrdom and scribalism: they would narrate how an individual copied the protocols of the martyrdom trial that would

otherwise disappear due to destruction. In the first half of the fifth century, the epilogue of the *Acta Victoris* (BHL 8580) is worth noting, as it could also be defined as an authenticating device, placed at the end of the account. Indeed, the supposed author of the text herein presents himself as a notary of the emperor Maximian. Since it was first stated that Maximian's advisor Anulinus ordered the destruction of all written evidence about the proceedings of Victor's trial, the epilogue aims to demonstrate the credibility of the narrative despite the loss of archives. The notarius, the Christian Maximianus, claims to have secretly written down from memory what he saw:

Tunc ego Maximianus notarius imperatoris christianus ab infantia iuravi per paganissimum eorum: et tamen per noctem cum luminaribus in hippodromo circi scripsi prout memoria potui retinere.

Then I Maximianus the *notarius* of the emperor, Christian from infancy, I swore by the most pagan among them. But meanwhile, at night, in the the lights of the circus hippodrome, I would write as much as I could remember.¹⁰⁰

According to Rebillard, "this first topos [the relation of the *excerptores* in martyrdom narratives] confirms that Christians of the fourth century and later believed that the court protocols of martyr trials played a vital role in the traditions about the martyrs."¹⁰¹ Rebillard is right that there is a circumscribed topos of the *notarius* as guarantor of the accuracy of the narrative of events leading to martyrdom.¹⁰² The alleged existence of the martyrs's written confessions certainly contributed to establishing a connection between scribal activity and martyrdom. Yet taking into account Ps.-Pionius's colophon, and the evidence about Pamphilus, Lucian, and others, we see a larger trend which establishes scribal activity *lato sensu* as witness activity, whether legal or textual.

The *notarius*'s written performance, as that of the biblical scribe, was defined by its accuracy. This accuracy supposedly was what made the document trustworthy. As Clifford

Ando has noted, in late antiquity, martyrdom narratives exploiting the *commentarii* of the *excerptores*, as well as authors such as Eusebius manifest a new “faith in authenticated documents as carriers of true knowledge about history.”¹⁰³ In the case of martyr trials, however, the power of the document exceeds historical truth: it becomes an embodiment of the martyr and of his/her holiness; in other words, a textual relic.

Some of the martyrs themselves were occasionally remembered to have been *excerptores*. For instance, a fifth-century sermon recounts that Genesius, while taking notes during the trial of Christians in Arles, threw his tablets on the floor, revealing at once that he was also a Christian.¹⁰⁴ A similar scenario unfolds in the Passion of Speusippus, also dated to the fifth century:¹⁰⁵ Neon, the *notarius* who was recording the trial of the three martyrs, unable to tolerate the injustice of the trial any longer, closes his tablets, smashes the images in the Temple where the events took place, and gives them to his colleague Turbon. Neon dies as a martyr. Turbon, in possession of the tablets, then writes down the whole account and is also martyred. Teitler and Rebillard provide a few more examples which establish the throwing of the tablets by the *excerptor*-martyr as a topos.¹⁰⁶ This trope is of course a reminiscence of Moses’s breaking the first tablets and of Abraham slashing the idols.

These texts, I would argue, do not only support the idea of a close association between scribalism and martyrdom, but, paradoxically, they also suggest that they are contradictory terms in a context of religious resistance: the *excerptor*’s faith and the writing down of the official acts are bound to clash, as the latter embodies *Romanitas* and the former, as Coogan has shown, *Christianitas*.¹⁰⁷ Between the lines, the inference might have been that a proper Christian scribe was meant to copy scripture, not the minutes of a martyrdom trial.

FROM MARTYR TO POPE: REVELATORY EDITORIAL PRACTICES

We now move to another historical context, i.e., fifth-century Rome, at a time when Roman society was deeply transformed as a consequence of the Germanic invasions. Leo the first was elected pope in 440 C.E., when the Western empire was ruled by Valentinian III (425–455). As G. Demacopoulos has shown, Leo made significant use of the Petrine topos.¹⁰⁸ For instance, on the first anniversary of his election on September 441, Leo articulated a connection between Peter and himself “that would become a permanent feature of subsequent papal self-promotion.”¹⁰⁹

John Moschus’s *Pratum Spirituale* (c. 610–620 C.E.), a collection of edifying stories, sayings and anecdotes about monks and hermits, includes a notice on Leo. This may be surprising as he was neither a monk nor a hermit, but Moschus, according to the prologue of the *Pratum*, had finished his life and written his work in Rome, where he presumably became acquainted with various local traditions.¹¹⁰ Moreover, as a Chalcedonian, he must have felt an attachment to the see of Rome, which championed Chalcedon’s defence, as his notes on Leo (147–149) and Gregory attest (151, 192).¹¹¹

Moschus’s entry 147 reflects Leo’s strategy of self-representation as well as its articulation to the image of the scribe-martyr. Yet the scribe-martyr is herein turned into a *papal* scribe-martyr, and the scribal activity consists not in copying a text but in correcting it. While we have seen the motif of the scribe-martyr and his textual relics deployed in scholarly and legal contexts, Moschus’s excerpt presents the same motif in an institutional context. It includes a legend in which Pope Leo is said to have placed his *Tome* on the tomb of St. Peter, requesting that the saint correct any errors. Forty days later, Peter appears to Leo and says: “I have read and corrected it” (Ἀνέγνων καὶ διορθώσάμην). Taking the letter from the tomb, Leo unfolds it and finds it corrected by the hand of the holy apostle.¹¹²

According to tradition, Peter, first pope of Rome, had died a martyr. It is both as a martyr and a pope that he appears to Leo, in a revelatory experience reminiscent of that of

Pionius with Polycarp. Yet the purpose here is different: this legend seems to reflect *a posteriori* Leo's failed attempt to impose his *Tome* at the Synod of Ephesus in 449 C.E. as well as (perhaps) his humiliation in 451 C.E. at Chalcedon due to Canon 28, which conferred on the See of Constantinople "equal dignity" with the See of Rome.¹¹³

In the text of Moschus, Peter's *diorthosis*, a *terminus technicus* of textual work designating the routine corrections of a text, not only validates the text authored by Leo and makes it holy, but it also turns it into a textual relic: not that of Leo, but his own. Through these miraculous handwritten corrections, the supposed first pope herein legitimates his successor, Leo. A specific bond between the first pope and his successor is thus established through editorial work, even though they have never met in person. Thus, as was the case with Pamphilus and Pionius, the motif of the holy editorial work allows the construction of a specific lineage, in this case, a papal lineage. In addition, just as Lucian's and Pamphilus's scribal martyrdom contributed to bestowing authority and holiness on Antioch-Nicomedia and Caesarea respectively, in this passage, Rome also was implicitly made unique by the Petrine epiphany.

Interestingly, authorship is conferred on Leo while the great Peter is turned, as it were, into his enslaved secretary. By inverting the traditional hierarchy between the two roles (scribe and author), the narrative suggests that scribal work is ultimately what gives a text its accuracy and therefore its power,¹¹⁴ especially when the editorial practice is revelatory in nature, executed from the realm of the dead martyrs. At any rate, the scribe-function is, according to this excerpt, what endows the book with authority and legitimacy. It also clearly illustrates the circulation of the motif of the scribe-martyr and its adaptation to new circumstances, in monastic Eastern and institutional Roman circles.

CONCLUSION

This paper has investigated a series of late ancient Christian texts in which scribalism and martyrdom are associated. I have argued that this is more than a random juxtaposition: from the fourth century on, the scribe-martyr becomes a motif used in certain religious, legal, scholarly and even institutional contexts, in order to express faith-fulness, resistance, or legitimation. In particular, it becomes instrumental in creating textual or institutional genealogies, and in endowing some specific cities with theological authority and prestige.

The emergence of this motif, I would argue, can be attributed to one main cause: a growing focus on the materiality of the book, which contributed to articulate a specifically Christian association between body and text. As we have seen in the case of the Donatist controversy, this association also led to the construction of a connection between faith and scribalism, which became part of discourses of rejection and exclusion between rival factions.

In the context of the emergence of the cult of the martyrs and their relics during the Fourth century, certain texts, or rather “books” (whether scrolls or codices) began to be considered as textual relics. The handwriting could be seen as a metonymy for the hand, leading to the concept of textual relics, as we have seen in the case of Lucian. The shift from the Roman idea that a book was the embodiment of the author’s presence to the Christian idea of textual relics naturally led to a change of perception regarding, not the *author* of the text, but its *scribe*.¹¹⁵

Indeed, the emphasis on the accuracy of the text and its historical and theological value as testimony, as in the case of the *notarii* and *exceptores*, also bestowed new authority on the scribe. When the scribe was also a martyr, his status endowed his textual work with the holiness of a sacred witness, the authority of the true *martus*.

Included in narratives of martyrdom, asceticism, religious persecutions, and institutional or hagiographic legends, the scribe-martyr emerged as a new, particularly potent figure of theological authority announcing the medieval scribe.

Sabrina Inowlocki is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the KU Leuven (Belgium)

This project received funding from the European Union’s Horizon research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no. 101025412, ‘Christian Illustrious Men: Christian Culture and Identity from Eusebius of Caesarea to Isidore of Sevilla.’

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Jos Verheyden and Prof. Andreas Merkt, as well as the reviewers at *JECS*, for their valuable comments. Any remaining errors are my own.

¹ Peter Brown, “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80–101; *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), which were tremendously influential. See, e.g., Patricia Cox Miller, *Biography in Late Antiquity: A Quest for the Holy Man*. The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 5 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); John Howe, “Revisiting the Holy Man,” *CHR* 86 (2000): 640–44; David Frankfurter, “Syncretism and the Holy Man in Late Antique Egypt,” *JECS* 11. 3 (2003): 339–85; Rafal. Kosinski, *Holiness and Power: Constantinopolitan Holy Men and Authority in the 5th Century*. Millennium Studies 57 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), among others.

² See e.g., Anthony Grafton and Megan Hale Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), who only touch it briefly in relation to Pamphilus, as well as Jeremy Schott, “Plotinus’s Portrait and Pamphilus’s Prison Notebook: Neoplatonic and Early Christian Textualities at the Turn of the Fourth Century C.E.,” *JECS* 21.3 (2013): 329–62.

³ See e.g., Elizabeth Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (NY: Columbia University Press, 2004); Candida R. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Nicole

Hartmann, *Martyrium: Variationen und potenzielle eines Diskurses im zweiten Jahrhundert*, Early Christianity in the context of antiquity volume 14 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2013); Stephanie Cobb, *Divine Deliverance: Pain and Painlessness in Early Christian Martyr Texts* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016). For a fuller bibliography, see David J. DeVore, “Opening the Canon of Martyr Narratives: Pre-Decian Martyrdom Discourse and the Hypomnēmata of Hegesippus,” *JECS* 27.4 (2019): 579–609 (580, n.2).

⁴ Roger Chartier, *L’ordre des livres: lecteurs, auteurs, bibliothèques en Europe entre XIVe et XVIIIe Siècle*, Collection de la pensée (Aix-en-Provence: Alinea, 1992); Christian Jacob, “Rassembler la mémoire: réflexions sur l’histoire des bibliothèques,” *Diogenes* 196 (2001): 53–76; “Quatre fragments d’une histoire des bibliothèques antiques,” *Littératures classiques* 66 (2008): 11–25; “Qu’est-ce qu’un lieu de savoir?” *Encyclopédie numérique* 2 (Marseille: OpenEdition Press, 2014); and “Bibliothèques antiques,” *Humanisme* 320.3 (2018): 38–43. For Christianity, the literature is quite extensive; see, among others, Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995); Grafton and Williams, *Transformation of the Book*; Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2006); William Eugene Klingshirn ed. *The Early Christian Book*, Catholic University of America Studies in Early Christianity (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2008); Martin Wallraff, *Kodex und Kanon: Das Buch im frühen Christentum* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013); John S. Kloppenborg, “Literate Media in Early Christ Groups: The Creation of a Christian Book Culture,” *JECS* 22 (2014): 22:21–59; Chris Keith, *The Gospel as Manuscript: An Early History of the Jesus Tradition as Material Artifact* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); Candida Moss, “The Secretary: Enslaved Workers, Stenography, and the Production of Early Christian Literature,”

JTS 74 (2023): 20–56; Jeremiah Coogan, “Divine Truth, Presence, and Power: Christian Books in Roman North Africa,” *JLA* 11 (2018): 375–95; *Eusebius the Evangelist: Rewriting the Fourfold Gospel in Late Antiquity. Cultures of Reading in the Ancient Mediterranean* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022); “Misusing Books. Material Texts and Lived Religion in the Roman Mediterranean,” *RRE* 8.3 (2022): 301–316. See more bibliography in Francesco Berno, “Le Livre comme véhicule de salut et scripturisation de la communauté élue. Étude portant sur Nag Hammadi et la littérature gnostique copte,” *Études Balkaniques* 24.1 (2020): 33–48 (35, n. 1–2).

⁵ The expression is from Kloppenborg, “Literate Media in Early Christ Groups,” 21–59, and see, among many others, Gregory P. Fewster, “Ancient Book Culture and the Literacy of James: On the Production and Consumption of a Pseudepigraphal Letter,” *ZAC* 20 (2016): 387–417; James Corke-Webster, “A Man for the Times: Jesus and the Abgar Correspondence in Eusebius of Caesarea’s Ecclesiastical History,” *Harvard Theological Review* 110.4 (2017): 563–87 and *Eusebius and Empire: Constructing Church and Rome in the Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge University Press, 2019); Berno, “Le Livre comme véhicule de salut.”

⁶ Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Repr. ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

⁷ William Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities*, Classical Culture and Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁸ Kim Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁹ I will not enter here the debate on the Christian use of the codex. For more on this subject and the use of the codex at Caesarea, see, e.g., the research and bibliography by Grafton and

Williams, *Transformation of the Book*; Wallraff, *Kodex und Kanon*, 8–24; Matthew R. Crawford, *The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*. Note, however, the article of Sonja Drimmer, “The Rollodex: An Experiment around the Prepositional Paradigm through Peter of Poitiers’s *Genealogia Christi*,” in *Seeing Codicologically: New Explorations in the Technology of the Book*, ed. Sonja Drimmer, Lynley Ann Herbert, and Benjamin Tilghman, special issue of the *Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 76 (2023): 1–32). She argues that the idea of the replacement of the “Jewish scroll” by the “Christian codex” has supersessionist overtones.

¹⁰ See Grafton and Williams, *Transformation of the Book*, 179–195; On Eusebius’s citations: Erica Carotenuto, *Tradizione e Innovazione Nella Historia Ecclesiastica Di Eusebio Di Cesarea*. Istituto Italiano per Gli Studi Storici 46 (Bologna: Il mulino, 2001); Sabrina Inowlocki, *Eusebius and the Jewish Authors: His Citation Technique in an Apologetic Context*, *Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, Arbeiten Zur Geschichte Des Antiken Judentums Und Des Urchristentums* 64 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2006) and “The Hand of the Slave and the Hand of the Martyr: Pamphilus of Caesarea, Autography, and the Rise of Textual Relics,” *JLA* 16.2 (2023, forthcoming).

¹¹ See, e.g., Natalie B. Dohrmann, “Jewish Books and Roman Readers: Censorship, Authorship, and the Rabbinic Library,” in *Reconsidering Roman Power: Roman, Greek, Jewish and Christian Perceptions and Reactions*, Katell Berthelot ed., Collection de l’École Française de Rome (Rome: Publications de l’École française de Rome, 2020): 417–441;,, Rebecca Scharbach Wollenberg, *The Closed Book: How the Rabbis Taught the Jews (Not) to Read the Bible* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023) and the bibliography herein.

¹² On the role of enslaved workers in the literary world, see, e.g., Moss. “The Secretary: Enslaved Workers,” and Coogan, Jeremiah, Howley, Joseph and Candida Moss (eds.), *Writing, Enslavement, and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

¹³ Eus. v.C. 4.36–37.

¹⁴ For the relation between book and law, see Caroline Humfress, “Judging by the Book. Christian Codices and Late Antique Legal Culture,” in Klingshirn, William Eugene, eds. *The Early Christian Book*, 141–58 and Elizabeth A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁵ I use the term “scribe” *lato sensu*, to designate any individual involved in writing practices, be it copying or correcting. It does not include practices of authorship, which is why I have not included Perpetua, for instance.

¹⁶ On the birth of the cult of the relics, see Robert Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

¹⁷ E.g., the martyrdom narratives of Justin, Apollonius, the Scillitan Martyrs, and Carpus. Modern scholars have themselves valued pre-Decian martyrdom narratives as historical sources precisely because of these transcripts. See e.g., Hippolyte Delehaye, *Mélanges d'hagiographie Grecque et Latine*. Subsidia Hagiographica 42 (Brussels, 1966): 12–13, who distinguished “legendary” martyr narratives such as apocryphal acts and saints’ lives, from martyr-acts. See also Gary A. Bisbee, *Pre-Decian Acts of Martyrs and Commentarii*. Harvard Dissertations in Religion no. 22 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988). In this paper, I take a different direction, arguing that they shed light on the status and representation of the document.

¹⁸ In the sixth century, Cassiodorus had already grappled with the question of the nexus between scribal activity and spiritual progress, in *Institutiones* 1.30.1.

¹⁹ See recently the studies of Coogan, “Divine Truth, Presence, and Power: Christian Books in Roman North Africa,” *JLA* 11.2 (2018): 375–95 and “Misusing Books. Material Texts and Lived Religion in the Roman Mediterranean,” *RRE* 8.3 (2022): 301–316.

²⁰ See Thomas Hendrickson, “Spurious Manuscripts of Genuine Works: The Cases of Cicero and Virgil,” in *Animo Decipiendi*, Guzman and Martinez eds. (Groningen: Barkhuis, 2018): 125–38. He explains that the secondary autograph refers not to the text written in the author’s hand, but to the text copied or corrected by a prestigious copyist.

²¹ Some classical texts also attest to the prestige of the primary autograph. See, e.g., James E. G. Zetzel, “*Emendavi ad Tironem*: Some Notes on Scholarship in the Second Century A. D.,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 77 (1973): 225–43, and Myles McDonnell, “Writing, Copying, and Autograph Manuscripts in Ancient Rome,” *CQ* 46.2 (1996): 469–491. The secondary autograph could also be endowed with authority and prestige: See, e.g., Hendrickson, “Spurious Manuscripts;” Candida Moss, “Fashioning Mark: Early Christian Discussions about the Scribe and Status of the Second Gospel,” *NTS* 67 (2021) :181–204; and Inowlocki, “The hand of the Slave.”

²² Among the Jews, a first model of scribe-martyr was provided by Eleazar, in 2 Macc 6, a wise *grammateus* who preferred to end his life rather than to betray the Law. On scribes, see Sirach 38.24; *Jos. Ant.* 12.142; *4Macc* 5.4.

²³ On *MPol* see most recently Boudewijn Dehandschutter, “The *Martyrium Polycarpi*: A Century of Research,” *ANRW* 2.27.1 (1993): 485–522 and *Polycarpiana: Studies on Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity: Collected Essays*. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 205 (Leuven; Dudley, MA: Leuven University Press ; Uitgeverij Peeters, 2007); Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 56–76; Paul Hartog, *Polycarp’s Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*. Oxford Apostolic Fathers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jesse

Hoover, “False Lives, False Martyrs: ‘Pseudo-Pionius’ and the Redating of the Martyrdom of Polycarp,” *VC* 67. 5 (2013): 471–98; and Otto Zwierlein, *Die Urfassungen der Martyria Polycarpi et Pionii und das Corpus Polycarpianum*. Band 1: *Editiones criticae*. Band 2: *Textgeschichte und Rekonstruktion. Polykarp, Ignatius und der Redaktor Ps.-Pionius*. Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 116.1–2 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014).

²⁴ *M. Pol.* 22.2–3; Text Herbert Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972;2019): 2–21. My trans. See also the English trans. by Michael W. Holmes and Joseph Barber Lightfoot eds, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*. 3. ed., 2. print (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2008): 306–333.

²⁵ Hoover, “False Lives,” 473.

²⁶ *M. Pion.* 2. Pionius’ martyrdom is dated to c. 250 CE but see the discussion in Musurillo, xxix.

²⁷ See most recently Zwierlein, *Urfassungen der Martyria Polycarpi*, 2.51–53; For a post-Decian dating of Polycarp, see Silvia Ronchey, *Indagine Sul Martirio Di San Policarpo*. Istituto Storico Italiano per Il Medioevo (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1990) and “On the Dating of Polycarp: Rethinking the Place of the Martyrdom of Polycarp in the History of Christianity,” *Early Christianity* 1.4 (2010): 539.

²⁸ Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 115; Zwierlein, *Urfassungen der Martyria Polycarpi*, 2.51–53.

²⁹ Musurillo, *Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, 19, n. 29; Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 115–116; Cyril Charles Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library 2007): 143.

³⁰ J. B. Lightfoot, Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, *The Apostolic Fathers: Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp: Revised Text with Introductions, Notes, Dissertations, and Translations*. 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1981): 3 and 426.

³¹ Timothy D. Barnes, “Pre-Decian *Acta Martyrum* 1,” *JTS* 19.2 (1968): 509–31 (510); Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 65–66; Zwielerlein, *Die Urfassungen der Martyria Polycarpi*, 2.68–69.

³² Real or fictitious, it is likely that “Pionius” aimed to be recognized as the martyr Pionius.

³³ An interesting point is that “Pionius” does not only claim to have found the text, or to have published it, cf. *Palam facere* in *Apoc. Pauli*.

³⁴ Cf. *Ap. Jas.* intr.; see also the revelation in *Revelatio Sancti Stephani* c. 415 in S.

Vanderlinden, “*Revelatio Sancti Stephani* (BHG 7850–6),” *Revue des études byzantines* 4.1 (1946): 178–217.

³⁵ See Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) and “Truth and Doubt in Manuscript Discovery Narratives,” in *Rethinking Authority: Composition and Transmission in Late Antiquity*, A.J. Berkovitz, M. Letteney, and M. Vidas eds. (London: Routledge, 2018): 139–60.

³⁶ Anthony Grafton and Ann Blair, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (New edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019): 58.

³⁷ Éric Rebillard, *The Early Martyr Narratives: Neither Authentic Accounts nor Forgeries*. *Divinations: Prereading Late Ancient Religion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020): 34, 67, 69 etc.

³⁸ *M. Pol.* 18. See Wisniewski, *Relics*, 11–12.

³⁹ On the meaning of these “textual pedigrees,” see Eve Krakowski, “‘Many Days without the God of Truth’: Loss and Recovery of Religious Knowledge in Early Karaite Thought,” in *Pesher Nahum: Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature from Antiquity through*

the Middle Ages presented to Norman (Nahum) Golb. Joel L. Kraemer and Michael G.

Wechsler, eds. *Studies in ancient Oriental Civilization* 66 (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012): 121–140 cited by Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination*, 141.

See also Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 65–67.

⁴⁰ Mroczek, “Truth and Doubt,” 151.

⁴¹ Phot. *Cod.* 118. On *martus*, see discussion and bibliography in DeVore, “Opening the Canon of Martyr Narratives,” 599–603. See also Diane Shane Fruchtman, *Living Martyrs in Late Antiquity and Beyond: Surviving Martyrdom* (London: Routledge, 2023) on living martyrs. On Origen’s death and place of death, see Carriker, *Library*, 11, n.34.

⁴² See Eus. *h.e.* 6.39.5; 7.1.

⁴³ For a much-needed new edition and translation for such colophons, see Peter Gentry, “Text and Translation of All Known Colophons Relating to Origen’s Hexapla,” in *The Forerunners and Heirs of Origen’s Hexapla*, ed. John Meade (in preparation). I wish to thank Prof. Gentry for letting me read this paper and for his useful advice. See also Bradley John Marsh, “Quinta, Sexta, and Septima,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, edited by Alison G. Salvesen and Timothy Michael Law, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021): 480–88.

⁴⁴ Inowlocki, “The Hand of the Slave.”

⁴⁵ Inowlocki, “The Hand of the Slave.”

⁴⁶ In the book of Esther in Sinaiticus: BL Add 43725 (Sinaiticus) Q 37 Fol. 3r.

⁴⁷ This question is examined in Inowlocki, “The Hand of the Slave.”

⁴⁸ As a reviewer once pointed out to me, the appellation “confessor” and the fact to be in jail does not entail that Pamphilus expected to be executed. However, it does sufficiently reflect a connection between persecution, the risk of martyrdom, and scribal activity.

⁴⁹ See Gentry, “Colophons.”

⁵⁰ On the Origenist controversies, Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992) remains a must read. More recently, see Krastu Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria and the First Origenist Controversy: Rhetoric and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Samuel Rubenson, “Why Did the Origenist Controversy Begin? Re-thinking the Standard Narratives,” *Modern Theology* 38.2 (2022): 318–37.

⁵¹ The same mechanism seems to have been at work in the West, as an illuminating article by Scott Bruce demonstrates in Scott Bruce, “Origen Issues: The Reception of a Renegade Greek Theologian in Early Medieval Europe,” *Journal of Medieval Latin* 33 (2023), forthcoming. I wish to thank Prof. Bruce for generously sharing this paper with me.

⁵² On Lucian’s death, see Gustave Bardy, *Recherches sur saint Lucien d'Antioche et son école*, Collection Etudes de théologie historique (Paris: Beauchesne, 1936): 3–32, 71; Hanns Christof Brennecke, “Lukian von Antiochien in Der Geschichte Des Arianischen Streites,” in *Logos, Festschrift für Luise Abramowski zum 8. Juli 1993*, Hanns Ch. Brennecke, Christoph Marksches, and Ernst L. Grasmück eds. (Berlin–NY: De Gruyter, 1993): 87–123 (170–192); Timothy Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*. 5th ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981): 40. However, Michael Slusser, “The Martyrdom of Lucian of Antioch” *ZAC* 7.2 (2003): 329–37 proposes 211. The main source is the *Vita Luciani* is reflected in the *Menologion of Symeon Metaphrastes*, the *Synaxarion of the Church of Constantinople*, and the *Suda*. Joseph Bidez has reconstructed it in Appendix 6 to his edition of Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History* in the GCS. Bidez uses all these texts as well as a unique manuscript of *Vita Constantini* (BGH 365). Ruf. *h.e.* 9.5.3.

⁵³ I pursue this comparison in my monograph on Pamphilus, under contract with Cambridge University Press.

⁵⁴ On Lucian the classic work remains: Bardy, *Lucien d'Antioche*, 3–32; Bruce M. Metzger, *The Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1963): 1–7. See the bibliography in David M. Gwynn, *The Eusebians: The Polemic of Athanasius of Alexandria and the Construction of the 'Arian Controversy'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006): 203; Glanville Downey, *History of Antioch* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974 (reed. 2015)): 337–342; Lucian in R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318–381* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2005): 79–83; and Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001): 44–47; see also Hanns Christof Brennecke, “Art. Lucian von Antiochien,” in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 21 (1991): 474–79 and “Lukian von Antiochien in Der Geschichte Des Arianischen Streites.”

⁵⁵ Eusebius describes Lucian as an emblematic martyr of Antioch who was martyred in Nicomedia (*h.e.* 8.13.2) but Rufinus omits the reference to Nicomedia and the presence of the emperor, and he adds a long apologetic discourse whose source remains mysterious (*Latin h.e.* 9.6.3, see Torben Christensen, *Rufinus of Aquileia and the Historia Ecclesiastica*, Lib. VIII–IX, *of Eusebius*, Historisk-Filosofiske Meddelelser 58 (Copenhagen: Kongelige Danske videnskabernes selskab : Commissioner, Munksgaard, 1989): 249.

⁵⁶ See Jan Willem Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992): 10–12; Julia Hillner, *Helena Augusta: Mother of the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022): 76–78.

⁵⁷ Jerome refers to Lucian not only in his *Praef. in lib. Paralip.* (PL 28: 1325A), but also *Praef. in quatuor evangelia* (PL 29:527B), and Ep. 106.2.

⁵⁸ Text edited by Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo, Hieronymus. *Gli uomini illustri* (Firenze :Nardini, 1988): 182, my trans.

⁵⁹ ἡ ἔγραψαν ἢ ἀν(τ)εγράψαντο οἱ ἄνδρες ὧν ἦν ἐπόνυμα τὰ βιβλία: Galen. *De ind.* 13. Text edited by Boudon-Millot, Véronique, and Jouanna, Jacques. *Galenus, Claudius: ne pas se chagriner.* CUF (Paris: Belles Lettres, 2010), my trans.

⁶⁰ Cf. Ep. 106.2.2 and *Praef. Hieronymi In Quatuor Evangelia* MPL 29.527b in which Jerome compares his work to Lucian and criticizes his emendations. I wonder to what extent *Vir.ill.* 77 is not a deliberate blow to Lucian deliberately implying Pamphilus's superiority.

⁶¹ In another passage (*h.e.* 7.19), he also voices his doubts regarding the authenticity of the Apocalypse of Paul, a text that “none of the ancients ever saw.”

⁶² Soz. *h.e.* 3.5.9. My trans. Text from Bernard Grillet, Guy Sabbah, A. J. Festugière, *Histoire ecclésiastique*, Sources chrétiennes, 495 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2005).

⁶³ See Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus*, 45–47.

⁶⁴ See note 49.

⁶⁵ It is accepted by D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch: A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Archive, 1982): 81. On Lucian's theology, see the same, 82. However, Bardy, *Lucien d'Antioche*, 122–123 and Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 279–280, cast doubt on the association of Lucian and the Council of Antioch in 341. See also Carriker, *Library*, 223–224.

⁶⁶ Bardy, *Lucien d'Antioche*, 9–10; 91–92, 119, 131; Kenneth B. Steinhauser, “2013 NAPS Presidential Address. From Russia with Love: Deciphering Augustine's Code,” *J ECS* 22. 1 (2014): 1–20.

⁶⁷ Theodor Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen : A. Deichert, 1890) : 311.

⁶⁸ See the text and the comparison made with a Syriac colophon to IV Kings in Galloway, Ian Andrew, *These are the Words of Eusebius: A Translation and Analysis of the Colophon at the*

End of Fourth Kingdoms in BnF syr. 27 (PhD. Diss. 2022, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary): 36–37. See also Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*. (Repr. d. ed. Oxford University Press 1968; Winona Lake Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1993): 118–24; Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000): 155–157. According to Jerome, the Septima existed especially in the books composed in verses: Job, Psalms, Lamentations and Song of Songs. We have no citation of any reading of this text, only references in some manuscripts and Jerome (in *Ep. ad Titum*). In several manuscripts of the Greek Old Testament, a note about the septima is usually inserted before the 12 Prophets, and occasionally also before Psalms, after Chronicles and elsewhere, where it is identified with the edition by Lucian: “seventh edition, the one of the great Lucian, ascetic and martyr.”

⁶⁹ My trans. Listed in CPG 2249; PG 28.433–436. See also PG 84.29–32; PG 106.125–126 in notes according to two Venitian mss. Studies about the *Synopsis* include Zahn. *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 1.302–318 and more recently, Gilles Dorival, ed. *qu’est-ce qu’un corpus littéraire? recherches sur sur le corpus biblique et les corpus patristiques*. Collection de la Revue des Études Juives 35 (Paris ; Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2005) : 53–93 (70–93); Guillaume Bady, “Les *Kephalaia* dans les Synopses des Écritures attribuées à Athanase et à Jean Chrysostome,” in *Les délimitations éditoriales des écritures des bibles anciennes aux lectures modernes*, Bady and Korpel, M.C.A. eds., (Leuven: Peeters Publishers & Booksellers, 2020) : 191–209; Francesca Prometea Barone, “Pour une édition critique de la *Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae* du Pseudo-Jean Chrysostome,” *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d’histoire anciennes* 83.1 (2009): 7–19. See also Marsh, “Quinta, Sexta, and Septima,” 487: “Other sources identified Lucian’s recension as Septima in addition to those mentioned above. This association is echoed in parts of the manuscript tradition, especially after Chronicles or before the Twelve or the Psalter (Robert Devreesse, *Introduction à*

L'étude Des Manuscrits Grecs (Paris: Klincksieck, 1954): 118)...How Lucian's text came to be identified with Septima is unknown.”

⁷⁰ See Marsh, “Quinta, Sexta, and Septima,” 483–487 for references and details on this conundrum. Wallace–Hadrill, *Christian Antioch*, 81 draws a connection between Lucian's scriptural work and that of Origen as the potential source of Lucian's theology.

⁷¹ Galloway, *These are the Words of Eusebius*, 36–38. Peter Gentry, Galloway's supervisor, assigns to the colophon the date range 15 December 719–18 January 720 CE (see Gentry “Origen's Hexapla,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, edited by Alison G. Salvesen and Timothy Michael Law (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021): 552–71 (561). The ms is BnF syr. 27. Folio 88v–89v, lines 29–86 of BnF syr. 27.

⁷² See Devreesse, *Introduction*, 119 n.1.

⁷³ Heinrich Dörrie, “Zur Geschichte Der Septuaginta Im Jahrhundert Konstantins,” *ZNW* 39.1 (1940): 79, cf. Marsh, “Quinta, Sexta, and Septima,” 487: “How Lucian's text came to be identified with Septima is unknown.”

⁷⁴ Eus., *p.e.* 6.16.1–4.

⁷⁵ Drijvers, *Helena* 1992, 10–13 inquires about the special connection between Helena and Lucian in Drepanum–Helenopolis but finds no solution.

⁷⁶ Paulinus Nola Ep. 31.5 (CSEL 29:272); Soz. *h.e.* 2.1.4; Eusebius, *p.e.* 8 *Praef.* See also Abraham Wasserstein and David Wasserstein, *The Legend of the Septuagint: From Classical Antiquity to Today* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), and Paul C. Dilley, “The Invention of Christian Tradition: Apocrypha, Imperial Policy, and Anti-Jewish Propaganda,” in *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 50.4 (2010): 586–614, on *inventio* narratives and anti-Judaism.

⁷⁷ On the role of the Jews as authorizing Christian knowledge, see Andrew S. Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews: The Holy Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity* (Stanford

University Press, 2004). Lucian was said by some sources to have expertise in Hebrew, e.g., the Synopsis of Ps.–Athanasius and the Life of Lucian, as well as Suidas. See Bruce M. Metzger, *The Lucianic Recension of the Greek Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1963): 5.

⁷⁸ See *Chron. Pasc.* 5, ann. 303; 8, ann. 309; 13, ann. 327.

⁷⁹ Thomas C. Ferguson, *The Past is Prologue: The Revolution of Nicene Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 2005): 65–67.

⁸⁰ On the *Chron. Pasc.* and its source see the analysis and biography by Ferguson, *The Past Is Prologue*, 65–67.

⁸¹ Metzger, *The Lucianic Recension*, 6. See also Hippolyte Delehaye, *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi; adiectis synaxariis selectis; Propylaeum ad acta sanctorum novembris*, Volume 11 of *Acta Sanctorum* (Brussels: Socii Bollandiani, 1902): 138; Martin Joseph Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae: sive auctorum fere iam perditorum secundi tertiique saeculi post Christum natum quae supersunt* (Hildesheim ; New York: Olms, 1974): 4.1–17.

⁸² The text is reconstructed from the *Menologion* of Symeon Metaphrastes, the Synaxarion of the Church of Constantinople, the Suda, and a unique manuscript of *Vita Constantini* (BGH 365). See Joseph Bidez, Friedhelm Winkelmann, Philostorgius. *Kirchengeschichte: Mit Dem Leben Des Lucian von Antiochien Und Den Fragmenten Eines Arianischen Historiographen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, n.d. 1913, 2018): cxlvii–cli.

⁸³ Ἦσκητο δὲ τὴν ὀξυγραφίαν, καὶ τὸ ἐκεῖθεν αὐτῷ πορίζομενον, ἅμα μὲν ἑαυτῷ πρὸς τροφήν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τοῖς πένησιν ἐχορήγει· καὶ γὰρ εἰ μὴ πρὶν ἢ τροφῆς οὗτος μεταλάβοι, ἕτεροι τοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτοῦ χειρῶν βίου μετὰσχοιεν, ἀδικίαν τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐτίθετο. Text (BHG 997) J.-P. Migne, *Vita et martyrium sacrosancti martyris Luciani, Patrologiae cursus completus (series Graeca)* (MPG) 114 (Paris: Migne, 1864): 397–416. Transl. Bidez.

Philostorgius, 195. The note 6 refers to Lucian's practice of calligraphy in Synax. 139.26–27.

⁸⁴ This part of the text is from Sym. Metaphr. *Vita et martyrium sancti Luciani* (BHG 997).

Text MPG 114.413.28; My transl. Cf. trans. Philip R. Amidon, *Philostorgius: Church History*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World 23 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2007), 193–203.

⁸⁵ Νῦν δὲ κυρῶσαι βουλόμενος τῷ ἀνδρὶ τὴν ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς Γραφαῖς εἰσενεχθεῖσαν σπουδὴν, καὶ ὡς πολλοῦ τινος ἄρα ἦν ἡ πραγματία ἀξιωτάτη, τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ τὴν ἰδίως πρὸς τοῦτο διακονησαμένην ἰδίως ἠξίωσε τιμῆσαι καὶ τοῖς παθήμασι· καθάπερ, οἶμαι, καὶ τῶν ἀθλητῶν οἱ θεαταὶ τοὺς βραχίονας εἰώθασιν ταινιοῦν. Text MPG 416.4–10. Transl. Amidon.

Philostorgius, 202–203. This image suggests that the trop of the athlete has been transferred from the martyr to the scribe!

⁸⁶ Rapp, “Holy Texts, Holy Men,” 194–222.

⁸⁷ *Passio Sanctorum Alphii, Philadelphi et Cyrini* 8.28. See François Halkin, “Les trois frères martyrs de Lentini,” in *Six inédits d’hagiologie byzantine* (Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1987): 63–87 for edition and translation in French. On the historical context, see Daniela Motta, *Percorsi dell’agiografia, Società e cultura nella Sicilia tardoantica e bizantina* (Catania: Prisma, 2004): 305–323.

⁸⁸ βιβλία παλαιᾶς καὶ νέας διαθήκης, ἅπερ ἦσαν οἱ ἅγιοι γράψαντες ἰδιοχείρως.

⁸⁹ The Dominican Martyrology (July 4) available online

<http://catholocity.net/Martyrology/martyr00.htm>

The saint is venerated to this day by the Coptic Church:

<https://stshenoudamonastery.org.au/theodore-cyrene/>

⁹⁰ Jeremiah Coogan, “Divine Truth, Presence, and Power: Christian Books in Roman North Africa,” *JLA* 11.2 (2018): 375–95.

⁹¹ Brent D. Shaw, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 66.

⁹² The text of these Acts occurs in PL 8 as *Acta Martyrum Saturn Presbyteri, Felicis, Dativi, Ampelii et Aliorum*. PL gives two editions, one Donatist (8.704) and one Catholic (8.704–13). The editions are Franchi de' Cavalieri, P., "Passio ss. Dativi, Saturnini presb. et aliorum," in de' Cavalieri, *Note agiografiche*, fasc. 8 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana 1935): 47–71 and J.L. Maier, *Le dossier du donatisme. I. Des origines à la mort de Constance II (303–361)*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1987): 57–92. Trans. by Maureen A. Tilley, *Donatist Martyr Stories: The Church in Conflict in Roman North Africa*, Translated Texts for Historians 24 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996): 25–49. On these martyrs, see Maureen A. Tilley, "Scripture as an Element of Social Control: Two Martyr Stories of Christian North Africa," *HTR* 83 (1990): 383–97; F. Dolbeau, "La "Passion" Des Martyrs d'Abitina: remarques sur l'établissement du Texte," *Anal. Boll.* 121 (2003): 273–96 (274–75); Alan Dearn, "The Abitinian Martyrs and the Outbreak of the Donatist Schism," *JEH* 55.1 (2004): 1–18.

⁹³ Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 72.

⁹⁴ Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, 82.

⁹⁵ Cf. Deut, 4.2; 12.32; Prov 30.5–6 On this curse see W. C. Van Unnik, "De La Regle Μήτε Προσθεναι Μήτε Αφελεν Dans l'histoire Du Canon," *Vigiliae Christianae* 3.1 (1949): 1–36, and Sabrina Inowlocki, "Neither Adding nor Omitting Anything: Josephus' Promise Not to Modify the Scriptures in Greek and Latin Context," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 56.1 (2005): 48–65.

⁹⁶ *Scriptum est, inquiunt, in Apocalypsi: "Quicumque adiecerit ad librum istum apicem unum aut litteram unam, adiciet dominus super illum innumerabiles plagas; et quicumque deleuerit, delebit dominus partem eius de libro uitae." Si ergo additus apex unus aut littera una uel adempta de libro sancto radicitus amputai et sacrilegi facti subuertit auctorem,*

necesse est omnes eos qui testamenta diuina legesque uenerandas omnipotentis dei et domini nostri Iesu Christi profanis ignibus tradiderunt exurendas aeternis gehennae ardoribus atque inextinguibili igne torqueri. Text from Maier, *Le dossier du donatisme*, vol.1: 88.

⁹⁷ Accusation of irresponsible textual practices can also be found among “Pagans” in anti-Christian discourses and see Coogan’s articles, *Eusebius the Evangelist: Rewriting the Fourfold Gospel in Late Antiquity*, *Cultures of Reading in the Ancient Mediterranean* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022). Coogan, “Misusing Books,” and “Meddling with the Gospel.”

⁹⁸ See B. Quinot, “*Fidelis et perfidus*, deux mots-clés de la controverse,” *BA* 30 (1967): 751–753; Tom Geue, “Keeping/Losing Records, Keeping/Losing Faith: Suetonius and Justin Do the Document,” in *Literature and Culture in the Roman Empire*, Alice König, Rebecca Langlands, and James Uden eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020): 96–235 (203–22). Examples in Joseph A. Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture: Text, Presence, and Imperial Knowledge in the Noctes Atticae* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018): 176: Gell. NA 1.7.1... *in libro spectatae fidei Tironiana cura atque disciplina facto* ... “in a book of evident fidelity, having been produced with Tironian care and discipline.” See also Kelsie G. Rodenbiker, “Scribal ‘Faithfulness’ and the Text-Critical Imaginary,” in *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri at Ninety*, edited by Garrick Vernon Allen et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023): 107–20.

⁹⁹ On *fides* in the language of slavery, see Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,) 2015 and Rose MacLean, *Freed Slaves and Roman Imperial Culture: Social Integration and the Transformation of Values* (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018): 37–38.

¹⁰⁰ My trans. Text edition BHL 8580, *Acta Sanctorum, Mai.* II, 288-290 (= Mombricitus (1910), II, 630-632). Other Christians had to pay to rescue such documents: cf. H. C. Teitler, *Notarii and Exceptores: An Inquiry into Role and Significance of Shorthand Writers in the Imperial and Ecclesiastical Bureaucracy of the Roman Empire: From the Early Principate to c. 450 A.D.*, Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology, v. 1 (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben Publisher, 1985): 83–84.

¹⁰¹ Rebillard, *Early Martyr Narratives*, 33.

¹⁰² He refers notably to Asterius, bishop of Amasea in Asia Minor around 400 (d. c. 410 CE), who wrote an *Ekphrasis on the Holy Martyr Euphemia* (BHG 623). Text from François Halkin, *Euphémie de Chalcedoine. Légendes Byzantines*, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 41 (Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1965): 4–8.

¹⁰³ Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*, *Classics and Contemporary Thought* 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013): 130.

¹⁰⁴ Euseb. Gallic. *Hom.* 56.4 (ed. Fr. Glorie, CCSL 101, 101A and 101B (1970–71): 652) cf. *Passio Genesisii* 2.1. The homily (BHL 3306; CPL 503; CPPM 4673) is sometimes attributed to Hilarius of Arles (401–49); the homily is part of the Eusebius Gallicanus collection, which was compiled in southeastern Gaul in the mid to late fifth century; see Lisa Bailey, *Christianity's Quiet Success: The Eusebius Gallicanus Sermon Collection and the Power of the Church in Late Antique Gaul* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010) : 29–38 for the *status quaestionis*.

¹⁰⁵ There are a Greek version (BHG 1646) and a Latin one (BHL 7828); the Latin version was written before the sixth century when the Cappadocian martyrs were naturalized in Langres (Gaul) and the text rewritten as BHL 7829; Rebillard, *Early Martyr Narratives*, n. 128 for more detail. Greek text in Henri Grégoire, *Saints jumeaux et dieux cavaliers: Étude*

hagiographique, Bibliothèque hagiographique orientale 9 (Paris: Picard. Grégoire, 1905): 22 l.15–21; Latin in Grégoire. *Saints jumeaux*, 24.

¹⁰⁶ Teitler, *Notarii and Exceptores*, 82–84; Rebillard, *Early Martyr Narratives*. The Passion of Cassianus of Tangiers (BHL 1636): see Hippolyte Delehaye, “Les Actes de S. Marcel le Centurion,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 41 (1923): 257–87 (277–78); Latin text in Rudolf Knopf, Gustav Krüger, and Gerhard Ruhbach, eds. *Ausgewählte Märtyrerakten*, 4. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965): 89–90. *Pass. Cassian.* 1.4 (Knopf, Krüger, and Ruhbach, *Ausgewählte Märtyrerakten*, 90): *Quas cum sententias exciperet Cassianus, ubi deuictum deuotione tanti martyris Aurelium Agricolanum, capitalem uidit ferire sententiam, exsecrationem sui clara uoce contestans, graphium et codicem proiecit in terra*. This is reminiscent of the students throwing their stylets and tablets at Cassian the school master in Prudentius’ *Peristephanon* 9. Rebillard also mentions the Passion of Theodore the General (BHG 1750) 12 and 17 whose redactor, the notarius Augarus, also throws down his tablets before continuing his job at the request of the martyr himself (Greek text in G. Van Hoof, “Acta græca S. Theodori Ducis martyris,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 2 (1883): 359–67). According to Rebillard (n.130), BHG 1750 is the oldest version of the Passion of Theodore the General; this martyr is a doublet of Theodore the Soldier and seems to appear after the sixth century, probably as late as the ninth century (Hippolyte Delehaye, *Les légendes grecques des saints militaires* (Paris: Picard, 1909), 15.

¹⁰⁷ Coogan, “Divine Truth, Presence, and Power.”

¹⁰⁸ George E. Demacopoulos, *The Invention of Peter. Apostolic Discourse and Papal Authority in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013): 39–72.

¹⁰⁹ Demacopoulos, *The Invention of Peter*, 42.

¹¹⁰ See Henry Chadwick, “John Moschus and His Friend Sophronius the Sophist,” *JTS* 25 (1974): 41–74 (58): “Nothing in the Meadow supports the visit to Rome...., but the statement is not in the least improbable.”

¹¹¹ On the connection between the desert fathers and Rome, see Chadwick, “John Moschus and His Friend,” 58.

¹¹² Καὶ δὴ λαβὼν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐκ τοῦ τάφου τοῦ ἁγίου Πέτρου, ἀνέπτυσεν καὶ εὗρεν χειρὶ τοῦ ἀποστόλου διορθωθεῖσαν. Text from J. Mosch. *Pratum spirituale* 147, PG 87.3: 2852–3112.

¹¹³ Even though his Tome was herein identified as one of the foundational articulations of Christological orthodoxy, as noted by Demacopoulos, *The Invention of Peter*.

¹¹⁴ It is also possible that the text implicitly identifies Peter’s editorial activity with that of the aristocrats whose signed colophons attest to the prestige of this menial activity in late antiquity. See Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 421–497; Kirsten Wallenwein, *Corpus Subscriptionum: Verzeichnis Der Beglaubigungen von Spätantiken Und Frühmittelalterlichen Textabschriften (Saec. IV–VIII), Quellen Und Untersuchungen Zur Lateinischen Philologie Des Mittelalters* 19 (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann Verlag, 2017).

¹¹⁵ In such a context, the persona of the scribe began to challenge that of the Christian author, which was always under the threat of accusations of heresy or lack of humility: Cf. e.g., Derek Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) and Éric A. Junod, “Du Danger d’écrire, Selon Origène,” in *Origeniana Decima* (2011): 91–108. This situation led to two different possibilities: the authorial self-fashioning as scribe, i.e., the scribe as fiction of authorship, as Vessey has shown (Mark Vessey, “Two. From Cursus to Ductus: Figures of Writing in Western Late Antiquity (Augustine, Jerome, Cassiodorus, Bede),” in *European*

Literary Careers: The Author from Antiquity to the Renaissance in Patrick Cheney, and Frederick A. de Armas eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002): 47–103 (48)) has described it, or the mythologization of scribal figures occasionally leading to false attribution of texts, as we have seen in Sozomen and Jerome.