UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Emotional Rescue: Idolatry and Affective Conversion in 1 Corinthians 8-10

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies

by

Marshall McKee Evans

Committee in charge:

Professor Christine Thomas, Chair

Professor Helen Morales

Professor Claudia Moser

December 2020

The dissertation of Marshall McKee Evans is approved.

_____

Dr. Helen Morales

_____

Dr. Claudia Moser

_____

Dr. Christine Thomas, Committee Chair

December 2020

Emotional Rescue: Idolatry and Affective Conversion in 1 Corinthians 8-10

by

Marshall McKee Evans

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Helen Morales and Claudia Moser, who served on my dissertation committee, and whose careful reading and clear advice improved this project in innumerable ways since its inception. I would also like to thank my dissertation advisor, Christine Thomas, whose knowledge of pious interactions with Phrygian votive steles sparked the idea for a study of emotional connections with images of the gods. Her archaeological, textual, and theoretical expertise in ancient Greek religion and early Christianity saved this project from many errors, and she helped make its main arguments far more precise and relevant. Throughout my time at UCSB, she has been a source of unfailing patience and practical guidance, especially during the writing of the final chapter, completed during the Co-vid 19 pandemic of 2020. I could not have imagined a better advisor. Finally, I want to thank my parents, John and Marsha Evans, who encouraged my interest in Greek mythology and early Christianity many years ago, and who have offered constant support and encouragement. I dedicate this thesis to them.

Marshall McKee Evans

Education

University of California at Santa Barbara. 2013--2020.
Santa Barbara CA.
Doctor of Philosophy (expected December 2020).

Harvard Divinity School. 2012--2013.
Cambridge MA.
Master of Theology.

Andover-Newton Theological School. 2010--2012.
Newton MA.

Harvard Divinity School. 1995--1998.
Cambridge MA.
Master of Divinity.

Middlebury College. 1989--1993.
Middlebury VT.
Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Italian Language.

Fellowships & Awards

Birger A. Pearson Award for Excellence in the Study of Christian Origins and Hellenistic Religions. Spring 2020.
UCSB Center for Middle Eastern Studies Travel Fellowship. Summer 2015.
UCSB Catholic Studies Travel Fellowship. Summer 2015.
Nominated for Outstanding TA Award by UCSB Academic Senate. Fall 2014.
Inducted into Jonathan Edwards Society. Andover-Newton. May 2012.
Elected by St. Mary's Senior Class to give Baccalaureate address. May 2008.
Awarded NEH Yeats Seminar Fellowship in Galway, Ireland. Summer 2003.
Awarded St. Albans True Fellowship. Summer 2001.

Teaching Experience

Lead TA. UCSB Religion Department. 2016-2017.
• Offered workshop *What Makes a Great TA*.
• Directed new TA Training. Fall 2016.
• Supported new TA's throughout the academic year.

Teaching Assistantships at UCSB.
• Religious Studies 80C, Religion and Western Civilization III. Spring Quarter 2017 and 2019.
• Religious Studies 12, Religious Approaches to Death. Winter Quarter 2019.
• English 22, Literature and the Environment. Fall Quarter 2018.
• Religious Studies 24, Teachings of Jesus in Comparative Perspective. Winter Quarter 2015 and 2018.
• English 15, Shakespeare. Fall Quarter 2017.
• Classics 40, Greek Mythology. Fall Quarter 2014-2017. Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarter 2019-2020.

• Religious Studies 1, Introduction to the Study of Religion. Spring Quarter 2014.

Assistant Chaplain and Religion Teacher. 2006--2010.
St. Mary's Episcopal School. Memphis TN.
- Designed and taught 10th grade Bible course.
- Designed and taught 11th and 12th grade Comparative Religion course.
- Designed and taught 12th grade course, Heaven and Hell, on Dante, Milton, and Blake.
- Co-taught 11th and 12th grade Humanities course.

Religion and English Literature Teacher. 1999--2006.
St. Albans School for Boys. Washington DC.
- Designed and taught 11th and 12th grade English, including American Literature 1850—1930, Modern British Literature, Comparative Literature 1300—1900, 9th grade English and Dante's Eternal Vision.
- Designed and taught all 9th grade Bible courses.

Homework Tutor. January 1996--May 1997. Charlestown Boys and Girls Club. Charlestown MA.
- Supervised after school homework tutoring for 6th, 7th and 8th graders.
- Served as co-leader of Adventure Challenge Program.

Papers and Presentations

Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting. Denver CO 2018.
• "What We Talk About When We Talk About Idolatry: A Brief Historiography of the Worship of Images in Ancient Greek Religion"

Ancient Mediterranean Studies Seminar. UCSB 2019.
• "Indigenous Categories for the Worship of Images in Ancient Greek Religion"

Languages

Italian
- Advanced Writing, Speaking, and Reading

German
- Advanced Reading

Ancient Greek, Attic and Koine
- Advanced Reading

Ancient Coptic
- Intermediate Reading

Latin
- Intermediate Reading

References

Dr. Helen Morales
University of California at Santa Barbara
hmorales@classics.ucsb.edu

Dr. Claudia Moser
University of California at Santa Barbara
claudiamoser@gmail.com

Dr. Christine Thomas
University of California at Santa Barbara
cmthomas@ucsb.edu

ABSTRACT

Emotional Rescue: Idolatry and the Conversion of Emotion in 1 Corinthians 8-10

by

Marshall McKee Evans

Although the significance of animal sacrifice in ancient Greek religion has long been recognized, the significance of images of the gods, both anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic, has been often overlooked, and certainly undertheorized. Focusing on images of the gods in ancient Greek religion as objects of piety solves several problems. First, analyzing the role of images of the gods in ancient Greek religious practice exposes a whole host of religious attitudes and beliefs frequently rejected or even mocked by many of the literate elite who composed the majority of the texts that serve as our primary sources for ancient Greek religion. Second, a focus on the significance of images on the gods in late Hellenistic and early Imperial Greece underscores the role these objects played in the apocalyptic literature of Judaism, and in the preaching of Paul of Tarsus.

The opening chapter explains the scholarly neglect of images of gods as significant objects of piety by analyzing some prominent 19th and early 20th century theorists of religion, including Max Müller, Edward Tylor, Robertson Smith, and Jane Ellen Harrison. Smith's recognition of the intimate relationship between images of gods and their worshippers offers a way forward for understanding the significance of images of the gods in ancient Greek and Roman religion. The second and third chapters analyze the language used to describe worship dependent upon images of the gods in two ancient Greek novels, Pausanias, and 1 Corinthians. Comparison of pagan and Pauline discourse for images suggests first century pagans and Paul had more in common in the ways they regard images of gods than has been acknowledged.

The last chapter maps the significance of the similarities and differences between pagan and Pauline discourse for images of the gods. It argues that the prevalence of images in early Christian worship spaces, as well as pagan domestic and social spaces, suggests avoiding interaction with images of the gods would have been virtually impossible. Paul uses apocalyptic language to mark these images of the gods as perilous and to bring about an emotional conversion in the former pagans whose habits, experiences, and memories have been inextricably tied to them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

When Cicero was exiled from Rome in 58 BCE, although his house was demolished and his personal property was destroyed, he rescued a statuette of Minerva he had kept there, which he later dedicated at the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Palatine hill. Cicero not only claimed with pride that he had saved Minerva from being violated and had returned her to Jupiter, he declared that by this act he had saved the entire country. If mythological tales of divine retribution for offenses against gods are any guide, he had a point.

By contrast, shortly after the Roman sack of Corinth in 146 BCE, someone took a statuette of Aphrodite, broke off its head and one of its legs, hacked it repeatedly with a sharp object, threw it into a hole, and buried it. That someone would so dishonor a statue of one of Corinth's divine patrons more than a century before Christianity existed may seem odd, unless the perpetrator was excoriating the goddess for failing to protect the city from Mummius, the Roman general who had recently destroyed it, as the writer of the excavation site report surmised. Of course, where Aphrodite is concerned, we need not attribute this attack to geopolitics. Who has not cursed the goddess of love?

More than two thousand years later, in 1901, during the archaeological excavation of Corinth, a similar mutilation of the goddess took place when a well-preserved Hellenistic statuette of Aphrodite, recently excavated, had its eyes, nose, and mouth cut off *after* it was unearthed. The culprit was, allegedly, a workman on the project, and he was promptly fired. Perhaps this was unfair even if he was the perpetrator, given Christian trepidation around images of Greek gods, which goes all the way back to Paul. Everyone has their demons. No one chooses when to encounter them. In Italy, it was once widespread practice, whenever a statue of a god was uncovered unexpectedly during a construction project, to ring the local

church bells. It's how they kept the demons away, newly roused because a long buried pagan idol had been brought to light.

The ability of an image of a god, whether in paint, wood, bronze or stone, to ignite a wide spectrum of passions is well known, and scholarship in both art history and classics has acknowledged it, and yet the role of images of the gods in the actual worship practices of ancient Greek and Roman religions has received only intermittent attention from scholars of religion, who often subordinate images of gods to animal sacrifice. This is doubly true in the field of early Christianity, where for centuries "idolatry" was the default scholarly category for the use of images in worship, despite the fact that hardly anyone took the trouble to define it.

What is idolatry? Better yet, how are we to understand the role and evaluate the significance of images of the gods in ancient Mediterranean religions, whether from a Greek, Roman, Jewish, or Christian perspective? The impulses that provoked Cicero to lovingly preserve a small statuette of a goddess from his doomed house, and the impulses that caused someone to abuse and discard a statuette of Aphrodite, pervaded the ancient world. These impulses provoked by images of the gods, impulses to care for and to destroy, demand an investigation into the role of images of the gods in pagan worship.

In this project, an analysis of the affective aspect, the emotional aspect, of ancient pagan worshippers' relationships with images of the gods, I hope to better understand both Cicero's triumphant rescue of Minerva as well as the anonymous attacks upon Aphrodite in Corinth, whether the perpetrator was a pagan or a Christian. (Aggression, both physical and rhetorical, towards images of gods appears in both traditions.) My more specific goal is an attempt to understand how Paul's formerly pagan, newly Christian audience might have responded to Paul's warnings about idolatry in 1 Corinthians 8-10, with impulses for preservation, or with

impulses for destruction. My model for this project is Jorunn Økland's *Women in Their Place*, a study of 1 Corinthians 11-14, which analyzes pagan and Jewish discourse about women in order to suggest possibilities of reception and interpretation on behalf of formerly pagan, newly Christian women whose worship behavior Paul wants to dictate. In this four chapter project, chapter one offers a short historiography of idolatry. In chapter two, I analyze pagan discourse of images of the gods. In chapter three, I analyze Jewish, and specifically Pauline, discourse of images of the gods in 1 Corinthians 8-10. In chapter four, I offer a model for framing the Corinthian reception of Paul's condemnation of idolatry, especially its affective aspects and their implications. I will elaborate on each chapter in turn.

In chapter one, I have compiled a brief historiography of the category of idolatry, for so long the default category for understanding the use of images in worship, in order to remove the blind spots that have kept scholars from recognizing just how important images were, and are, to those who worship with them. In this historiography, I show that although some of the 19th century forerunners in the field of religious studies proposed scholarly models to explain the use of images in worship, they never shake loose completely from the polemical category of "idolatry." For most of them, worshipping with images never loses its negative valence. Still, some scholars are more aware than others of the almost comic one dimensionality attending centuries of mostly Christian attempts to describe worship with statues. I argue that Robertson Smith, who seriously challenges the category of idolatry, offers a way forward for contemporary scholarly attempts to understand the role and significance of images of the gods in worship when he recognizes the significance and value of an affective relationship between a worshipper and a statue.

In the second chapter, an analysis of language used to describe images of the gods from a pagan perspective, I argue for abandoning the category of idolatry when trying to understand pagan practice, and for replacing idolatry with two indigenous categories used by pagans themselves. Two indigenous categories for images of the gods employed by ancient Greeks and Romans are the identification of the image with the god and the social system of honor which embraces both god and worshipper. When Cicero describes taking the statuette of Minerva out of his house and dedicating it in Jupiter's temple, he does not describe the statuette as an object, "it." He uses the pronoun, "her." This simple identification of image and god, prevalent throughout ancient Greek and Roman literature, has far reaching implications for the ways people regarded statues and paintings of gods. One of the implications is that these images were often attributed with agency. Stories abound of images of gods who made things happen. The attribution of agency to images of the gods brings us to a second category for perceiving the role of images in ancient paganism, one which overlaps with the first, the category of honor. As has been well recognized, ancient Greeks and Romans participated in societies consumed with the distribution, reception, and maintenance of personal honor. Nowhere was this social system of honor more visible than in the treatment of images of the gods. Images of the gods received honor from their devotees, through bathing, cleaning, painting, dressing, the laying of a garland, or supplication, but they also, according to textual and material evidence, dispensed honor, through miracles, good fortune, aesthetic appeal, and through subtler indications of divine favor. The darker side of attributing agency to images of the gods reflects Cicero's conviction that he prevented a national catastrophe by rescuing Minerva. A god whose image has been dishonored might retaliate. Gods may not pay attention to every single thing mortals do, but they pay attention to how their images are treated. These

two indigenous categories for images of the gods in ancient paganism are evident in two ancient Greek novels, Xenophon's *Ephesian Tale* and Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*. Pausanias' *Description of Greece* represents another source for exposing how ancient Greeks and Romans identified gods with their images and how they saw these images as participants in honor exchange. Archaeological evidence corroborates these claims.

In the third chapter, I demonstrate how Paul, who freely uses the category of idolatry in a negative sense as one would expect, nonetheless shares the pagan perspectives that statues can be identified with divine beings and that they participate in honor exchange. Unwilling to grant the divine beings who are identified with statues the name of gods, he uses the pejorative term *daimonia*, "godlings," and warns his audience, with increasing alarm, to avoid interacting with them. Weak as they are, suggests Paul, God will still blast you out of existence if you associate with them. Paul uses the discourse of identification and honor to discuss statues with his audience in 1 Corinthians, but he also adds an apocalyptic discourse about the divine wrath awaiting idols and idolaters in order to sever any remaining emotional ties his Corinthian audience might have with images of the gods. Paul's use of apocalyptic discourse to complete an affective conversion of his newly Christian audience away from material images and towards an aniconic notion of divinity is an essential, and undervalued, aspect of his message about Jesus.

In the beginning of the fourth chapter, I show how the built environment of Paul's first-century pagan audience would not have permitted the easy avoidance of idolatry Paul recommends, not at least without exacting a terrible social cost. Images of the gods were everywhere. They were at work, at home, in public social spaces--baths, courtyards, markets, and theaters. Behavior around these images of the gods cemented social bonds. This was not

necessarily a good thing. To be sure, these social bonds entrenched social inequalities--between master and slave, husband and wife, patron and client, parent and child, ancestor and scion. But social bonds also allow for honoring friendships, births, commercial, artistic, and athletic achievements, migrations, marriages, and deaths. Images of gods probably stood in Christian worship spaces, provoking memory if not compelling devotion. As we will see, evidence does suggest some Christians may indeed have kept participating in pagan rituals for centuries, a testament to the value of the bonds they were loath to forsake.

Finally, in the second part of the fourth chapter, I use a sociological model of religious emotion to suggest that Paul's apocalyptic warnings of the dangers of idolatry must inevitably have had a destructive effect upon the familial and communal relationships of many in his Corinthian congregation, unless they just ignored him. Paul's attempt to orient the emotions of his audience away from the images of the gods they had always known and towards the aniconic figure of Christ they had pledged to worship is designed to mar the affective relationships new Christians had with their old gods; if Paul's message was not compelling for his contemporary audience, and we do not know if it was or not, it surely resonated with succeeding generations of Christian teaching, as condemnations of idolatry became more strident. The last several decades have seen a great deal of scholarship emphasizing how early Christian teaching became entangled with various aspects of ethnic, gender, and economic identity. The question of how new Christians negotiated the effects of Christian teaching on their pagan past is often left out of these discussions. Paul's original audience does not come to him as a blank canvas, and, although their own voices are mostly lost, except for the degree to which they can be discerned through his letters, more needs to be done to imagine their relationships with their old gods to better understand their devotion to their new one.

Chapter 1 What We Talk About When We Talk About Idolatry

For ancient Jews and Christians, as well as for many late 19th and early 20th century western scholars of comparative religion, discourse describing pagan[1] devotional practice accompanied by images of the gods is often suffused with the discourse employed in polemics against idolatry. As a consequence, attempts to analyze the roles images played in the lives of the worshippers whose acts of piety frequently focused on them have been skewed towards shoring up support for various other religious or scholarly agenda. Whether in the ancient or modern world, deliberately or not, the polemical discourse of idolatry used to discredit worship involving images of the gods mischaracterizes the complexity and import of piety driven by or paired with artificial representations of divine figures. In the context of ancient Mediterranean religions, for Jewish and Christian apologists who had so much at stake in cultivating a distinctly aniconic monotheistic identity over and against a background pervaded by iconic polytheism, the mischaracterization of worship with images was undoubtedly deliberate. For example, the authors of the condemnations of idolatry in the Hebrew Bible probably understood worship with images better than they would admit, as Jon Levenson argues in his 1985 classic *Sinai and Zion*.

> [T]he Hebrew Bible does present foreign religion as fetishism, the worship of mindless matter (e.g., Ps 115:4-8). It identifies the god with his or her icon. But no one with an acquaintance with Mesopotamian or Canaanite religion can accept that we have in this identification a sensitive or even perceptive understanding of the role of iconography in these traditions. It is precisely the fact that the non-Israelite did not conceive his icon as inanimate matter and identify it as such with his god *in toto* which makes the polemic inaccurate. But we cannot conclude from the inaccuracy of the Israelite poet's satire that he had no understanding of the spiritual life of his Canaanite neighbor and nothing in common with it. To do so would be to miss entirely the situation out of which interreligious polemics grow. Polemic is by nature reductionistic. It therefore cannot concede dignity or even good intentions to its target.[2]

[1] Here, and throughout, I use the term "pagan" to refer to those practicing Greek and Roman religions. As is well-known, "pagan" is a Christian term, and Greeks and Romans had no self-designation for their religious beliefs and practices, but for this project the term serves to make distinctions between those engaging in Greek and Roman, as opposed to Jewish, or early Christian religious practices.

[2] Levenson, Jon. *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (San Francisco: Harper Collins 1985), 109-110.

The Psalmist whom Levenson quotes charges those whose worship involved images of their gods as literally devoid of all sense, just like the idols they adore. Idolaters cannot speak, see, hear, smell or feel. The charge is both insult and diagnosis, an account of why they would be so stupid as to worship a stone. In the text that comprises the focus of the subsequent chapters of this study, 1 Cor. 8-10, and that supplies a graver charge without even a cursory attempt to explain the attractions of idolatry, Paul calls those who sacrifice to an idol "partners with demons" (1 Cor. 10:20).[3] No good intentions or dignity here. Unlike ancient Jews and Christians, who probably understood "idolatry" better than they ever acknowledged and who consciously filled their descriptions of worship with images with misrepresentation and invective, 19th and early 20th century scholars of ancient polytheistic religions often unconsciously laced their accounts of worship with images with a similar polemical discourse, sometimes against idolatry and sometimes, more subtly, against the broader concept of associating materiality with divinity, which they believed was a barrier to human progress. The progress these early scholars of religion endorsed and thought idolatry inhibited was variously conceived in terms of culture, rationality, or institutional Christianity. Scholars have therefore mostly overlooked, misunderstood, or at the very least left unexplored worship involving artificial images of the gods.

In this chapter, a brief historiography of the scholarship of worship involving images of the gods, I will detail the ways that the study of comparative religion, even in its infancy in the 19th century, adopted the polemical category of idolatry to analyze pious behavior around statues. I will also show how the study of ancient Greek religion, which flourished during the same time period and often because of some of the first scholars of comparative religion,

[3] Unless otherwise noted, all English translations from the Bible are from the Harper Collins Study Bible. New Revised Standard Version. Wayne A. Meeks, General Editor. (New York: Harper Collins 1989).

inherited the category of idolatry from 19th century comparative religion, though these scholars tried to apply it with various nuances. Finally, I will argue that one of these 19th century scholars of comparative religion, the sociologist Robertson Smith, offers a way forward for our attempt to identify indigenous categories for the role of statues in ancient Greek religion. Smith insists upon analyzing the society and rituals, rather than simply the beliefs, of ancient religious traditions. Smith's analysis of society and ritual in ancient Semitic religions illuminates the affective realm of worship involving images of the gods; people's language and behavior in the presence of images of the gods exposes their attitudes and feelings towards their gods, their relationships with them, especially on a personal level. Analyzing the language and behavior of ancient Greeks around the images of their gods offers us a way to discard idolatry as a scholarly category, and presents us a vision of these sacred objects as the ancient Greeks saw them.

As a scholar of ancient Semitic traditions, Robertson Smith recognized the significance of images of the gods among the neighboring peoples of the Israelites. Despite Smith's conviction, doubtlessly influenced by his own evangelical Christian faith, that worshipping with images was a mistake, Smith's emphasis upon ritual and society as the dual foci necessary for the study of religion led him to prioritize the affective realm of ancient religious traditions instead of their intellectual claims, which he considered less important.[4] Smith argued that ancient Semitic peoples, meaning Arabs, Hebrews, Phoenicians, Arameans, Babylonians, and Assyrians, considered the gods part of the community and even part of the family.[5] For example, when a god was with an ancient Semitic tribe in war, they meant his idol was with

[4] Wheeler-Barclay, Marjorie. *The Science of Religion in Britain, 1860-1915* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press 2010), 146, 163.
[5] Smith, William Robertson. *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1889), 30.

them.[6] Religion, for Smith, began not with mythological etiologies designed to assuage existential anxiety, but out of kinship ties with the gods: "It is not with a vague fear of unknown powers, but with a loving reverence for known gods who are knit to their worshippers by strong bonds of kinship, that religion in the only true sense of the word begins."[7] Smith saw that people expressed their love for their gods in the ways they acted around images of them, and although his insight had the potential to highlight the role of images in worship in almost any religious tradition, he too got caught up in the strong currents of 19th century European culture, concerned with human evolution and human progress, and saw worship with images in terms of human development, albeit a relatively positive development compared to his fellow scholars.

The association of particular religious practices with various stages of human progress among 19th and early 20th century scholars of religion extends back to the Enlightenment. David Hume, whose *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion,* published in 1787, contradicted popular Enlightenment theories that religion had originated in a "primitive monotheism,"[8] nonetheless upheld monotheism as a feature of a "higher civilization" compared to polytheism.[9] In this way, he prefigured 19th century discussions identifying particular theologies or rituals as indicators of human progress. With the arbitrariness and uncertainty of existence, rather than revelation or philosophical contemplation, as the initial spark that fires the religious imagination and gives life to divine beings,[10] Hume thought "idolatry," or any identification of supernatural power with material objects, remained a practice that sadly

[6] Smith, *Lectures*, 38.
[7] Smith, *Lectures*, 55.
[8] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 23.
[9] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 23.
[10] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 23-24.

appealed to the "vulgar," in both polytheistic and monotheistic traditions.[11] Hume's contemporary and friend Charles de Brosses contributes to the terminology of the new science of religion in general and worship with objects in particular when he authors a work on the concept of fetishism,[12] which he defines as "divination of any animate or inanimate object;"[13] it is Auguste Comte, however, who popularizes de Brosses' largely unnoticed work and makes fetishism a stage in the development of human consciousness.[14] Under Comte's influence, scholars making their investigations into what would come to be called comparative religion have access to "a systematic application of evolutionary principles to universal history."[15] The first researches into comparative religion made by Max Müller, E.B. Tylor, Robertson Smith, and J.G. Frazer had a ready framework for identifying sacrifice, iconic, and aniconic worship as indicators of different stages of human evolution. These theorists of religion all applied a hierarchical framework of religious practice to their subjects with various qualifications. To be sure, they also checked the uncritical condemnation of idolatry and injected some degree of theoretical sophistication into conversations about what idolatry was, and yet they tended to agree, often for very different reasons, with Hume's assessment that an aniconic monotheism was in all ways superior to the iconic polytheism that obstructed human development toward some more worthy end.

Jane Ellen Harrison, Frazer's contemporary and fellow historian of ancient Greek religion, participates in late 19th and early 20th century conversation identifying certain religious practices with human progress, but it is worth noting that she disagrees with her

[11] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 24.
[12] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 25
[13] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 26.
[14] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 25.
[15] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 27.

colleagues' assessment of what constitutes progress and regress in human social development. Harrison rejects many of the features of 19th century Protestantism that had come to be synonymous with indicators of a sophisticated culture, the assumed marks of human achievement in the industrial age. Instead of viewing rationalism, self-control, and technical precision in the plastic arts as confirmation of human social progress, Harrison drew attention to the value of mysticism, ecstasy, and nature.[16] So doing, she challenged the reigning definition of religion.[17] Furthermore, while her theories were much criticized at the time of publication and certainly never achieved consensus, it is arguable that her methodological approach has achieved consensus, at least in the field of ancient Greek religion. The appeal to archaeological as well as literary evidence, the emphasis on analyzing ritual instead of myth only in order to understand religion, and the willingness to use sociological and anthropological models were all methodological choices Harrison made and they are all, perhaps without exception, methodological assumptions in the researches of ancient Greek religion today. Although in some ways, then, Harrison's theories of Greek religion participate in 19th century comparative religion's obsession with human progress, in at least another respect she differs from all of her colleagues in her approach to understanding pagan gods: she uses ancient material artifacts, statues and images of the gods themselves, in order to hypothesize how ancient Greek worshippers perceived them. If worship involving images never becomes a topic of analysis in its own right, and perhaps gets lost in her efforts to propose a unified theory of the evolution of ancient Greek religion, the very fact that she inserted material culture into the theoretical conversation represents a significant scholarly decision and

[16] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 233.
[17] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 233.

contribution towards understanding the relationship between ancient pagans and the statues, carvings, and paintings that fueled so much pious activity.

After Harrison and throughout the 20th century, within the field of ancient Greek religion at least, scholarly misunderstanding and neglect of the role of images in ancient polytheistic worship has other sources as well. A distorted portrait of pagan worship arises partly out of the subordination of images to the ritual of sacrifice in accounts of ancient Greek religion. Later in the 20th century, devotion involving images suffered neglect due to scholarly assumptions about the inaccessibility of statues in temples as well as assumptions about what types of images might receive devotion, despite the plethora of evidence suggesting the accessibility of images in temples and the variety of public and private contexts, over and above sanctuaries, in which people expressed devotion to images of their gods.

For example, in *Iliad* VI, Hekabē and her handmaidens, following the instructions of Hektor, bring a robe woven in Sidon to the temple of Athena and give it to the priestess, Theano, who lays it across the knees of the statue of Athena as a foretaste of a magnificent animal sacrifice of twelve heifers, provided Athena kills Diomedes.[18] This instance of supplication before an image of a god, the only one in the *Iliad,*[19] has parallels throughout accounts of piety in ancient Greek polytheism, from Herodotus to Euripides to Pausanias.[20] While temples were sometimes locked, and prevented a worshipper access to the presence of the image of the god, often they allowed people, whether supplicants or just the curious, to approach the image without hindrance.[21] As Alice Donohue has shown, images of the gods

[18] Homer. *The Iliad*. (Richmond Lattimore, trans. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1951), VI.301-310.
[19] Donohue, Alice. *Xoana and the Origins of Greek Sculpture* (Atlanta: Scholars Press 1988), 24. Given the similarity of the scene to the Panathenaia, the scene may even be an Athenian addition.
[20] Corbett, P.E. "Greek Temples and Greek Worshippers." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 17 (1970): 151.
[21] Corbett, "Greek Temples and Greek Worshippers," 151.

standing outside of temples, whether in public places or homes, were also objects of devotion,[22] and indeed the very term "cult statue" is a contemporary scholarly category rather than an ancient Greek one.[23] Compared to animal sacrifice, however, the practice of devotion in the presence of an image of a god, whether of stone, wood, or paint, remains somewhat overlooked by scholars and under theorized in the scholarship of ancient Greek polytheism.

As it stands now, that animal sacrifice serves as the primary means of interacting with the gods in ancient Greek and Roman religion has become orthodoxy in introductions to the paganism of the ancient Mediterranean basin. Sociological conceptions of ancient Greek religion that privilege the social functions of sacrifice dominate the scholarly foreground while images of the gods and the temples that hosted them recede into the background, leaving unexamined acts of individual piety that frequently accompanied or were inspired by statues and paintings, to say nothing of the sociological functions of such images, whether within temples or without.[24] Walter Burkert summarizes this view in his masterful compendium of ancient Greek polytheistic phenomena, *Ancient Greek Religion*: "However much the picture of Greek religion was thereafter defined by the temple and the statue of the god, for the living cult they were and remained more of a side-show than a centre.[25]" The model of centre and periphery, holding animal sacrifice at the centre and other pious activity on the periphery,

[22] Donohue, Alice. *Xoana*, 86-87. Donohue cites Theophrastus *Char.* 16.14, Nicander 74.68, Artemidorus 2.33, and Clement *Hom*. 10. 23 as evidence of devotion to images outside of temples.
[23] Donohue, Alice. "Greek Images of the Gods: Considerations in Terminology and Methodology," *Hephaistos* 15 (1997), 33.
[24] Among these influential introductions to ancient Greek religion are *Religion in the Ancient Greek City* by Louise Zaidman and Pauline Pantel, trans. by Paul Cartledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992) and John Scheid's *An Introduction to Roman Religion*, trans. by Janet Lloyd (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2003), 79. Julia Kindt recognizes how the dominance of sociological models of religion blind us to the piety of individuals. "Personal Religion: A Productive Category for the Study of Ancient Greek Religion?" (*Journal of Hellenic Studies 135,* 2015).
[25] Burkert, Walter, *Ancient Greek Religion : Archaic and Classical*. trans. John Raffan (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1985), 91. The encyclopedic nature of Burkert's classic work allows for a more multifaceted portrayal of Greek religion than Burkert's own statement would suggest.

reveals both a Durkheimian emphasis on understanding the social effects of ritual as well as structuralist assumptions about religion's role in the development of the *polis*.[26] When considering the social center of Greek religious life, Burkert may well be correct,[27] but considering the religious center of each individual life is another matter altogether. Why then, did scholarship of ancient Greek religion make this move to emphasize animal sacrifice over all other forms of piety in the first place? More particularly, how did the first scholarly attempts to analyze religion regard the images that received devotion in any culture, to say nothing of the statues, carvings, and paintings that attracted pious activity in ancient Greek life?

II Slouching Towards Bethlehem: Christianity and the Discourse of Human Progress

Analysis of late 19th century foundational works of comparative religion in general reveal how images of the gods in 20th century studies of ancient Greek religion are informed by the Christian category of idolatry and concomitant 19th century philosophical discourse concerning social progress. These philosophical assumptions themselves are rooted in evolutionary models governing the then nascent field of comparative religion that pose a hierarchical relationship between material and immaterial religious phenomena in which any concrete conception of divinity is subordinate to an abstract conception. The category of idolatry, like the related categories of the fetish[28] and the totem,[29] also current in the 19th

[26] Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane. "What is *Polis* Religion?" in *The Greek City from Homer to Alexander*, eds. Murray, Oswyn, and Price, Simon R.F. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1990), 295-322.
[27] Sourvinou-Inwood's masterful article "What is *Polis* Religion?" claims that the *polis* "anchored, mediated, and legitimated all religious activity," and yet she still insists "it was the individual who was the primary, the basic cultic unit in *polis* religion, and not, for example, a small group such as the *oikos.*" Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is *Polis* Religion?," 297, 322.
[28] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 25-28. Comte thought fetishism helped humans to organize their perceptions of nature.
[29] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 122. J.F. McLennan popularized the term "totem" in his series of articles entitled 'The Worship of Animals and Plants' for *The Fortnightly Review* (1869-1870).

century discourse of comparative religion, is a convenient, though unexamined, unit for measuring human progress in the cultures where it is located, and rarely a positive one. For Max Müller idolatry represents an intermediate stage in the progress towards monotheistic conceptions of deity. For E.B. Tylor it is a stage in the slow evolution of religious conceptions towards an understanding of the universe based on the scientific method. For Robertson Smith, while using artificial objects, as opposed to natural ones, represents a laudable effort to cultivate more intimacy with a local deity and therefore signifies another step on the journey towards social organization, it is nevertheless a practice to overcome in favor of Christianity. In their use of the term "idolatry," these scholars often vacillate between employing it as a neutral category of worship involving statues and paintings and a derogatory label for irrational or vacuous piety. The spectre of polemic against idolatry hovers above their recognition of it as a stage in human social development.

The 19th century witnessed seismic changes in western European perceptions of religion as a universal human phenomenon, with questions of the primacy of Christianity and debates about the criteria for evaluating religious traditions always at stake.[30] Max Müller, regarded by some as the founder of comparative religion, contributes to the scholarly discussion of idolatry, or more generally of worship accompanied by images and statues, by way of his argument that an aniconic monotheism, in the form of Christianity, is the "culmination and fulfillment of mankind's spiritual evolution."[31] Müller engages in two ways with the question of monotheism and the significance of other religions, monotheistic and polytheistic, which will run through the 19th century and beyond it. While he argues that the

[30] I am referring here to the work of Max Müller, E.B. Tylor, Ernst Renan, Ludwig Feuerbach, David Friedrich Strauss, William Robertson Smith, and James. G. Frazer, to say nothing of Charles Darwin and Sir Charles Lyell. Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 17.
[31] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science*, 62.

religions of the world are the media by which humanity will gradually come to a conception of one god, he also cautions vigilance in humanity's ongoing effort to resist longing for material desires so that spiritual realities may emerge more readily and completely.[32] Müller's embrace of monotheism therefore includes the conviction that other religious traditions are ultimately working in service to it.[33] With respect to the images of the gods in worship more specifically, in the preface to *Chips from a German Workshop* Müller, not surprisingly given his appreciation for and fascination with Hinduism, goes out of his way to acknowledge the clumsiness and perhaps inappropriateness of the very term "idolatry" in Hindu piety. Müller quotes a Hindu of Benares giving a lecture in defense of Hinduism to an English audience.

> "If by idolatry," he says, "is meant a system of worship which confines our ideas of the deity to a mere image of clay or stone; which prevents our hearts from being expanded and elevated with lofty notions of the attributes of God; if this is what is meant by idolatry, we disclaim idolatry, we abhor idolatry, and we deplore the ignorance or uncharitableness of those that charge us with this groveling system of worship…But if, firmly believing, as we do, in the omnipresence of God, we behold, by the aid of our imagination, in the form of an image any of his glorious manifestations, ought we to be charged with identifying them with the matter of the image, whilst during those moments of sincere and fervent devotion we do not even think of matter?[34]

Müller's stirring example of this apologetic for worship with statues highlights his awareness of the limits and even superficiality of the term "idolatry," and of the complexity and richness of the kinds of religious experience that might unfold not only in the presence of but because of statues or paintings. At the same time, his belief in the continuous revelation of God in history includes the concern that "movement away from the spiritual pole and toward the material" is a "process of degradation to which all religions were subject."[35] Therefore Müller

---

[32] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 59. "The struggle to arrive at a pure conception of God was really part of a larger conflict between the material and the spiritual, between the selfless longing to know the divine and to enter into communion with it, and the egoistic surrender to the claims of the world and to the human taste for the morbid and the irrational."

[33] Müller, Max. *Chips from a German Workshop*. "Every religion, even the most imperfect and degraded, has something that ought to be sacred to us, for there is in all religions a secret yearning after the true, though unknown God" (xxx) https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/aka6773.0001.001/32?rgn=full+text;view=image;q1=idolatry.

[34] Müller, *Chips*, xvii.

[35] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 60.

can extol Jewish monotheism and still say, in a critique of Ernst Renan, that "the Semitic nations… were frequently addicted to the most degraded forms of a polytheistic idolatry."[36] Why Müller does not extend to the ancient Semites the same layered, pious experience with a statue he did to the speaker in Benares is not a question within the scope of this project, but it is worth noting that Müller's generous, optimistic tolerance betrays a disdain for the use of statues and paintings in worship that his later colleagues of ancient Greek religion will manifest to varying degrees and for myriad reasons. Despite the intensity of the debates concerning the benefits of religion or especially methodology in the young field of comparative religion between Müller, E.B. Tylor, and J.G. Frazer, with respect to the value of using images as vehicles for piety, Müller and his colleagues shared more in common than not. Methodological questions regarding the value of Müller's philological approach, Tylor's intellectualist approach, or Robertson Smith's sociological approach consumed far more scholarly attention and energy than any discussion of the use of images in worship.

Edward Burnett Tylor's thoughts on the origin and function of images of the gods emerge not in his most famous work, *Primitive Culture*, but in his earlier *Early History of Mankind*, published in 1865. There, in a chapter with the revealing title "Images and Names," Tylor associates idolatry, fetishism, and the apotropaic avoidance of certain names to an inability on the part of "races at a lower state of civilization"[37] to distinguish between subjective and objective reality. While the civilized man, according to Tylor, recognizes a connection between an object and, say, a picture of it, he also knows the connection is

[36] Müller, *Chips*, 343. Ernest Renan. "Nouvelles considérations sur le caractère générale des peuples sémitiques et in particulier sur leur tendance au monothéisme," Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1859.
[37] Tylor, E.B. *Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization* (London: John Murray 1870), 108.

"*subjective,* that is, in the mind of the observer."[38] He defines a genuine objective connection between object and its image according to the presence or absence of a cause and effect relationship between the two.

> [I]t might be said that the connexion is in some degree what a mathematician expresses in saying that *y* is a function of *x*, when, if *x* changes, *y* changes too. The connexion between a man and his portrait is not objective, for what is done to the man has no affect upon the portrait, and *vice versâ.*"[39]

Certainly, Tylor's categories of objective and subjective relationships between objects may be disputed with even centuries-old Kantian assumptions about perception and just a slightly more nuanced understanding of effects, especially if we are discussing a tradition as full of anxiety and obsession as human portraiture. That aside, for Tylor, those in a "low stage of culture" make images of the gods and assume the magical powers of certain words because they believe "it is possible to communicate an impression to the original through the copy."[40] What one does to or for a statue of a god one does to or for the god herself.

Notwithstanding Tylor's well documented condescension towards primitive tribes or even his comparison of them to children,[41] he does attempt to develop his model of how and why they fashioned images of their gods in paint, wood and stone. Tylor shares with Müller the conviction that the use of images of the gods in worship marks a stage in the development of religious ideas. Once constructed, the image of the god assists the mind with thinking more expansively and precisely about divinity. Tylor uses the analogy of children playing with toys to set up his explanation of people worshipping idols.

> Unlike as the toy may be to what it represents in the child's mind, it still answers a purpose, and is an evident assistance to the child in enabling it to arrange and develop its ideas, by working the objects and actions and stories it is acquainted with, into a series of dramatic pictures. Of how much use the material object is in setting the mind to work may be seen by taking it away and by leaving the child to play with nothing to play with.[42]

---

[38] Tylor, *Early History*, 119.
[39] Tylor, *Early History*, 119.
[40] Tylor, *Early History*, 119-120.
[41] Tylor, *Early History,* 119.
[42] Tylor, *Early History*, 109.

Tylor's admission that the idol, like the toy, aids a worshipper to "arrange and develop its ideas," by itself gives more credit to the range of religious experience made possible by images than many treatments of the practice. Tylor elaborates on his analogy of the toy to the idol when he insists that strict verisimilitude of the toy to its represented object, or of idol to divinity, is both less desirable and less useful than rough similarity. A child wants not "servile and detailed copies of objects," but "symbols, which a child can make to stand for many objects with the aid of the imagination."[43] Tylor agrees with Müller that the use of these symbols in religion indicates more than idiocy or the recalcitrance of the heathen. If one assumes the objective distance of the anthropologist and casts aside Christian prejudice towards images of divine beings, one can recognize in "idolatry" the mark of a civilization that has achieved a certain sophistication.

> But the student who occupies himself in tracing the early stages of human civilization, can see in the rude image of the savage an important aid to early religious development, while it often happens that the missionary is as unable to appreciate the use and value of an idol, as the grown-up man is to realize the use of a doll to a child.[44]

To be sure, Müller and Tylor believed that humanity was progressing towards different ends, with the use of images in worship a waypoint on the road. Müller believed humanity was progressing towards the more complete realization of God and Tylor believed human culture was advancing towards a civilization more dependent on scientific knowledge. A third contributor to the discussions about comparative religion, Robertson Smith, would, unexpectedly perhaps, complicate the understanding of the use of images in worship still more, even if his insights in this particular respect are less familiar than the other two.

[43] Tylor, *Early History,* 109.
[44] Tylor, *Early History*, 113.

Robertson Smith, often regarded as the founder of the modern sociology of religion because he was the first to "articulate a distinctively sociological method,"[45] acknowledges the potential complexity of the use of images in worship in his *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*. Although sacrifice emerges as Smith's primary focus in these lectures, his sociological approach, that is, his assumption that the rituals and religious institutions of the ancient Hebrews shared similarities with the Arabs, Phoenicians, Arameans, Babylonians, and Assyrians with whom they interacted, insisted on attention to the material realities of religious expression.

> All acts of ancient worship have a material embodiment, which is not left to the choice of the worshipper, but is limited by fixed rules. They must be performed at certain places and at certain times, with the aid of certain material appliances, and according to certain mechanical forms.[46]

Smith's emphasis on the material context of ancient Semitic religion and his attempt to understand how religious institutions functioned in the societies of which they were a part helped avoid the easy ascription of the practices he analyzed to Tylorean survivals or to intellectual efforts to seek aid against fear of the unknown.[47] Smith understood that worship dependent upon images of the gods not only exposed a notion of divinity foreign to Christianity's transcendent god, but it also could be every bit as complex and sophisticated as worship free of material instruments.

Smith's recognition of the material context of ancient Semitic religion led him to a radical insight in the concept of divinity in ancient Mesopotamia, one alien to the concept of a transcendent god present in Christianity. To the ancient Semitic peoples, the gods were family. If "relations between gods and men are not independent of the natural environment," then transcendence is not an attribute of ancient Semitic divinities (including the god the Hebrews

[45] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 121.
[46] Smith, *Lectures*, 82.
[47] Smith, *Lectures*, 55.

incidentally) and "neither gods nor men are sharply differentiated from the lower orders of beings." The omnipresence and omnipotence of divinity would make no sense to an ancient Semite.[48] Their gods were "knit to their worshippers by strong bonds of kinship,"[49] accessible locally and under specific material conditions. The national god reflected fledgling conceptions of tribal kingship, "when its executive strength was very limited, and the sovereign was in no way held responsible for the constant maintenance of law and order in all parts of his realm."[50] Therefore "the national god might be good and just, but was not continually active or omnipresent in his activity."[51] Such a model of divinity was in no way deficient, but was in fact preferable: "A god who could be reached when he was wanted, but usually left men pretty much to themselves, was far more acceptable than one whose ever watchful eye can neither be avoided nor deceived."[52] Smith uncouples the quality of transcendence from the ancient divinity of the pre-exilic Israelites and their cultural cousins and to some degree defends the fact of a familial, immanent god through his attention to, in his words, the "material embodiment"[53] of their religious institutions.

Furthermore, while Smith's more focused, more narrow study on the religion of the Semites did not concern religion in general, like Müller and Tylor, he does suggest some of his own convictions about the relationship between the development of religious ideas and notions of human progress. A lifelong Evangelical who was fired in 1881 from his position at the University of Aberdeen for advocating the new, 19th century German standards of biblical criticism,[54] Smith's perspective on iconic, polytheistic acts of piety as indicators of human

[48] Smith, *Lectures*, 64.
[49] Smith, *Lectures*, 55.
[50] Smith, *Lectures*, 64.
[51] Smith, *Lectures,* 64.
[52] Smith, *Lectures,* 64.
[53] Smith, *Lectures*, 82.
[54] Wheeler-Barclay, *Science,* 141.

progress are, in light of his faith commitments, both entirely predictable and radically unexpected. He predictably affirms, for example, the "New Testament conception" that god "is spirit and is to be worshipped spiritually,"[55] and yet he cites Isaiah, along with other Semitic peoples, as a figure who had failed to fully comprehend this fact. Isaiah, "conceiving Jehovah as the king of Israel, the supreme director of its national polity…necessarily conceives His kingly activity as going forth from the capital of the nation,"[56] and in this way Isaiah's understanding of god "corresponds to the ordinary ideas of Semitic heathenism."[57] Mistaken, or incomplete as this and other heathen notions of national deities might be, such notions did contribute to "the slow and difficult process of the consolidation of an orderly society out of barbarism."[58] Like Tylor and Müller before him, Smith recognizes religious ideas as indicators of moral progress.

Unlike Tylor, however, and more emphatically and precisely than Müller, Smith rejects the use of images of the gods in worship as necessarily unsophisticated, and critiques the terminology employed in scholarly discussion about them. In a criticism of the frequent application of the category of fetishism to worship involving material objects, Smith also includes Christian worship involving material objects into similar arrays of non-Christian pious activities. Smith's thoughtful rejection of fetishism is part of a consideration of sacred stones.

> The worship of sacred stones is often spoken of as if it belonged to a distinctly lower type of religion than the worship of images. It is called fetishism—a merely popular term, which conveys no precise idea, but is vaguely supposed to mean something very savage and contemptible. And no doubt the worship of unshapen blocks is from the artistic point of view a very poor thing, but from a purely religious point of view its inferiority to image worship is not so evident. The host in the mass is as much

[55] Smith, *Lectures*, 110.
[56] Smith, *Lectures*, 110.
[57] Smith, *Lectures*, 111.
[58] Smith, *Lectures*, 65. Smith echoes this view when he discusses rules governing holiness, 144.

> artistically inferior to the Venus of Milo as a Semitic *maṣṣēba* was, but no one will say that medieval Christianity was a lower form of religion than Aphrodite worship.[59]

Smith's separation of the religious import of worship involving sacred stones from the rendering of an aesthetic judgment upon the stones themselves is a distinction that many a scholar both before and after him have failed to make. In addition, his resistance to the ambiguity of the category of fetishism prefigures by several decades the criticisms leveled at Mircea Eliade's attempt to apply categories from one religious tradition universally across others. Furthermore, Smith argues that worship involving artificial objects such as statues represents a transformation in the relationship of worshippers to their divinities from the time when only natural objects, like stones, trees, or natural bodies of water, were aids to worship. Once divinities have consented to enter into or at least lend their presence to artificial objects, the gods are closer to their worshippers, and such increased intimacy "marks an advance on the worship of natural objects."[60] The significance of these artificial sacred objects depended neither on their verisimilitude to the gods nor indeed upon any aesthetic category, but rather upon the most basic spatial one. For the "chief idol" of a sanctuary, "its position showed what it was without either figure or inscription."[61] Where the object was in the sanctuary revealed more about its meaning than its appearance did. Finally, although in his later lectures Smith is more focused on the ritual of sacrifice than on the rituals focused on images of the gods, his discussions of sacrifice lead him to comment upon the rituals of devotion towards idols involving either anointing them or clothing them. Among Semitic peoples, both sacred poles and statues were clothed, a practice recorded by Ezekiel.[62] Sometimes a statue would be clothed with the skin of the sacrificed animal, the same kind of skin used to clothe worshippers,

[59] Smith, *Lectures,* 192.
[60] Smith, *Lectures*, 189.
[61] Smith, *Lectures,* 191.
[62] Smith, *Lectures*, 215. Ezek. 16:18

a mark of shared kinship, in Smith's view.[63] In summary, Smith's brief, frequently tangential remarks upon the pious activities involving artificial objects in worship reflect more careful analysis of their significance and sophistication than his contemporaries working in the nascent field of comparative religion, in spite of Smith's evangelical conviction that worshipping with images is a mistake.

III Rejecting Idolatry and Keeping It Too: The Deification of Classical Greek Art

Toward the 19th century's end, the burgeoning fields of sociology and anthropology, and of course archaeology, had raised questions regarding religion in general to which specialists in the field of ancient Greek religion began to respond. *Greek Votive Offerings* by William Henry Denham Rouse does not, incidentally, participate in late 19th century conversations about religion and human progress, and therefore stands as something of an anachronism here. And yet for all of its theoretical poverty, Rouse recognized a host of practices involving material objects that had long been overlooked, and that continue to be. Jane Ellen Harrison mounted the first systematic effort to integrate anthropological, sociological, philological and archaeological research into a coherent theory not just of ancient Greek religion, but of religion in general in *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion.* For Harrison, the value of images lay in the degree to which they foster social cohesion; even where they do not, she simultaneously celebrates artistic excellence and pans what she considers the increasing distance between the Greeks and their Olympian gods in the classical age. Martin Nilsson's *A History of Greek Religion*, though an impressive display of erudition by an eminent classicist, traffics in just the sort of polemical discourse surrounding

[63] Smith, *Lectures*, 415.

worship with images that Müller, Tylor, and Smith attempted to dissolve, however intermittently and inconsistently. Like Harrison, if more conventionally, he disdains idolatry but celebrates the plastic arts of the classical period. What these three very different works share, despite their various aims and methodologies, is an enshrinement of the artistic standards of classical Athens against which broader religious and cultural judgments can be made. As a result, for Rouse, Harrison, and Nilsson any conversation about images as objects of piety is not so much eliminated as drowned out by paeans to classical Athens.

Given the tepid reviews which followed its publication in 1902, W.H.D. Rouse's *Greek Votive Offerings* seems an inauspicious place to begin a brief historiography of the role of images in ancient Greek religion. While the staggering number of examples of votive offerings to various gods in myriad spheres of ancient Greek life testifies to Rouse's industriousness in amassing evidence of the votive habit, the narrow scope of his conclusions betrays the absence of any overarching theory of religion applied to understand their significance. One reviewer summarized the work best when he suggested that an essay on Greek votive offerings followed by a catalogue of evidence would have been both more readable and more useful.[64] Still, none other than Marcel Mauss, writing in *L'Année Sociologique* in 1903, recognized the need for an ambitious attempt to study this neglected aspect of ancient Greek religious practice. Mauss noted the absence of any previous effort to understand votive offerings despite the "almost infinite number of documents" testifying to them.[65] Despite Mauss's endorsement of the overall aim, if not the conclusions, of Rouse's project, scholarly trends followed his own work with Henri Hubert in 1899, and kept animal sacrifice at the forefront of scholarly discussions of ancient Greek religion where, I would argue, it has largely remained. In this way, Rouse's

[64] Gutch, Clement. "Review: Rouse's *Greek Votive Offerings,*" *Classical Review* 17 (1903): 372.
[65] Mauss, Marcel. *L'Année Sociologique* (Presses Universitaire de France 1902-1903) 293. author's translation.

book highlights both a general theoretical stagnation among studies of ancient Greek religion just before the publication of Harrison's *Themis,* and the identification of a need for research that has not yet been satisfied.

Whatever its shortcomings then, Rouse's work highlights the inattention given to the use of objects in ancient Greek worship, whether of images of the gods themselves or offerings to them. More significantly, Rouse's study reveals a thoroughly Protestant bias towards the inner life of the pious with a surprising complementary implication, one running counter to Protestant assumptions, that the use of votive offerings in acts of piety enriched peoples' lives. The suggestion that votive offerings represented authentic acts of piety appears only because Rouse depends upon the narrative of decline frequently used to describe ancient Greek religion beginning in the 4th century BCE, which itself employs the category of idolatry to suggest the corruption and emptiness of ancient Greek religion in the post Classical period. Indeed, one must wonder if Rouse is more critical of Hellenistic art than Hellenistic religion. Rouse's identification of votive offerings in the Hellenistic period as idolatrous at the least raises the question, asked if poorly answered, how we understand ancient Greek worship with objects at all.

Rouse himself tries to distinguish between votive offerings before and after the Classical period through a definition of a votive offering that depends upon the concept of free will. Rouse's undeveloped definition of votives indicates his Protestant emphasis on the worshipper's intention, an emphasis that allows him to keep the religious activity of the Classical period where he wants it, as the subject of hagiographic narrative rather than scholarly analysis based upon thoroughly defined and developed categories. From the very first sentence of his first chapter to his last, the "General Sketch" by which he attempts to draw

conclusions about the evidence he has collected, Rouse defines a votive offering as an object given from free will:[66] "The essence of a votive offering is freewill. It may be customary, as the firstfruits; of fixt proportion, as the tithe; but it must not be compulsory, or it becomes a tax."[67] Rouse admits of no nuance in his definition, and brooks no ambiguity in the notion of custom vs. compulsion. Intention hallows every gift, no matter how small, much like the widow's two mites,[68] "for the Greeks knew as well as we do that the thought sanctifies the deed."[69] By contrast, "compulsion" and "self-glorification" are the two motives which "rob the later [i.e. fourth century BCE] offerings of their moral worth."[70] In another discussion in his last chapter regarding the identification of divinities with their attributes, Rouse delivers his coup de grâce to the religion of the Hellenistic period: "This view of divine attributes applies *ex hypothesi* down to the fourth century; after which a great change takes place. Now the religious conception of the gods decays, and what may be called idolatry takes its place."[71] As it has been for centuries, the term "idolatry" is used here to shut down rather than open up understanding. Up to the 5th century BCE Greeks worshipped their gods with sincere hearts through the laying of garlands, the donation of statuettes, the offering of clothes, jewelry, tools and weapons either in whole or miniature; after the 5th century Greek religious practice in general sends its increasingly shallow roots ever more futilely into the hardening hearts of the people.

Without ever saying so explicitly, then, Rouse describes ancient Greece in the classical period and earlier as a society in which every object, almost without exception, potentially

[66] Rouse, *Votive Offerings,* 1.
[67] Rouse, *Votive Offerings,* 351.
[68] Luke 21:1-4
[69] Rouse, *Votive Offerings*, 356.
[70] Rouse, *Votive Offerings*, 351.
[71] Rouse, *Votive Offerings*, 378-379.

belongs to the gods because every object is a potential votive offering.[72] The implications of this fact cannot be underestimated. First, the gods in ancient Greek religion have a vested interest in the material world, however imperishable it might be. Every object is a possible mediator between human and divine, a means of expressing gratitude, hope, pride, frustration, fear, or grief not just in corporate, but in personal life, which can take place without the public sanction of a sacrifice or a festival. Death, tithes, victory in battle or games, healing, childbirth, promotion, supplication, good fortune: all of these events, to take but one example from each of Rouse's chapters, demanded the involvement of objects other than the cooked flesh of a sacrificed animal and a libation. They demanded also, in Rouse's words, "offerings which are not immediately perishable."[73] Rouse's "not immediately perishable" underscores the significance of these objects in ancient Greek religious practice, their need to be taken as seriously as animal sacrifice in any attempt at a thorough understanding of the rituals of ancient Greek religion. Those who offered "not immediately perishable" offerings expected them to be on display for a while, to both the gods and to others. Votive offerings represent attempts to participate in and shape social life. This essential element of votive objects, that they linger in time, if only for a few days as a garland or a lock of hair, perhaps for months or decades if crafted of wood or stone, and that they take up space, signifies a mark on the environment sanctioned by or at least seeking divine approval. Add to votive objects' insistence on participation in their immediate environment their likelihood of being personally chosen by the devotee, and there exists evidence of participation in communal life, however molded or restricted by custom. The donation of objects is as significant, if not more, in expressing personal identity as the acquisition of objects. Clear as the significance of Rouse's exhaustive

[72] Rouse, *Votive Offerings,* 352.
[73] Rouse, *Votive Offerings,* 1.

accumulation of evidence might be, he left to his readers the task of synthesizing it and drawing out its implications. Of course, what he does make clear is that he equates the aesthetic and religious qualities of the classical age—they represent the apex of ancient Greek artistic achievement and piety. Sincere worship produces art made according to the standards of classical Athens.

Jane Harrison's *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, first published in 1912, presents an ambitious argument on the beginnings of Greek religion rooted in Durkheim's then recent claim that religion reflects and emerges out of social experience. While my task is an examination of Harrison's understanding of images of the gods in ancient Greek religion, a short summary of the book's sweeping argument is necessary to clarify Harrison's complex account of the significance and purpose of images of the gods, especially of the anthropomorphic images she assigns to a secondary stage of development in Greek religious thinking. Unlike scholars some few decades later, Harrison acknowledges and celebrates Durkheim's impact on the study of religion in general when she declares from the outset her assumption that "among primitive peoples, religion reflects *collective* feeling and *collective* thinking."[74] More critically, she invokes his dependence on the concept of the "sacred," but with greater attention to its lack of a fixed meaning, particularly in Greek religion, and consequently without a similar engagement of its opposite pole in Durkheim's conception, the "profane."[75] Harrison argues that Greek religion has its origins in the social experience of cultivating plants and animals for food. In societies whose dominant relationships are

[74] Harrison, Jane. *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1912), xiii.
[75] Harrison, *Themis,* 63.

matrilineal, early Greek communities project a Mother-Son relationship onto their understanding of the life-giving qualities of plants and animals.

> So far man's eyes are bent on earth as food-giver. In his social structure the important features are Mother and Son, and, projecting his own emotions into nature round him, he sees in the earth the Mother as food-giver, and in the fruits of the earth her Son, her Kouros, his symbol the blossoming branch of a tree. The first divinity in the sequence of cults at Delphi is Gaia.[76]

As at Delphi, however, in the long trajectory of Greek religion the worship of Gaia will fade and be replaced with the construction and worship of the Olympian gods: "The worship of Earth in a word comes before the worship of Heaven."[77] This transition in ancient Greek societies from powerful social experiences[78] that create and receive ritual sanction to the creation and worship of anthropomorphized divinities is not without its consequences for the Greek conception of self and the universe. Harrison identifies a key watershed in the development of ancient Greek thought through totemism, a category that will have a significant impact on her understanding of the role of ancient Greek images of the gods in worship.

Applying a definition of totemism used by her Cambridge colleague Sir James George Frazier, Harrison is interested in totemism as a necessary epistemological category in an evolutionary progression of reflection upon the relationship between self, group, and nature. Totemism's slow death will simultaneously corrupt and doom Greek religion even as it allows a peerless cultural efflorescence in the plastic arts of sculpture and architecture. Quoting Frazier, Harrison defines totemism as "an intimate relation which is supposed to exist between a group of kindred people on the one side and a species of natural or artificial objects on the other side, which objects are called the totems of the human group."[79] Totemism, then, does

---

[76] Harrison, *Themis,* xx.
[77] Harrison, *Themis*, 451.
[78] Harrison, *Themis*, 27-29. Harrison cites the Hymn to the Kouretes, found at Palaikastro in Crete and dated, in her view, between the 7th and 5th century BCE, as an example of Greek religion in its embryonic stage when ritual took place without necessarily involving any divinity.
[79] Harrison, *Themis*, 119.

not involve worship *per se* because totemism exhibits a "lack of differentiation of subject and object,"[80] as Tylor thought, while "worship involves a conscious segregation of god and worshipper." Harrison continues:

> The very idea of a god, as we have seen in the case of the Kouros and the Bacchos, belongs to a later stage of epistemology, a stage in which a man stands off from his own imagination, looks at it, taken an attitude towards it, sees it as *object*. Worship connotes an object of worship. Between totemism and worship stands the midway stage of magic"[81]

While Harrison thinks totemism is a stage in the intellectual development of every culture, the Greeks grew out of it comparatively early, and left only traces of it in their literature and art.[82] Harrison's application of the category of totemism to the early stages of Greek religion, and her insistence on its absence in later stages, smudges the theoretical lens she uses to understand the many roles of images of the gods in Greek religion, even as her own numerous specific references to the myriad roles images play in ancient Greek religion belies her theoretical blind spot.

While it is by now obvious that Harrison is not interested in isolating the role of images of the gods, anthropomorphic or not, in any particular time period of Greek religious practice, she does hold up the creation of statues as both an actual and metaphorical step forward and backward in what she implies is overall cultural progress. The ancient Greek demand for reified, anthropomorphized divinities indicated a step backwards in their scientific understanding and a step forward in their artistic development. In a telling summation of the trajectory from totemism through magic to the Olympians, Harrison writes that "The Olympians are, as will presently be shown, essentially *objets d'art.*"[83] The conviction, born out of collective emotional experience from enjoying the fruits of the earth, to take but one of

[80] Harrison, *Themis*, 128.
[81] Harrison, *Themis*, 127.
[82] Harrison, *Themis*, 128.
[83] Harrison, *Themis*, 462.

her examples, that a divinity exists leads to the actual physical construction of divinity in stone and wood. Zeus Ktesios, often represented simply by a common household jar, betrays such an evolution, according to Harrison. This particular manifestation of Zeus, "to the Greeks a house-snake, with a service of storehouse jars for his chief sanctity," is according to Harrison's evolutionary model of the gods the divine equivalent of a horseshoe crab, unchanged through the centuries for all his awkward fragility; he is "simply a *daimon* of fertility, taking snake form…not yet a *theos*."[84] The notion of divinity as jar or snake, however, offends the "reflecting worshipper."[85] The "conscious intelligence," in a pre-scientific effort to apprehend life, constructs the Olympian who governs both the natural and the social order, but it is the representative of social order, Themis, who is always the actual object of religious devotion. While the creation of reified Olympians through conscious reflection and analysis of experience indicates a kind of progress for Harrison because they turned ancient Greek attention to the heavens and "tempted man up the steep road of exact observation" towards math and science, the absurdity of anthropomorphized divinities engaged in a *do ut des* relationship between the human and divine renders these figures incapable of any intimacy. The Olympians exchange their former function as nature deities who die and live again and who serve a meaningful social purpose for listless figureheads demanding honor and immortality.[86] In a revealing passage, Harrison concludes, "in progress of time, man dessicates his god, intellectualizes him, till he is a mere concept, an *eidolon*. Having got his *eidolon*, that *eidolon* fails to satisfy his need, and he tries to supply the place of the vanished *thymos*, the real life-blood of emotion, by claiming objective reality."[87] Despite Harrison's lament for the

[84] Harrison, *Themis*, 300.
[85] Harrison, *Themis*, xxi.
[86] Harrison, *Themis*, 468.
[87] Harrison, *Themis*, 478.

arrest of scientific understanding, for the transformation of a collective emotional experience into the unfounded assertion that an objectively real, immortal being lay behind the emotional experience, she celebrates the actual creation of objects that fall under the category of Greek art for her contemporaries and for ours. The *eidolon* to which Harrison refers has its positive and negative valence. While it is "mere concept," hastily and rashly constructed, it is also "the strength of the Greek temperament," which "lay rather in art than in religion."[88] Harrison ascribes to all ancient Greek people an artistic temperament, so that they become "a race, in whom nature has linked less clearly the faculty of perception with the faculty of action." [89] The statues of the gods represent no objective reality, and serve no necessary purpose, and yet the ancient Greeks loved them because they made them, or even more precisely because they loved the process of making. Harrison's own conclusion regarding the evolution of the object of Greek devotion from totem to Olympian allows a negative evaluation of their construction from the perspective of Western science and a positive evaluation of their construction from the perspective of Western art.

In spite of the gaps that appear in her arguments with her ready application of the concept of totemism to large swaths of Greek religious phenomena, Harrison's discrete discussions of specific pieces of evidence, specific texts and specific objects, almost always exhibit a nuance that her schematic theoretical constructions fail to capture. Harrison's impressive, and innovative, command of ancient Greek textual and archaeological evidence highlights the fine distinctions the ancient Greeks themselves made between sacred things, sacred behaviors, and sacred experiences, even if she is more interested in a sweeping chronological trajectory than in a thoroughly developed critique of Durkheim's concepts of

[88] Harrison, *Themis*, 479.
[89] Harrison, *Themis*, 479.

sacred and profane. For example, in her discussion of an image on a dipylon amphora from the Geometric period, Harrison makes a distinction between an object acquiring its sacredness because it was offered to a god and an object acquiring its sacredness because it expresses an essential aspect of individual human identity. In this way, Harrison anticipates by decades discussions of object and cultural identity that are still filling articles in archaeological and anthropological journals. On the amphora, excavated at Kynosarges, a shield sits atop an altar or table, and a seated man to the right, holding what may be rattles in each hand faces it. While Harrison asserts that the shield is "undoubtedly sacred,"[90] she also insists "the tool, the weapon, became *per se* sacred, not because it was the instrument of a god, but because it was the extension and emphasis of man."[91] Harrison's ascription of the category of sacred to tools and weapons frustrates the easy dichotomy of sacred and profane employed by Durkheim. Harrison's resistance to assigning all objects used in ancient Greek worship the same quality and degree of "sacredness" reflects her careful attention to the evidence. Although Harrison's telling conclusion deliberately eschews the temptation to invoke the catch-all category of idolatry, or hoplolatry, as she calls it, her very struggle to demonstrate the ways in which the shield was sacred exposes the inadequacy of the terms she uses to define a "religious" object from the ancient Greek perspective.

> We must then clear our minds of all notion that the hoplolatry of the Greeks implies anthropomorphism. The shield on the altar is sacred *because it is a shield*, a tool, a defensive weapon, part of a man's personality, charged with magical force.[92]

The example she adduces could very easily have become one more bit of scholarly detritus in a polemic, once emphatically Christian, and from the Enlightenment onward "scientific," that sweeps objects into a landfill of "idolatry." Instead, Harrison argues that ancient Greek

[90] Harrison, *Themis*, 77.
[91] Harrison, *Themis*, 86.
[92] Harrison, *Themis*, 86-87.

religious practice deploys several means for individual and cultural expression in which the gods may be included, but which do not have the gods as the sole object.

Harrison displays a similar care in her reevaluation of the practice of sacrifice, and argues that sanctification, rather than sacrifice, is a broader, more accurate category for capturing the variety of ancient Greek religious practice. She points out that sacrifice "is simply either 'holy doing' or 'holy making,' ἱερά ῥέζειν, just *sanctification*, or to put it in primitive language, it is handling, manipulating *mana*."[93] While Harrison does attempt to invoke the concept of *mana* in an effort to cultivate a terminology useful for comparative study, her emphasis on sanctification over the *do ut des* model of sacrifice is a sound move. Perhaps because Harrison's overall theory of the origins of ancient Greek religion received more attention than many of her more discrete analyses, some of the work she did regarding the ancient Greek attitudes towards materiality and the divine has been overlooked.

Martin Nilsson's work embodies some of the best and, it must be said, worst aspects of 20th century western scholarship about ancient Greek religion. His remarkable erudition and command of ancient Greek texts still leads him to conclusions regarding images of the gods that depend upon almost stock Christian descriptions of idols and an uncritical museum docent's account of the art of the classical period. The impact of Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* upon Martin Nilsson's *A History of Greek Religion* manifests itself first in Nilsson's use of Durkheim's categories of sacred and profane, categories which apply only sporadically and by degrees to the host of phenomena that comprise ancient Greek piety. Even as Nilsson uses these categories freely throughout the work, his own sweeping knowledge of the specifics of ancient Greek religious practice explodes and often betrays them.

[93] Harrison, *Themis*, 137.

For example, Nilsson admits "The temple was holy, but there were varying degrees of holiness" before declaring in the very next paragraph "that which is sacred is inviolable."[94] Nilsson's insistence upon the inviolability of the sacred follows Durkheim's claim that the heterogeneity of the sacred and the profane is "absolute," though Durkheim of course grants movement from one realm to the other through the catalyst of ritual.[95] While Nilsson may have been correct to emphasize the inviolability of the sacred in sanctuary precincts, his own exempla of phenomena outside sanctuaries frustrate the rigidity of his characterization of sacred and profane. He refers to Homer to demonstrate that "the sacred and the accursed are withheld from common use," but offers abundant testimony to what can only be called "common" objects participating in or at the least touching the sacred realm through or even because of their "common use."[96] Wine, a common drink, according to Nilsson's application of Durkheim's categories stays within the profane realm if it passes the lips but enters the sacred realm when poured upon the ground.[97] Both hearth and the fire within it constitute ἑστία and serve as the center of the household cult.[98] Is a cold hearth still sacred, or not? A heap of stones by the side of a road, to which travelers can add with any common pebble, houses a *daimon* and later, Hermes himself.[99] In a revealing description of the prevalence of divine things in quotidian life, Nilsson acknowledges "One could hardly have taken a step out of doors without meeting a little temple, a sacred enclosure, an image, a cult-pillar, a sacred tree…This was the most persistent, though not the highest, form of antique religion; it was the form which gave way last of all to Christianity."[100] As Nilsson himself has shown, one need

[94] Nilsson, Martin. *A History of Greek Religion*. F.J. Fielden, trans. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1949), 80.
[95] Durkheim, Émile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: The Free Press 1995), 36.
[96] Nilsson, *History, 81*.
[97] Nilsson, *History*, 124.
[98] Nilsson, *History*, 124.
[99] Nilsson, *History*, 110.
[100] Nilsson, *History*, 119.

not even step out of doors. He recognized the ubiquity and range of possible encounters with the divine even if his use of Durkheim's sacred-profane terminology as a polarity is an imperfect way to analyze them. Whether or not encounters with images or representations of the gods in homes, on roads and in markets constitute "high" religious expression, Nilsson's own testimony to their remarkable endurance demands a reckoning with theoretical lenses long employed to understand them.

The imposing legacy of Durkheim's *Elementary Forms* appears as well as in Nilsson's concept of "evolution" in religion. Applying this Darwinian evolutionary model to ancient Greek religion, Nilsson declares from the outset that his study will show an older form of life, Greek religion, dying out to make room for a newer one, Christianity: "The present book is devoted to an account of Greek national religion and its decay."[101] For all of his deployment of Durkheim's categories, however, Nilsson makes the rather un-Durkheimian move of subordinating ritual to belief in ancient Greek piety. Indeed, "ritual" does not receive its own treatment anywhere but shares the third chapter marquee with belief in "Primitive Belief and Ritual." For Nilsson, the evolution of Greek religion follows a parabolic trajectory along axes of linear chronology and sincere devotion that begins in the Minoan period, hits its apex in Homer, and drops precipitously throughout the classical period only to result by the end of the 5th century in a shell of ritual wherein Athenian political ideals replace "true religious spirit."[102] With sad resignation, Nilsson declares that "religion became a total ruin in the Hellenistic period."[103] Although belief in the morally bankrupt, anthropomorphic Greek gods erodes, a "genuine Greek rationalism" embodied by the Homeric gods in their imitation of humanity

[101] Nilsson, *History,* 6.
[102] Nilsson, *History*, 265.
[103] Nilsson, *History*, 281.

falls like a seed out of the ancient epic tradition to receive new attention and new life in the philosophical traditions of the late classical period.[104] As he so often tends to do in studies of Greek culture, Homer emerges unscathed from Nilsson's account of the decay of Greek religion because his poetry reveals "the demand of the Greek temperament for perspicuity and a rationally comprehensible presentation of phenomena,"[105] while religion itself receives a classic Marxist dismissal: "Distress drives man into the arms of religion."[106]

Images themselves in Nilsson's work, statues and paintings, possess a double valence that arises from their being bound, negatively, to idolatry on the one hand and, positively, to art on the other. Obviously, given the dearth of ancient textual records, general diachronic studies of Greek religion reaching back to the Minoan period force scholars to reckon with the use of objects in religion because objects and images comprise the majority of the evidence. To his credit, in his very first chapter, "Minoan-Mycenaean Religion," Nilsson brackets the material evidence of ancient Minoan culture in an attempt to deduce what he can about these deep roots in the tradition of ancient Greek religion, and yet his interchangeable deployment of the terms "idol," "object," and "relic" betrays a confusion about just how to interpret the statuettes and paintings he examines. For example, Nilsson distinguishes between objects used in ancient Minoan religious traditions and representations of the performance of those traditions.

> "[T]he monuments are of two different kinds and contribute in different degrees to our conception of the religion. One kind is composed of idols and actual objects of the cult, the other of sculptured, painted, or engraved representations of objects and scenes connected with the cult. They are depicted as the eye of imagination sees them, seldom in the form taken by their images in the cult; indeed, it is even conceivable that the cult knew no images, although the artist has represented the epiphany of a god. It is therefore advisable to begin by looking at the Minoan-Mycenean religion not as depicted by the creative imagination, but through the actual relics of the cult."[107]

[104] Nilsson, *History*, 281-282.
[105] Nilsson, *History*, 180.
[106] Nilsson, *History*, 181.
[107] Nilsson, *History*, 11.

Despite the Christian bias he exposes when he uses the term "idol," he does take seriously the import of these objects for understanding their religious significance. Even if his skepticism of the use of painted or engraved representations of cult as evidence is extreme, he refuses to use these representations of ritual as a casual substitute for the absence of descriptive literary texts, and at least confronts these objects and remains open to the various things they might be able to say to him. It is perhaps telling, however, that in his second chapter, "Greek Mythology," Nilsson returns to the more familiar waters of literary texts to continue his investigation of Greek religion, and all but ignores material culture until the last chapter. There, Nilsson's treatment of "idols" as recipients of sincere devotion parallels the ancient philosophical attack upon them, a mixture of incredulity and contempt, with indignation at the gods' frequent moral failures. "And they pray to these images, as if one should talk to a house, not knowing what gods and heroes are," says Herakleitos, summarizing Nilsson's opening paragraph of his last chapter on the defects of Greek religion.[108] These same images no doubt figured into Nilsson's assessment of the comparatively small influence of Orphic religion, a tradition ultimately rejected by the majority because "the demand of the Greek mind for clarity and plastic beauty carried the day."[109]

Although Rouse, Harrison, and Nilsson may appear an unlikely grouping given their interests and the span of their work across five decades, I hope to have demonstrated that each of these influential scholars follows, in their understanding of images of the gods, two ruts--the disparagement of idolatry and the deification of 5th century Athenian art. Falling into these ruts blinded both them and their readers to the significance of images of the gods in ancient

[108] Nilsson, *History*, 263.
[109] Nilsson, *History*, 223.

Greek piety. The work of Robertson Smith, however, combined with the far more recent work of Alice Donohue, offers a way out of the track that scholarship of Greek religion has been following for over a century.

IV Overcoming "Idolatry"

As is hopefully plain, Smith's recognition that the images of the gods were considered part of the community and the family among ancient Semitic peoples, as well as this brief historiography of images in ancient Greek religion, should at least compel a reassessment of images in ancient Greek piety. The work of Alice Donohue, writing in the late 1980's and 1990's, presents a specific scholarly challenge regarding images that my next chapter will try to answer. In her earlier work, *Xoana and the Origins of Greek Sculpture* from 1988, Donohue demonstrates that the term *xoanon*, commonly translated as "wooden statue" in English, "does not consistently denote one specific kind of image, but instead reflects the development of Greek thought about statuary."[110] We will have reason to return to Donohue in our second chapter, but a brief account of her work will be helpful here. Just like scholars of ancient Greek religion, the Greeks themselves wondered about the introduction of images of the gods into worship, and they worked out some of their answers through the shifting meanings of the word "ξοάνον." Unfortunately, even ancient Greek investigations of the history of images in worship left a *lacuna* into which critiques of images in any age could pour an answer. Ancient Greeks asked who introduced images of the gods in worship, and when, and where, and how, but gave less attention to the question of why.[111] While the question of why remains unanswered,[112]

[110] Donohue, *Xoana*, vii.
[111] Donohue, *Xoana*, 198.
[112] Donohue, *Xoana*, 231.

both antiquarians like Pausanias and polemicists against "idolatry" shared an answer for how statues came to be worshiped. The first ancient statues were aniconic, then evolved to crude wooden figural images, ξοάνα, and finally emerged as anthropomorphic stone images. Although this evolutionary theory of the development of statues has been debunked,[113] it has had remarkable staying power,[114] despite the testimony for it coming from the Christian Clement, and the historical guesses of Plutarch and Pausanias.[115] This evolutionary theory of Greek statues was primarily used as ammunition by iconoclasts: “The idea of the evolution of statuary from primitive aniconic monuments is an argument devised to further the aims of iconoclasm.”[116] While Donohue's book, her critical analysis of the term ξοάνον, was one attempt to reopen the question of how ancient Greeks perceived the images of their gods, an article she wrote a decade later took issue with a more specific scholarly oversight and asked a more specific question.

In an article from 1997, "Greek Images of the Gods: Considerations in Terminology and Methodology," Donohue argues that "in discussing Greek art and religion, both the term and the idea of the cult image should be abandoned.”[117] The term "cult statue," long used for images of the gods that were the objects of piety, is not actually an indigenous ancient Greek term. In fact, there was no firm line separating "cult" statues from other kinds of images, which may well receive offerings or reverence. As with the Greek word "ξοάνον," the use of the term "cult statue" has its roots in polemics against idolatry and paeans to the ancient past: “The idea of the cult image combines two general lines of evidence and scholarship: iconoclasm and

[113] Donohue, *Xoana*, 175.
[114] Donohue, *Xoana*, 193. Ridgway, in *The Arachaic Style in Greek Sculpture,* follows this model to some degree. Ridgway, B.S. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1977).
[115] Donohue, *Xoana*, 177.
[116] Donohue, *Xoana*, 205.
[117] Donohue, Alice. “Greek Images of the Gods: Considerations in Terminology and Methodology,” (*Hephaistos* vol. 15, 1997), 31.

antiquarian ethnography. Both are rooted in ancient texts and owe their development to specific post-antique circumstances."[118] Donohue calls for investigations into ancient Greek terminology for images of the gods, for studies of behavior around images of the gods, and for inquiries into the nature of representation.[119] She argues that we have not attempted to try see images of the gods as the ancient Greeks saw them: "On the whole, the scholarly imagination has been iconoclastic, and few analyses have moved far enough from the iconoclastic position to entertain seriously the possibility of approaching the images as the images that the Greeks insisted they were."[120] If we want to understand the role of images in ancient Greek religion, we need to discard the category of "idolatry," and ferret out other language, in both the ancient and modern world, which has prevented our engagement with these objects as contributions to, rather than simply adornment of, ancient Greek life.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that age-old polemics against idolatry, not all of them Jewish or Christian, distorted analyses of the use of images in worship conducted by some of the first scholars of comparative religion. Max Müller, E.B. Tylor, J.G. Frazer, and Robertson Smith each thought idolatry was a mistake in human social development. None of them made the use of images in worship a primary object of study. These same scholars, however, each in his own way, thought worship with images of the gods was a productive mistake from which human societies could learn and grow. Robertson Smith in particular recognized that the location of an image of a god revealed the bonds of affection between the god and the family

[118] Donohue, "Greek Images, 38.
[119] Donohue, "Greek Images," 44.
[120] Donohue, "Greek Images," 42.

or the god and the tribe, and refused to allow aesthetic judgments upon an image's quality to dictate its significance in a given community. For Smith, the location of the image was paramount.

In the field of ancient Greek religion, scholars attempted to incorporate the exciting work of the scholars of comparative religion into their studies. Jane Ellen Harrison, who absorbed Smith and Durkheim, and W.H.D. Rouse insisted on bringing material culture into any effort to construct theories of ancient Greek religion, though they only sporadically heeded Smith's warning against using aesthetic quality to evaluate an object's significance in religious practice. If anything, Harrison went to the opposite extreme when she prioritized simple and crude objects over complex and refined ones in her analysis of ancient Greek piety. Nilsson, for his part, includes careful, precise analyses of discrete objects in his history of Greek religion, but when writing about Greek religion as a whole exposes his disdain for idolatry. In the field of ancient Greek religion more broadly, for the better part of the 20th century, animal sacrifice drew far more scholarly attention than the use of images in worship.

The work of Robertson Smith, as well as the far more recent work of Alice Donohue and others, as we shall see, offers grounds for dispensing with the category of idolatry in scholarly attempts to understand the role of images in worship from ancient pagans' own perspective. Smith recognized that for those who used objects or images to worship their gods, the human origins of the object did not detract from the object's role in mediating relationships with a god.

> Of course not the rudest savage believes that in setting up a sacred stone he is making a new god; what he does believe is that the god comes into the stone, dwells in it or animates it, so that for practical purposes the stone is thenceforth an embodiment of the god, and may be spoken of and dealt with, as if it were the god himself.[121]

[121] Smith, *Lectures,* 189.

Donohue and several of her scholarly contemporaries echo Smith's insight, and it is to them we now turn as we try to understand how ancient pagans themselves regarded images of their gods.

Chapter 2 Honoring Gods: Pagan Discourse for Images

In this chapter, I will take up, in a necessarily partial, narrowly defined way, Alice Donohue's challenge, issued in 1997, that "On the whole, the scholarly imagination has been iconoclastic, and few analyses have moved far enough from the iconoclastic position to entertain seriously the possibility of approaching the images as the Greeks insisted they were."[122] How then do we approach images of the gods as the Greeks insisted they were? I propose that the answer lies in a philological analysis of the language ancient Greeks used for their interactions with images of the gods. Ancient Greek texts and inscriptions suggest two, quite basic indigenous categories for images of the gods--the identification of the image with the god and the participation of the image of the god in the social exchange of honor--τιμή. Before we demonstrate these patterns in late Hellenistic and early Imperial Greek texts, we will review other scholarly attempts to understand images of the gods as the Greeks themselves did.

Donohue's charge that only a few scholars attempted to analyze images of the gods from an indigenous perspective includes notable efforts that preceded her article, efforts which have informed my own approach. Her own *Xoana,* published in 1988, focused, as we have noted, on the misconceptions surrounding the use of the word to denote an ancient wooden statue, and traced the evolution of the meaning of ξόανον. Richard Gordon's study of Mithraism and its art, though published in 1996, just a year before Donohue's critique, included an article from 1979 that essentially advocated an analysis of ancient Mediterranean statuary from an indigenous perspective, more specifically as currency in a social system based

[122] Donohue, "Greek Images," 42.

on the accumulation of "symbolic capital,"[123] an idea to which we shall return. Andrew Stewart, in his seminal study of ancient Greek sculpture, published in 1990, notes Pericles identifying Athena with her image in Thucydides and highlights the "far-reaching implications" of the identification of image and divinity, a practice evinced from Homer to Pausanias. Stewart later analyzed what ancient Greek statuary reveals about sexual desire, gender norms, and the social construction of the *polis*, and therefore assumes the kind of affective response to images of the gods that is the focus of this project.[124] Christopher Faraone, in the 1992 publication of his doctoral thesis, focuses on the prevalence of apotropaic and animated statues in ancient Greece, and therefore highlights the role of images of the gods as agents of divine activity.[125] Jaś Elsner broached the subject of how ancient Greeks and Romans regarded images of the gods in his *Art and the Roman Viewer* in 1995, an account of the transformation from pagan to Christian art (and became more focused on the perspective of pious pagans in his 2007 *Roman Eyes,* when he analyzed what he called the "ritual-centered visuality" of the pious in the Roman Empire).[126] Verity Platt, perhaps came closest to answering Donohue's challenge with her 2011 *Facing the Gods: Epiphany and Representation in Graeco-Roman Art, Literature, and Religion*.[127] Platt shows how the abundance evidence for and discussion of epiphany in Hellenistic culture proves it was a "major cultural

[123] Gordon, Richard. "The Real and the Imaginary: Production and Religion in the Graeco-Roman World" (*Art History 2, no. 1.* Henley on Thames 1979), 10, 23.
[124] Stewart, Andrew. *Greek Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1990), 44. Stewart's focus in this work is not upon pious activity surrounding Greek images. *Art, Desire and the Body in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997).
[125] Faraone, Christopher. *Talismans and Trojan Horses: Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual* (New York: Oxford University Press 1992).
[126] Elsner, Jaś. *Art and the Roman Viewer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995). *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2007).
[127] Platt, Verity. *Facing the Gods: Epiphany and Representation in Graeco-Roman Art, Literature, and Religion* (Cambridge and London: Cambridge University Press 2011).

preoccupation,"[128] and she observes, with respect to cult statues in particular, that "To view a cult image was to encounter a being who *looked back*."[129] Just a few years later, in 2015, Georgia Petridou also studied the phenomenon of epiphany in ancient Greece, and attempted to identify the conditions under which epiphany occurred in front of cult statues.[130] Despite these significant studies analyzing of the role of images of the gods in ancient Mediterranean life, they are far outnumbered by the scholarly focus on animal sacrifice, at least among scholars of religion, and there is still no sustained, comprehensive attempt to establish a set of indigenous categories as a starting point for analyzing ancient Greek images of the gods.

As Bjørn Tajford has noted, "to name and describe a religion and its key components with terms and concepts that its practitioners identify with is a matter of respect,"[131] and several recent scholars, including some I have mentioned, have suggested some possibilities. S.R.F. Price's work suggests memory and myth are two categories necessary for the comprehension of ancient statuary and paintings. In his venerable article "Memory and Ancient Greece," Price highlights the "articulation of local identity through the iconography of local mythology," and regards objects, especially images of gods and humans, as "Inscribed Memory." Stewart echoes Price's focus on the significance of myth for interpreting objects when, commenting on the inextricability of sacred and secular in ancient Greek life, he notes "only in a myth could a shared heritage, present striving, and divine sanction meet and cohere."[132] Price, however, downplays the role of personal piety in ancient Greek religion in favor of a broader,

[128] Platt, *Facing the Gods*, 23.
[129] Platt, *Facing the Gods*, 78.
[130] Petridou, Georgia. *Divine Epiphany in Greek Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2015), 50.
[131] Tajford, Bjørn. "Indigenous Religion(s) as an Analytical Category"(*Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 2013), 224.
[132] Stewart, *Greek Sculpture,* 43-44.

sociological approach, as Julia Kindt noted.[133] Elsner identifies two discourses at work simultaneously in ancient Greek and Roman accounts of images of the gods, the "ritual-centered" and the "art historical,"[134] which help explain how a pilgrim such as Pausanias can both assess an image for its aesthetic value and revere it as an instantiation of the divine. I will appeal to Stewart's reminder that many ancient Greeks associated the gods with their images, and analyze the consequences of this perspective for behavior towards these images. I will also combine Gordon's suggestion of images of the gods as symbolic capital with Elsner's insight about "ritual-centered" discourse used around images of the gods in order to suggest one indigenous category, represented by τίμη, which is helpful for understanding ancient Greek and Roman attitudes towards material representations of the divine.

First, I will underscore the significance of what may simply be called the literal aspect of the perception of ancient Greek images, as Gordon, Stewart, Elsner, Donohue, Faraone, and Platt have all insisted--the identification of the image with the god. I will show how the identification of inert matter with divinity gives images of gods a duality, which allows them to be both object and god, truly object and truly god, to steal a later Christian creedal formulation. Second, I will make the case that a helpful indigenous category for understanding ancient Greek and Roman images of the gods is τιμή, honor, or more specifically the social system that regulates the attribution and distribution of honor. When we recognize the participation of images of the gods in the ancient Greek and Roman systems of honor, we can pay particular attention, as Robertson Smith's work emphasized, to the affective consequences of this participation, the hope, fear, dread, euphoria, and everything in between that people felt

[133] Kindt, Julia. "Personal Religion: A Productive Category for the Study of Ancient Greek Religion?" (*Journal of Hellenic Studies 135,* 2015), 35.
[134] Elsner, *Roman Eyes,* 35-38.

around and because of images of the gods, and better understand their behavior towards them. The category of honor, situated in its ancient context, illuminates this affective realm, the realm of the emotions, which is often neglected in the application of sociological models to ancient Greek religion.

Certainly sociological, functional analyses fulfill the crucial task of revealing human social structures, but they also overlook, in Sarah Iles Johnston's words, "how ritual works to situate the humans who practice it apropos the *other* creatures who inhabit the cosmos--gods, heroes, demons, ghosts, etc."[135] Literary and archaeological evidence from various social strata shows that these *other* creatures of the cosmos, such as gods and heroes, assess, receive, and dispense honor through their images. While elite Romans and Greeks, who wrote the majority of our sources, certainly honored statues with the proper rituals, they also frequently criticized what they considered excessive piety directed towards images of the gods. The criticism of elites testifies to the pervasiveness of affective behavior directed towards images of the gods. Furthermore some sources without any overtly satirical edge, like ancient novels and Pausanias, are replete with examples of acts of piety and affection towards images.[136] These sources therefore a suggest a critical mass of non-elite ancient polytheists assumed the significant role of images of gods in honor exchange, and the need for standards of decorum around images to ensure that the gods were honored properly.

[135] Johnston, Sarah Iles. "Animating Statues: A Case Study in Ritual" (*Arethusa*, Vol. 41, No. 3, 2008), 471.
[136] Even if one reads some of the ancient Greek novels as fanciful or more subtly satirical accounts, satire and fancy assume and depend upon audience familiarity with social mores to be effective.

II "There is No Place That Does Not See You:" The Identification of Image and God[137]

For many in ancient Greece, from the Archaic through the Roman period, an image of the god was the god. In the 5th century BCE, Heraclitus laments how people "talk to these *agalmata* of theirs as if one were to converse with houses, in ignorance of the nature of both gods and heroes."[138] Heraclitus of course suggests the "nature" of the gods is completely divorced from their concrete representation, and his complaint finds a chorus of approval, especially from fellow Greek philosophers and, later, early Christians, but it also evinces the common practice of identifying images of the gods with the gods themselves. Clearly, Heraclitus' convictions about the "nature of both gods and heroes" were not universally shared, neither in his own time nor in succeeding centuries. The association of image and god enjoyed a long, stubborn, thriving afterlife, right up until Christians encouraged widespread iconoclasm in earnest. Eight ancient Greek words frequently translated into English as "statue," including ἄγαλμα, ξόανον, ἠδος, βρέτας, ἀνδριάς, εἰκών, εἴδωλον and ἀφίδρυμα, illustrate the variety of perspectives, often contested among the Greeks themselves, concerning what statues were and what their role was in pious practice.[139] Of course, the identification of the image of the god with the divinity it represents is most recognizable when Greek writers simply referred to a statue as ὁ θεός or used the god's proper name. The use of the god's name to refer to an image reveals the status of these images as special conduits between the human and divine realms, as Richard Gordon observed long ago.[140] The ambivalent nature of images of the gods helps

---

[137] Rilke, Rainer Maria. "Archaic Torso of Apollo" from *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*. Stephen Mitchell, ed. and translator (New York: Vintage Books 1989), 61.
[138] Stewart, *Greek Sculpture*, 45 quoting from Kirk, G.S., Raven, J.E., and Schofield, M. *The Presocratic Philosophers*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge 1983).
[139] Donohue notes in her conclusion to *Xoana* "that a thorough study of Greek words for statues is badly needed." While some progress has been made in this area no such systematic study exists. 235.
[140] Gordon, Richard, "Real and Imaginary," 10.

explain the range of their treatment by ancient Greeks, whether skeptical philosophers or pious worshippers; these images in wood, paint and stone, ignored by one, honored by another, were defined by latency, latent impotence and power alike depending on the circumstance.

While this portion of my study is not the systematic philological study of Greek words for statues Donohue desired, a brief examination of four of them, particularly common to the late Hellenistic and early Imperial writers whom we will focus on more closely, notably Chariton, Xenophon, Paul, and Pausanias, will serve to show some of the overlap as well as contestation of meaning surrounding images of the gods. Examining ἄγαλμα, ξόανον, εἰκών and εἴδωλον reveals images of the gods as precious gifts exchanged between mortal and immortal, ancient wooden statues, mere simulacra, and deliberate deceptions respectively. The most commonly used Greek word for statue or image of a god, ἄγαλμα,[141] frequently translated in English as "statue" or "image," is not without its ambiguity. The semantic range of ἄγαλμα shows how images of the gods were regarded as instruments of connection between gods and humans. Ἄγαλμα's triple meaning, as "glory" or "delight," as "pleasing gift," and as "statue" carries implications for the humans who make or dedicate the statue as well as for the god who receives it, a fact which implies the system of offering and receiving honor in which these objects were entrenched. While ἄγαλμα can mean any object that evokes delight, and indeed in Homer can refer to the animal being sacrificed as well as an inanimate votive gift,[142] by the fourth century BCE it is used for any statue, no matter its purpose.[143] In an article explaining the manifold meaning of ἄγαλμα, Karl Kerenyi offers two examples of statue bases with inscriptions, one to Apollo, one to Hera. The first, a late 6th century BCE statue of a seated

[141] Kerenyi, Karl. "ΆΓΑΛΜΑ, ΕΙΚΩΝ, ΕΙΔΟΛΟΝ" (*Theologische Forschung,* Vol. 31, 1964), 59.
[142] Dietrich, Bernard. "From Knossos to Homer" in *What is a God? Studies in the Nature of Greek Divinity* (Swansea: Duckworth 1997), 3.
[143] Stewart, *Greek Sculpture,* 45.

human, not Apollo, reads "I am of Chares...the ἄγαλμα, the glory/honor/statue of Apollo."[144] The statue of a seated man does not represent Apollo, but it belongs to and honors him. The second inscription, an older one, of a female figure, reads "Cheramyes dedicated me, to guard the ἄγαλμα, the glory of Hera." The ἄγαλμα is both the image of the god, and the glory of the god, which the image protects. The glory of the finished, dedicated statue is, as Karl Kerenyi writes, an "almost eternally flowing source of an event in which the god participated no less than the man."[145] Subsequent viewers of an image of a god may participate in this event also. While Kerenyi argues that the surface of the statue is the source of this pleasure, an aesthetic pleasure whose depth lies in its ability to keep giving, pointing both backwards into the mythological past of the god as well as forwards into continued historical existence in a specific historical context,[146] I would add that the statue's aesthetic pleasure allows the spectator to witness the exchange of honor between the dedicator and the god. This exchange of honor has its meaning fulfilled in the observations of a statue's audience because honor needs communal confirmation.

Ξόανον may be the most misunderstood of any of these terms used to refer to images of the gods chiefly because of Pausanias's use of the word to refer to an old, wooden statue of a god. In most ancient sources, old, wooden statue is not what the term means.[147] In her book devoted entirely to a study of the term ξόανον, Donohue shows that the term ξόανον, appearing in neither Homer nor Herodotus, had a broad range of meanings when it first appears in the middle third of the 5th century, including anything carved, such as a doorpost or a musical

[144] Kerenyi, ΆΓΑΛΜΑ, 60. Χάρης εἰμί...ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος. Griech. Dial.-Inschr. 5507.
[145] Kerenyi, ΆΓΑΛΜΑ, 60. Χηραμύης μ᾽ἀνέθηκεν τῆρηι ἄγαλμα. Bull. Corr. Hell. 4 (1880) 485.
[146] Kerenyi, ΆΓΑΛΜΑ, 51.
[147] Donohue, *Xoana,* 1, 173.

instrument.[148] In the early fourth century, its use as a term for a statue is well established,[149] but it undergoes a transformation of meaning when deployed in late Hellenistic iconoclastic rhetoric. In the Sibylline Oracles, ξόανα are associated with εἴδολα, and not in a positive way,[150] although in 2nd century BCE inscriptions ξόανα can once again refer to dedications and furnishings in both private and public settings.[151] In late Hellenistic iconoclastic debates, ξόανον is explicitly associated with idolatry and an entirely critical vision of worship with images.[152] In the first and second centuries CE, the term continues to be a staple of iconoclastic rhetoric, and appears specifically as part of the iconoclastic agenda of positing what amounts to an evolutionary model of idolatry and statuary, a model that Pausanias echoes and that, as we have seen, reverberates all the way down to the 19th century theories of Müller, Tylor and Frazer.[153] Donohue explains that "The main point of the evolutionary theory is that the urge to symbolize or depict the gods is a naïve impulse of the kind one might expect in a child or barbarian, barbarians being thought of as the children of the civilized world."[154] Although both Plutarch and Pausanias adopt this evolutionary model to some degree, both associating ξόανον with wooden statues and both assuming the earliest statuary was made of wood,[155] Pausanias, who uses the term more than any other author, remains unique in the consistency of his meaning. For Pausanias a ξόανον is always made of wood and rarely represents humans.[156] Finally, Clement and Plutarch employ specialized definitions of *xoanon*. For Clement, ξόανα are crudely scraped pillars of stone and wood, while for Plutarch, they are *agalmata* of which

[148] Donohue, *Xoana*, 10, 23-24, 26.
[149] Donohue, *Xoana*, 33.
[150] Sibylline Oracle III.57-59, apud Donohue, *Xoana,* 99.
[151] Donohue, *Xoana*, 67-68.
[152] Donohue, *Xoana*, 68, 103.
[153] Donohue, *Xoana*, 121.
[154] Donohue, *Xoana*, 122.
[155] Donohue, *Xoana*, 149,
[156] Donohue, *Xoana*, 140.

the principal characteristic is their material, wood. Both of these uses of the word are "tendentious creations that serve the interests of iconoclasm and antiquarianism respectively."[157]

In order to transition to εἰκών and εἴδωλον, we'll once more use ἄγαλμα, this common term for "statue," "honor," "pleasing gift," as a springboard. In this particular case, ἄγαλμα and εἰκών are used in conjunction, though not synonymously, to refer to two aspects of one statue. In Plato's *Symposium,* the word εἰκών is one of several acceptable words for sculpture with a neutral valence. Here, εἰκών is a foil for ἄγαλμα in a well-known reference that Alcibiades makes to Socrates. At the end of Agathon's dinner party, after each of the participants has given a discourse on love, Alcibiades compares Socrates to an εἰκών of a Silenus, a figure of an aged satyr, companion to Dionysus, sold in a shop, which opens up to reveal an ἄγαλμα inside made of gold. Like Socrates, the Silenus figurine appears crude, ugly, and comic on the outside, but contains an ἄγαλμα, an authentic object of value and honor, on the inside. Furthermore, as Deborah Tarn Steiner maintains, in support of Stewart's observation about the erotic power of statues, the image of Socrates highlights this particular ἄγαλμα as an object of erotic longing for Alcibiades himself.[158] Alcibiades cannot get access to the ἄγαλμα of Socrates. In this instance, then, εἰκών indicates a surface explicitly. In other contexts, however, the terms εἰκών and εἴδωλον frequently, if not always, indicate contrasting perspectives about those images that assist apprehension of reality and those that impede it.

Plato and the post-Platonic philosophers investigate the implications of the deceptive nature of representation. The words εἰκών and εἴδωλον share semantic range,[159] and both can

[157] Donohue, *Xoana*, 140.
[158] Steiner, *Images in Mind,* 132.
[159] Griffith "'ΕΙΔΟΛΩΝ' as 'Idol' in Non-Jewish and Non-Christian Greek (*The Journal of Theological Studies*, NEW SERIES, Vol. 53, No. 1, 2002), 100.

serve as a common word for statue. Equally common, in philosophical and theological discourse, is the use of εἰκών and εἴδωλον to indicate, when used of statues and paintings, the ability of an image to illuminate truth or to obscure it, usually deliberately. Whereas in Plato's *Symposium* εἰκών refers to a statue of a satyr sold in a shop, albeit a special one with a secret compartment, in other sources είκών often indicates a copy which reveals being or reality, and possibly participates in the reality it purports to copy. One famous example is Phedias' statue of Zeus at Olympia, which Dio Chrysostom, speaking in the late first century CE, calls "μακαρίας εικόνος," the blessed image. The statue itself was designed, as Donohue reminds us, to replicate a divine epiphany through its size, its precious materials, and the scent of the pool of oil in front of it. In a rare instance of εἰκὼν appearing in a Platonic dialogue in a positive sense, at the very end of the *Timaeus*,[160] the entire visible universe is referred to as a "ζῶον ὁρατὸν τὰ ὁρατὰ περιέχον, εἰκὼν τοῦ νοητοῦ θεὸς αἰσθητός," a "visible living being encompassing visible things, a sensible image, εἰκών, of the intelligible god." Here, perceiving the world accurately is preparation for perceiving intelligible divinity, but note that the world, kosmos, Plato calls an image that is itself a visible living thing, "ζῶον ὁρατὸν." This world is a copy or an image, but it is not artificial. Although to what degree perception of the divine by means of the living world is possible, and for whom in Plato leads to a hornet's nest of questions we will not attempt to answer now, I include this reference to illustrate the positive connotations of εἰκών which elsewhere Plato and certainly some of his followers will seek to limit, particularly in discussions of artificial objects. The use of εἰκών has as its background the possibility for any statue or painting of a god to allow a worshipper easier or more direct access to divinity.

[160] Plato, *Timaeus* 92c. Author's translation.

Although the word εἴδωλον can serve as a neutral reference to an image of a god in multiple instances, and can therefore be basically synonymous with ἄγαλμα, it is also true that εἴδωλον is deployed by archaic and Classical authors, and obviously from the Hellenistic period onwards, Jewish and Christian authors, to indicate intentional or frustrating illusion. For example, for a use of εἴδωλον synonymous with ἄγαλμα, in the 1st century BCE Dionysus of Halicarnassus reports that he saw "εἴδωλα τῶν θεῶν,"[161] here simply statues of the gods. In a more explicit early 1st century BCE reference to workers at a Temple of Hermes in Egypt, the workers wash the garments "τῶν ἐν τῷ ἱερέῳ ἰδώλων," the garments of the holy idols, images of ibises and hawks called θεῶν in the same text.[162] Nonetheless, as Griffith notes, the connotation of εἴδωλον to refer to surface appearance only, without the "glory" or "honor" that attends the use of ἄγαλμα, makes it a good candidate for visible objects lacking depth and substance when Hellenistic Jews and later Christians are seeking ammunition against worshipping with statues.[163] The εἴδωλον of Aeneas made by Apollo in the *Iliad*, and the εἴδωλον of Helen imagined by Euripides, furnish the material out of which critics of material representation and material reality can fashion their arguments. For Plato in particular, εἴδωλα are not to be trusted because they are simply copies of the real or the true. According to Griffith, the use of the term εἴδωλων in any positive sense is extremely rare in subsequent philosophical texts.[164] To clarify how Plato regards artificial images, Steiner distinguishes between perceiving images as mimetic or metonymic objects. The mimetic object represents and resembles with only the most tenuous connection to the object of which it is a copy. The

[161] Griffith, ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ, Dionysus of Halicarnassus *Ant Rom.* 1.68.2.
[162] Griffith, "ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ," 97.
[163] Griffith, "ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ," 99.
[164] Griffith, "ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ," 99.

metonymic object serves as a facet or even a proxy of the object it represents. Steiner explains Plato's attitude towards artificially constructed images specifically.

> "[H]e denies the metonymic link between the statue and its subject, and treats any 'reality' that the work projects as a mere illusion, liable to disappear on closer inspection. Divorced from the contexts, whether funerary, votive, cultic, honorary, magical, or the rest, that still framed most images, the artifacts imagined in his texts aim to do no more than to replicate (imperfectly) the visible world.

To adopt this Platonic perspective of images of the gods divorces scholars from many of the funerary, votive, cultic, honorary, or magical contexts in which these images served. To return to Donohue, it is precisely this Platonic denial of a metonymic link between statue and divinity that is the assumption of polemics against idolatry, and of several hundred years of popular as well as scholarly attitudes towards the Greeks and the images of their gods.

Whereas Heraclitus, Plato and other philosophers deny the metonymic link between a divinity and his or her image, others affirmed it. Gordon argues that the discourse frequently used by ancient pagans to describe statues asserts their special status as neither completely living nor completely inert objects.

> They at once assert and deny that statues or painted figures are alive. 'Living' is broken down into its denotations: breath, sight, feelings, movement, skin-sheen, facial expression. So far as one or two of these denotations may be taken as 'sufficient' evidence of 'life,' the images live. But the whole inventory is never present, and the attempt to pass into the realm of the impermissible always fails.[165]

The image is the god, and it is not. Just as the model for light includes a wave and a particle, because light behaves according to the laws for both depending on the conditions, images of the gods are treated as gods, and occasionally even act like gods, though they are recognized as objects that are commissioned, constructed, and decay just as other objects do. Images of the gods have a dual citizenship, as it were, where they belong to the realm of inanimate matter and to the realm of the immortals at the same time. Nowhere is this clearer than in the ancient

[165] Gordon, "The Real and the Imaginary," 10.

Greek concept of epiphany, especially when it occurs in the presence of a statue, to say nothing of the animated statues examined by Faraone.[166] Georgia Petridou defines epiphany as "the manifestation of a deity to an individual or a group of people, in sleep or in waking reality, in a crisis or cult context."[167] Referring specifically to just such an epiphany in a cult context, Stewart writes of Athena turning away from the Trojan women in the *Iliad* who lay cloth across the knees of her image, "The statue, evidently a seated figure, is simply called 'Athena,' and to ask who turns away in the last line, it or the goddess, is meaningless."[168] There is no distinction in this case between the goddess and her image. In her study of the phenomenon of epiphany in ancient Greek culture, Petridou attributes the prevalence of epiphany to the pattern of a "dynamic interplay between the manifest outer structure and the concealed, inner structure" that is common throughout human and divine relations.[169] Images of the gods could both contain and conceal divine power, and offer safe mediation between human and god.[170]

To summarize, even this brief account of five different terms for "image" in ancient Greek reveals the different perspectives people had of statues. Four different words in ancient Greek commonly translated as "statue" or "image" in English, have, not surprisingly, varied and shifting meanings from the Archaic age, through the Classical and Hellenistic ages, and up until the Roman Imperial period. Although these four words' overlapping, mutating meanings reflect some contestation over what an image of a god represented, the continuous tradition of simply referring to an image of a god as ὁ θεός throughout the same span of time also indicates a significant, stubborn insistence on the identification of image with god. The

[166] Faraone, Christopher. *Talismans and Trojan Horses*.
[167] Petridou, Georgia. *Divine Epiphany*, 2.
[168] Stewart, *Greek Sculpture,* 44.
[169] Petridou, *Divine Epiphany,* 27.
[170] Petridou, *Divine Epiphany*, apud Platt, V. *Facing the Gods*, 77-123.

popularity of ἄγαλμα as a word for "image" of a god, with its generally positive connotations, begins in the Classical period and ἄγαλμα is still used by Pausanias over six centuries later. The use of ξόανον to refer to "statue" is not common until the 4th century BCE, and it gets absorbed into late Hellenistic iconoclastic debates to refer to primitive wooden statues in evolutionary models of worship, models constructed polemically to disparage worship with images. Pausanias, on the other hand, uses ξόανον sincerely, frequently, and with such specificity that many scholars assumed it always meant ancient, wooden statue. Although the words εἰκών and εἴδωλον could both be used neutrally to refer to image of a god, their popularity in philosophical discourse gave them different shades of meaning. Εἰκῶν could refer to a copy which reveals, or allows easier access to the object it copies, whereas εἴδωλον was coopted quite early to express the capacity of images to deceive. As is hopefully now plain, εἴδωλον became wholly adopted by polemicists against images to refer to any image of a god, such that the eponymous term for worshipping with images, "idolatry," has an entirely negative connotation. Notwithstanding suspicious or critical attitudes towards images of gods, the conviction that an image of a god contains latent divine power, best expressed linguistically through the common use of the term ὁ θεός to refer to an image, shows just how important images were in ancient Greek religion. Even if we concede Burkert's claim that the statue of the god was more side-show than center of Greek piety,[171] and that animal sacrifice did the primary work of delineating the proper relationship between gods and humans, surely this is a side-show that merits far more scholarly attention than it has received in the past.

[171] Burkert, Walter, *Ancient Greek Religion*, 91.

III Honor Among Gods and Humans

The significance of individual honor in both ancient Greece and Rome is well attested and has received significant scholarly attention.[172] Less well examined, perhaps, is the significance of the inclusion of the gods in the ancient Greek and Roman systems of honor, despite the acknowledgment that the gods "deserve and demand *timai*, honours, from mortals, and to question or mock their powers, to damage their cults, festivals, or representatives, is seriously to dishonor them."[173] As we noted earlier, Richard Gordon, commenting on what he regards as the misguided attempt of some Marxist historians to disregard the "symbolic" in the ancient world as ideology in order to uncover the "real" relationships governing social and economic life, argues that we need to see ancient art, especially sculpture, as a significant element in these ancient honor systems. The priority of honor as a cultural value in ancient Greece and Rome demands that we regard many material objects as currency acquired and spent in the negotiation of social relationships.

> As an honour society, the Graeco-Roman world spent quite as much labor and time on symbolic capital accumulation as it did upon what we would call real capital accumulation. Capable of a very low rate of production, it squandered freely the only commodity in endless supply: time....Public life was the focus of the accumulation of maximal amounts of symbolic capital.[174]

Gordon's insistence that ancient art be included in a social system that depends upon the accrual of symbolic capital obviously has consequences for how we understand patron-client relationships, the placement of art in private and public settings, and the competition for status. Even Gordon himself, however, overlooks one of the implications of his insight about honor, which is the extent to which human relationships with their gods unfolded in the context of a

---

[172] Barton, Carlin. *Roman Honor* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 2001), Fisher, N.R.E. *Hybris:A Study of the Values of Honor and Shame in Ancient Greece* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips 1992).
[173] Fisher, *Hybris*, 142.
[174] Gordon, "The Real and Imaginary," 22.

system of honor. Image location, care of the image, and the behavior expected in the presence of images, as well as stories of the divine origins of images or animated images are all part of the exchange of honor between mortals and immortals. Frequently identified with the gods themselves, as we have seen, these images could accept the honor bestowed on them, and they could dispense it; they could be victims of *hybris*, a deliberate attempt to dishonor them, and therefore provide a rationale for administration of divine justice. Like the practice of animal sacrifice, the rituals, formal and informal, surrounding images of the gods regulated the relations of honor between mortals and immortals. Consequently, images of the gods need to be seen as complementary partners with animal sacrifice rather than as subordinate or superfluous expressions of religious significance.[175]

Despite the general scholarly acceptance of the significance of honor in ancient Greece and Rome, it must be noted that the meaning of honor is multivalent and relevant to various spheres of community life.[176] Furthermore, what is considered honorable behavior in one locale may be considered dishonorable in another. For example, in one modern context, in a rural Greek community, an anthropologist observed the dishonor associated with refusing to stand trial in court, even if the dispute could be settled out of it. Settling out of court was viewed as an admission of weakness. Should a man lose a court case, he could blame the loss on the state, which everyone knew was corrupt. Conversely, in a similar community in Spain, settling a dispute in court was a dishonorable course of action because it meant one could not administer one's own affairs.[177] Instead of assuming honor as an ahistorical category, equally applicable regardless of chronology or geography, Herzfield stresses that "evidence should be

[175] Stewart, *Greek Sculpture,* 4.
[176] Finney, Mark. *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in its Greco-Roman Social Setting* (London: T&T Clark International 2012), 7.
[177] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 9.

sought in indigenous discourse and that the particular community under investigation must provide the specific contents of the value system proposed."[178] While we will examine the indigenous discourse of honor concerning mortals and immortals in the Roman East, in Greek, from the first century BCE and second century CE, some account of the history of the discourse of honor among the gods, and between gods and humans, from Homer and Hesiod to Imperial Rome, will help us understand the ways honor is extended towards images of the gods, and disseminated from them, in different social classes and particular geographical contexts.

The ancient Greek conviction that humans and gods lived out their relationships within a system of honor extends, like the identification of the gods with their images, from Homer and Hesiod all the way to Pausanias. Homer in particular is relevant for late Republican and early Imperial notions of honor in the Roman East because of the widespread use of Homer in education.[179] In Homeric poetry, honor is of paramount importance. "Homeric man's highest good," says E.R. Dodds, "is not the enjoyment of a quiet conscience, but the enjoyment of *time*, public esteem: "Why should I fight," asks Achilles, "if the good fighter receives no more τιμή than the bad?"[180] Achilles is not the only figure in the *Iliad* who rages at feeling his honor threatened. After Menelaus defeats Paris, Zeus proposes a discussion about how Troy might be preserved because he cherishes the way Trojans have honored him with their sacrifices.[181] The connection between the sense of being properly honored, and genuine affection, could

---

[178] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 11. from Herzfield *Anthropology Through the Looking Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1989), 76.
[179] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 27. Finney cites Marrou, H.I. *A History of Education in Antiquity* (London: Sheed and Ward 1977). Harris, W.V. *A History of Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press1989). Morgan, T. *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998).
[180] Dodds, E.R. *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1962), 17-18
[181] *Iliad* 3.44-47. αἵ γὰρ ῾υπ᾽ἠελίῳ τε καὶ οὐρανῷ ἀστερόντι/ ναιετάουσι πόληες ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,/ τάων μοι περὶ κῆρι τιέσκετο ῞Ιλιος ἱρὴ/ καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς ἐϋμμελίω Πριάμοιο. Monro and Allen, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1920). All quotations from Homer and Hesiod and are from the OCT.

hardly be more palpable. Equally palpable, unfortunately for the Trojans, is the anger felt towards Troy by Hera and Athena because Paris gave Aphrodite, and neither of them, the apple of Eris. Hera insists that Troy fall, and seals its fate.[182] As Finney points out, the gods are "acutely sensitive to questions of their individual honour and of overriding significance are the practical *demonstrations* of veneration and not simply intent" so that "neglect precipitates divine wrath in the form of a violent response."[183] Hesiod's *Theogony* underscores this divine determination to acquire and secure honor.

In the *Theogony*, Hesiod characterizes the entire conflict between Zeus and the Titans as a contest for honor. The conflict begins when Kronos swallows his children so that no other god might have "kingly honor," βασιληὶδα τιμὴν,[184] while the cycle of child overthrowing parent ends when Zeus swallows Metis for the exact same reason, and the βασιληὶδα τιμὴν is his alone.[185] To gain allies for his revolt, Zeus promises to restore the honor of any god who has lost it under Kronos's reign,[186] and he grants new honors for extraordinary service. For example, Zeus honors the goddess Styx for being the first deity to join his fight against the Titans, and makes this honor apparent to all by giving her additional gifts.[187] Hesiod accounts for the powers of the gods by the honor they receive from Zeus after his victory.[188] Even were a god not given power by Zeus, as in the case of Aphrodite, who was born with it, her power

[182] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 22 from Finley, M.I. *The World of Odysseus* (London: Chatto & Windus 1977), 140.
[183] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 23.
[184] Hes. *Theog.* 462. *Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum, Fragmenta Selecta*. (Edited by Friedrich Solmsen. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1970).
[185] Hes. *Theog.* 892.
[186] Hes. *Theog*. 395-396. τὸν δ᾽ἔφαθ᾽, ὅστις ἄτιμος ὑπὸ Κρόνου ἠδ᾽ἀγέραστος,/ τιμῆς καὶ γεράων ἐπιβησέμεν, ἥ θέμις ἐστίν.
[187] Hes. *Theog*. l 399. τὴν δὲ Ζεὺς τίμησε, περισσὰ δὲ δῶρα ἔδωκεν.
[188] Hes. *Theog.* 73-74 εὖ δὲ ἕκαστα/ ἀθανάτοις διέταξε νόμους καὶ ἐπέφραδε τιμάς.

and her honor are one and the same. From the beginning she had the honor[189] of being able to make people and gods subject to erotic love. As a testament to the broad range of meanings of τιμή in Hesiod, one scholar simply translates the word "τιμή" as "power" in the passage about Aphrodite,[190] whereas when Hesiod describes Zeus delegating responsibilities to the gods, he again uses τιμή, but the same scholar translates it as "domain." Honor does not denote only power and social status, but seems to reflect affection, as when Zeus, for no discernible reason, shows special attention to Leto's daughter Hekate, whom he "honored above all others."[191] Τιμή among the gods in Hesiod, therefore, has a finite quantity; honor is circumscribed according to each deity, and it is perishable. Kronos lost his, and the Titans lost theirs. Zeus giveth, and Zeus taketh away.

The honor Zeus wins over Kronos and the Titans and distributes among the gods affects mortals also, who, under special circumstances, can receive it from the gods, and whose relationships with each other depend upon it. The Muses who have commanded Hesiod to sing allocate honor to kings if they wish, who as a consequence speak with eloquence and rule justly.[192] Hesiod describes how Hekate may, if she so chooses, apportion honor to mortals after they sacrifice to her and pray to her.[193] To have a prayer answered is to receive honor from a god. At the same time, mortals are expected to honor the gods, and suffer when they neglect their responsibility, as Hesiod says in the *Works and Days*. Zeus annihilates the entire race of

---

[189] Hes. *Theog.* 203-206. ταὐτην δ᾽ἐξ ἀρχῆς τιμὴν ἔχει ἠδε λέλογχε/ μοῖραν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,/ παρθενίους τ᾽ὀάρους μειδήματά τ᾽ἐξαπάτας τε/ τέρψίν τε γλυκερὴν φιλότητά τε μειλιχίην τε.
[190] Hesiod. *Theogony. Works and Days. Shield.* trans. by Athanassakis, Apostolos (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 2003), l. 203.
[191] Hes. *Theog.* 411-12. τὴν περὶ πάντων/ Ζεὺς Κρονίδης τίμησε.
[192]Hes. *Theog.* 81-87. ὅντινα τιμήσουσι Διὸς κοῦραι μεγάλοιο/ γεινόμενόν τ᾽ἐσίδωσι διοτρεφέων βασιλήσων,/ τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ γλυκερὴν χείουσιν ἐέρσην,/ τοῦ δ᾽ἔπε᾽ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα.
[193] Hes. *Theog.* 416-419. ἔρδων ἱερά καλὰ κατὰ νόμον ἱλάσκηται,/ κικλήισκει Ἑκάτην. πολλή τέ οἱ ἔσπετο τιμὴ/ ῥεῖα μάλ᾽, ᾧ πρόφρων γε θεὰ ὑποδέξεται εὐχάς.

Silver because "they did not honor the blessed gods who dwell on Olympus."[194] A good neighbor, someone whom one could trust with his animals, is accounted an honor,[195] while the depravity of the entire race of Iron is defined by the fact that evil men are honored.[196] In all of these cases among gods and men, τιμή has its visible manifestation, whether through a material gift, an act of power, a specific behavior such as the assurance that one's livestock are safe, or an answered prayer. For Hesiod, honor is never simply an abstraction; the presence of honor, or the lack of it, in any being, human or divine, leaves its traces in the world of the senses for a community to witness.

Abundant examples of the Homeric and Hesiodic emphases upon honor appear throughout Classical[197] and Hellenistic[198] age literature as well, and this tradition of prioritizing honor continues to flourish in early Imperial Greece, although the institution of the Emperor will transform some of the ways in which honor is attributed and distributed.[199] Petronius, Quintillian, and Pliny the Younger all agree that Homer serve as a focal point in education; their conviction ensures that honor at least remains in a discussion of appropriate values among literate late Republican and early Imperial Romans and Greeks,[200] a fact that Cicero and Dio Chrysostom evince, respectively. Cicero acknowledges the honor the gods deserve, and cautions that a decline in piety, neglect of honoring the gods, will result in a decline of social

---

[194] Hesiod. *Works and Days*. l. 138-139. οὕνεκα τιμὰς/ οὐκ ἔδιδον μακάρεσσι θεοῖς οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν.
[195] Hesiod. *Works* 347. ἔμμορέ τοι τιμῆς ὅς τ᾽ἔμμορε γείτωνος ἐσθλοῦ.
[196] Hesiod. *Works,* 191-192. οὐδ᾽ἀγαθοῦ, μᾶλλον δὲ κακῶν ῥεκτῆρα καὶ ὕβριν/ ἀνέρα τιμήσουσι.
[197] Thucydides has Pericles say "the love of honour is alone untouched by age" 2.44.4 Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 28.
[198] Aristotle says the greatest "external good" is honor. *Eth. Nic.* 4.3.10-11. Aristotle also includes "service of the gods" as components of honor. *Rhet.* 1.5.9. From Finney, 33-34.
[199] Crook, Zeba. "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 128, No. 3. Fall 2009), 610. Crook argues convincingly that Malina's classification of "acquired honor"(from gender, class, etc.) and "ascribed honor" (from behavior) be replaced with the terms "attributed honor" and "distributed honor." Crook's terms emphasize the role of a given community in shaping what is considered honorable.
[200] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 35. Petron. *Sat.* 5; Quint. *Inst.* 1.8.5; 10.1.46; Pliny *Ep.* 2.14.2.

order.[201] Dio Chrysostom credits the pursuit of honor as the reason for individual and national achievement,[202] but he also criticizes the competition among the elite for honors as a game only the wealthy could play.[203] Dio's own grandfather bankrupted himself by paying for so many public benefactions.[204] Like Dio, both Hesiod and Pausanias point out that the social system dependent upon the exchange of honor has its flaws because they both lament that they live in ages when the appropriate relationships of honor are broken.[205]

Concern for honor, then, is very much alive in Greece during the late Republican and early Imperial periods. To reiterate, I would like to take this general concern for honor and focus specifically on the ways images of the gods participated in the attribution and distribution of honor, and especially upon the emotional stakes these exchanges of honor involved. In a study of Roman honor that I will argue applies to honor in the Roman East during the late Republic and early Empire, Carlin Barton has argued that honor is the concept that governs certain affective experiences.[206] Her focus on Roman honor aims to uncover a Roman "physics of the emotions."[207] She regards the human body as a crucial interpretive key to Roman emotional experience because the individual Roman must constantly attend to it and adjust it in order to maintain an acceptable standard of honor, no matter his or her social class. Barton argues that "Roman honor was, at its best, a homeostatic system, but it was *always* a

---

[201] Cicero. *Nat. De.* 2.3.8. Apud Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 46.
[202] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 36. *Or.* 31.17, 20. --"neither you nor anyone else, Greeks or barbarians...advanced to glory and power, for any other reason than you were fortunate enough to have men who lusted after honour."
[203] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 36. Apud Veyne. *Bread and Circuses: Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism* (London: Penguin 1990), 117-131.
[204] *Or.* 46.3.
[205] Hesiod see note 65. *Descr.* 8.2.4-5. ἐπ᾽ἐμοῦ δὲ--κακία γὰρ δὴ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ηὔξετο καὶ γῆν τε ἐπενέμετο πᾶσαν καὶ πόλεις πάσας--οὔτε θεὸς ἐγίνετο οὐδεὶς ἔτι ἐξ ἀνθρώπου, πλὴν ὅσον λόγῳ καὶ κολακείᾳ πρὸς τὸ ὑπερέχον, καὶ ἀδίκοις τὸ μήνιμα τὸ ἐκ τῶν θεῶν ὀψέ τε καὶ ἀπελθοῦσιν ἐνθένδε ἀπόκειται.
[206] Barton's primary focus is on the city of Rome and the Western Empire.
[207] Barton, *Roman Honor,* 4.

homeopathic system, and the body was the axis of the balancing systems that invested every aspect of Roman emotional life."[208] The system surrounding Roman honor was homeostatic in the sense that it depended upon the maintenance of an individual's honor at the same level no matter what was going on around him or what happened to him; it was homeopathic in the sense that one used or acted upon the body homeopathically, by increments, in order to maintain the necessary standard of honor. I contend that Barton's model for the maintenance of individual honor applies both to the bodies of the pious and to the "bodies," the images, of the gods. The notion that honor depends to some degree upon the body is not of course new. In their attempt to circumscribe the semantic field of honor, Bruce Malina and Jerome Neyrey include honor, shame, the intention to challenge, perceptions of being challenged and, crucial for our purposes, gestures, such as bowing down, reverencing, bending the knee.[209]

Barton focuses more specifically on how concern for honor affect every aspect of one's body. She explains how the significance of individual honor in ancient Rome heightened concern for one's body, and especially for one's metaphorical "face," no matter one's gender or social class.[210] Just as fear of ridicule pervades Homeric poetry,[211] fear of ridicule pervaded Roman social life.[212] Agamemnon's alarm at being told to return his war prize Chryseis in *Iliad* 1.118-120,[213] his declaration that "You all see this, my prize goes elsewhere," finds its reflection in late Republican and early Imperial Roman writers. Cicero can claim Caesar started

---

[208] Barton, *Roman Honor*, 7.
[209] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 14. Apud Malina, B. and Neyrey, J.H. "Honour and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World," in J.H. Neyrey (ed.), *The Social Word of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson 1991).
[210] Barton points out that despite the elite view that slaves had no honor, from the slaves' perspective honor might be all they had, *Roman Honor,* 12-13.
[211] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 19.
[212] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 74.
[213] "αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γέρας αὐτίχ᾽ ἑτοιμάσατ᾽, ὄφρα μὴ οἶος/ Ἀργείων ἀγέραστος ἔω, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε./ λεύσσετε γάρ τό γε πάντες, ὅ μοι γέρας ἔρχεται ἄλλη."

a war to avoid insult; Livy can attribute the conflict between patricians and plebs to the mistreatment of a plebian soldier; Seneca can imagine an aristocrat obsessing over an expected dinner invitation or a greeting of suspect courtesy. Although the term "Greco-Roman" has seen its share of misapplications and has been used to elide either Greek or Roman culture, concern for one's personal honor, a truly Greco-Roman phenomenon, manifests itself throughout Greek and Roman cultural contexts. All of these events, from Homer, to Cicero, to Livy, to Seneca, had plausible explanatory power because their audiences understood the fragility of individual honor, and the lengths to which one might go in order to protect it.[214] "For the Romans, being was being seen," argues Barton, and as a consequence behavior demanded regulation through ritual, "whether the decorum of daily intercourse or the etiquette of the games, the law courts, and senate house."[215] To preserve the face was to preserve the *animus*, and therefore the body needed an appropriate, standardized choreography.[216] The higher the priority one placed on one's individual honor, the more sensitive one became to the challenges of maintaining it. If concern for one's honor increases one's sensitivity to insult, as Barton suggests, surely it also increases one's sense of concern for those beings, human or divine, who recognize one's honor or are the source of its allocation. The Roman focus on the body, and on decorum, in personal relationships applies to the behavior expected around the bodies of the gods, their images, and the rituals that people engaged in around them. Therefore, statues were painted, washed, clothed, garlanded, and gilded, while slights, insults, and vandalism of statues was met with appropriate horror, and possible retribution.

[214] Barton, *Roman Honor,* 74-75
[215] Barton, *Roman Honor*, 79.
[216] Barton, *Roman Honor*, 78-79.

IV Encountering the Gods: The Ancient Greek Novel

Clear evidence from the late Republican and early Imperial ages for illustrating, first, the identification of image and god, and, second, the ways the honor due images of the gods assumes an emotional, personal context, comes from ancient novels and Pausanias, and finds corroboration in a recent excavation of statuettes from the Athenian agora. While there may be no late Hellenistic or early Imperial Hesiod who takes up relationships between mortals and immortals, and between immortals with each other, as his primary subject, the ancient Greek novelists demonstrate familiarity with Homer, and assume the same for their audience, through frequent, unannounced citations of him.[217] For example, Callirhoe, the eponymous heroine of Chariton's romance, serves with her unrivaled beauty as a doublet of Aphrodite and Helen both.[218] Furthermore, the ancient Greek novels, coming from late Hellenistic and early Imperial Roman contexts, offer fitting comparanda for attitudes towards images of the gods in first century CE Corinth, the focus of this project. Chariton's *Chareas and Callirhoe*, dated to between the late first century BCE and the mid-first century CE,[219] and Xenophon's *Ephesian Tale*, probably a second century CE work,[220] corroborate the suggestion that honor is a category that we might profitably use to illuminate the roles of these images in the lives of the ancient Greeks who lived, loved, worked, and died around them. Similarly, Pausanias, though obviously writing in neither epic poetry nor long form fiction, nonetheless does assume as one of his many subjects the relationship between mortals and immortals in second century Roman

---

[217] Trazskoma, Stephen, trans. *Two Novels from Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company 2010), xxxii.
[218] Zeitlin, Froma. "Religion," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*. Tim Whitmarsh, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008), 6. ProQuest https://www-proquest-com.proxy.library.ucsb.edu:9443/publication/2050349?accountid=14522
[219] Bowie, Ewen. "Literary Milieux," *Cambridge Companion*, 3. Bowie argues that *Chaereas and Callirhoe* was written in the mid-50's CE.
[220] Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 125.

Greece. His second century CE *Description of Greece*, using Herodotus and Thucydides as its literary models,[221] has been classified, somewhat controversially, as a pagan pilgrimage.[222] Finally, literary and archaeological evidence of statuettes confirms the personal and emotional connections people cultivated with their gods in their attempts to honor them through these small, material objects, which they could either keep at home or bring with them whenever they walked out the door.

The works by Chariton and Xenophon insist on the significance of their characters' personal relationships with particular gods, relationships unfolding without any compulsory act of animal sacrifice. Indeed, against the claim, prevalent in Rouse and Nilsson, that paganism in the late Hellenistic and early Imperial period was in a state of decline,[223] religion in these stories is vibrant, and arguably representative of the vitality of paganism in this period: "The evidence, scanty and scattered as it is, generally points to an increased level of religious engagement, one that promoted a desire for closer personal contact with the gods, especially through dreams, oracles and epiphanies, reports of miracles, aretalogies and mystery initiations."[224] These novels therefore demand that the *do ut des* paradigm long used to characterize ancient Greek religion through its emphasis on animal sacrifice be strictly qualified, if not abandoned altogether. *Chaereas and Callirhoe* assumes the efficacy of encounters with the image of a god even in the absence of a sacrificial offering. These personal

[221] Bowie, Ewen. "Inspiration and Aspiration: Date, Genre, and Readership" from *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece*, Susan Alcock, John Cherry, and Jaś Elsner, eds. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001), 25.
[222] Rutherford, Ian. "Tourism and the Sacred: Pausanias and the Traditions of Greek Pilgrimage." *Pausanias* (2001), 41, 52. Rutherford argues both that tourism and pilgrimage are inextricable in the ancient world, and that Pausanias's focus on viewing and contemplating sacred objects is a common aspect of ancient Greek piety. The notion of Pausanias as pilgrim is contested, with Elsner, Hornblower, Woolf, Alcock, and Auffarth affirming his status as pilgrim, and Swain and Arafat denying it (263).
[223] See no. 71 and no. 103.
[224] Zeitlin, "Religion," 5.

encounters with the god, to use Julia Kindt's language, therefore emphasize the mutual affection of worshipper and divinity. In Chariton there is no governing concept of *do ut des* here which satisfies a god's need for sacrifice to extend concern to a worshipper. In the first place, although prayers may mention the worshipper's participation in civic festivals,[225] individual prayer does not follow the *do ut des* paradigm. Prayer does not require a gift when one makes a request. The worshipper makes the required gift only after the prayer is answered. These encounters in the Greek novels, ranging emotionally from the reserved to the histrionic, signal not only watershed moments in the plot, but affirmations of the god responding to affective behavior directed towards the god's image. While Chariton's boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl, boy-gets-girl-back tale predictably features the stock young heroes and improbable plot twists of ancient romance, it celebrates the interest and involvement of Aphrodite in their lives. After literally running into Chaereas at a public festival of Aphrodite, Callirhoe engages the image of Aphrodite with characteristic effusiveness: "The girl, for her part, fell at Aphrodite's feet and kissed them. 'Mistress,' she cried, 'give me the man you showed me for my husband!'"[226] Chariton emphasizes the bold, affectionate gesture of Callirhoe, not the sacrifice she and her mother had originally gone to the temple to make. Just a few paragraphs later, and despite the mutual enmity of their fathers, the couple are engaged and married. Unfortunately, the requisite treachery of jealous suitors results in the couple's separation. Naïve Chaereas, tricked into believing Callirhoe has been unfaithful, literally kicks her into unconsciousness. The town of Syracuse, thinking her dead, buries her in a tomb, splendidly

[225] In *Iliad* 1,the priest Chryses mentions the sacrifices he has made for Apollo when he prays to Apollo to punish the Greeks for refusing to accept ransom for his daughter, but he prays alone, without making a sacrifice. *Iliad* 1.37-42.

[226] *Callirhoe* 1.7. ἡ δὲ παρθένος τῆς Ἀφροδίτης τοῖς ποσὶ προσέπεσε καὶ καταφιλοῦσα, "σύ μοι, δέσποινα" εἶπε, "δὸς ἄνδρα τοῦτον ὅν ἔδειξας." Reardon, *Greek Novels,* 22.

dressed with all the gold and silver of her dowry. After the burial, Callirhoe wakes up just before an enterprising pirate, intending to rob the tomb, breaks into it and takes both the riches and Callirhoe herself. The rest of the novel details the events that reunite the couple for marriage.

In one key scene, Chaereas, just like Callirhoe, has reason to beg for the help of Aphrodite. Upon landing in the region where Callirhoe serves as a slave, Chaereas wanders into a temple of Aphrodite and, in a dramatic gesture similar to Callirhoe's after they met, performs an act of supplication, only to see there a statue of his beloved after he prays to the goddess: "Chareas threw himself at her feet: 'Lady,' he said, 'you were the first to show me Callirhoe, at your festival; give me back now the woman you granted me.'"[227] After he prays, he sees an image of Callirhoe herself dedicated to the temple by another suitor. Although Chaereas makes this prayer halfway through the story and does not find it answered until the end, the statue of Callirhoe portends his prayer's eventual fulfillment. These characters' dramatic collapses before the image of Aphrodite, their kinetic appeal to the goddess, testify to the association of the image with the god herself and the god's recognition of the efficacy of personal prayer.

In several other instances in the novel, perhaps all the more poignant because of their restrained emotion, characters stand before an image of a god and pray, the typical posture for prayer according to Folkert Van Straten,[228] while revealing relationships with Aphrodite more

---

[227] *Callirhoe* 3.6 ἔδοξεν οὖν αὐτοις προσκυνῆσαι τὴν θεόν, καὶ προσδραμὼν τοῖς γόνασιν αὐτῆς Χαιρέας "σύ μοι, δέσποινα" <φησί>, "πρώτη Καλλιρόην ἔδειξας ἐν τῇ σῇ ἑορτῇ. σὺ καὶ νῦν ἀποδος, ἥν ἐχαρίσω." Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 59.

[228] Van Straten. "Did the Greeks Kneel Before Their Gods?" (*Babesch: Bulletin Antieke Beschaving*. Vol. 49, 1974), 160, 163. Van Straten's evidence is mostly from the 4th century BCE. Kneeling is an example of ἱκετεία, supplication, and occurs in contexts other than religious ones, as when a refugee seeks asylum for example. Kneeling before the gods may not have been common, given that only twenty of several hundred votive steles from the 4th century depict it.

complicated than a worshipper asking for a favor. After her child by Chaereas has been born, Callirhoe specifically asks for time alone with Aphrodite, and sends away her husband Dionysius and everyone else in his household except for a serving maid.

> Ἐπει δὲ ἀπηλλάγησαν, στᾶσα πλησίον τῆς Ἀφροδίτης καὶ ἀνατείνασα χερσὶ τὸ βρέφος "ὑπὲρ τούτου σοι" φησίν, "ὦ δέσποινα, γινώσκω τὴν χάριν· ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτῆς γὰρ οὐκ οἶδα. τότ᾽ἄν σοι καὶ περὶ ἐμαυτῆς ἠπιστάμην χάριν, εἴ μοι Χαιρέαν ἐτήρησας. πλὴν εἰκόνα μοι δέδωκας ἀνδρὸς φιλτάτου καὶ ὅλον οὐκ ἀφείλω μου Χαιρέαν. δὸς δή μοι γενέσθαι τὸν υἱὸν εὐτυχέστερον μὲν τῶν γονέων, ὅμοιον δὲ τῷ πάππῳ· πλεύσειε δὲ καὶ οὗτος ἐπὶ τριήρους στρατηγικῆς, καί τις εἴποι, ναυμαχοῦντος αὐτοῦ, ΄κρείττων Ἑρμοκράτους ὁ ἔκγονος·᾽ἠσθήσεται μὲν γὰρ καὶ ὁ πάππος ἔχων τῆς ἀρετῆς διάδοχον, ἡσθησόμεθα δὲ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτου καὶ τεθνεῶτς. ἱκετεύω σε, δέσποινα, διαλλάγηθί μοι λοιπόν· ἱκανῶς γάρ μοι δεδυστύχηται. τέθνηκα, ἀνέζηκα, λελήστευμαι, πέφευγα, πέπραμαι, δεδούλευκα· τίθημι δὲ καὶ τὸν δεύτερον γάμον ἔτι μοι τούτων βαρύτερον. ἀλλά μίαν ἀντὶ πάντων αἰτοῦμαι χάριν παρὰ σοῦ καὶ διὰ σοῦ παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν· σῳζέ μου τὸν ὀρφανόν." ἔτι βουλομένην λέγειν ἐπέσχε τὰ δάκρυα.[229]
>
> When they had left, she stood near to Aphrodite and held up her child. "On his behalf I am grateful to you mistress," she said. "On my own behalf I am not so sure. I should be grateful to you for myself as well if you had watched over Chaereas for me. But you have given me an image of my dear husband; you have not taken Chaereas from me altogether. Grant, I pray you, that my son be more fortunate than his parents, and like his grandfather...I beg you, mistress, be at peace with me now; I have had enough misfortune! I have died and come to life again. I have been taken by pirates and made an exile; I have been sold and been a slave; and I reckon my second marriage a greater burden yet than all this. I beg one favor of you, and of the other gods through you, to requite all: preserve my fatherless child!" She would have said more but could not for her tears.[230]

Callirhoe's request that Aphrodite protect her son includes a rebuke of the goddess, albeit one couched in the language of gratitude and acceptance of her fate. Her conditional, contrary to fact declaration that she "should" be grateful to the goddess is only partly assuaged by having in her son an image of her first love to remember him by. Callirhoe's plea to Aphrodite to "be at peace with me now" indicts the goddess for, at worst, causing her suffering and, at best, doing nothing to prevent it. Rendered silent by her grief, she then simply stands in front of the statue weeping. At another point, having learned of the wreck of a ship Chaereas may have been on, she exclaims, "ἄδικε Ἀφροδίτη," "unjust Aphrodite."[231] Finally, later in the novel,

[229] Chariton. *Callirhoe*. 3.8.
[230] Reardon, *Greek Novels,* 62
[231] *Callirhoe* 3.10.

Callirhoe's relationship with Aphrodite reaches its nadir. Convinced Chaereas is dead, Callirhoe faces Aphrodite but this time weeps first and speaks later:

> θεασαμένη δὲ Καλλιρόη τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, στᾶσα καταντικρὺ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐσιώπα καὶ ἔκλαιεν, ὀνειδίζουσα τῇ θεῷ τὰ δάκρυα· μόλις δὲ ὑπεφθέγξατο "ἰδοὺ καὶ Ἄραδος, μικρὰ νῆσος ἀντὶ τῆς μεγάλης Σικελίας καὶ οὐδείς ἐνταῦθα ἐμος. ἀρκεῖ, δέσποινα. μέχρι ποῦ με πολεμεῖς;[232]
>
> Callirhoe stood in front of Aphrodite, looking at her. At first she said nothing but wept; her tears reproached the goddess. Then she managed to find her voice. "So now it is Aradus; a small island instead of great Sicily--and there is no one here of my own people. My lady, that is enough. How long are you going to be at war with me?"[233]

Callirhoe's words, ostensibly respectful, constitute an honor challenge. Callirhoe's encounters with Aphrodite in these cases suggests a relationship, one with expectations, disappointments, negotiations, and veiled threats. Callirhoe prays not just to benefit her child but to try to understand and maintain a strained relationship with the goddess. The image of the goddess offers a locus for working that relationship out, and sacrifice on Aphrodite's altar is not a substitute for conversation with her in the form of prayer. Callirhoe repeatedly seeks out the image of Aphrodite because she expects that through the image Aphrodite is listening.

With a few significant exceptions, Chariton rarely depicts the thoughts and behavior of Aphrodite herself. Chariton's decision to focus on the characters' own ignorance of their future and the dynamic nature of their faith in Aphrodite allows him to inject their encounters with images of Aphrodite with a realistic sense of uncertainty about the goddess's reaction to their prayers. Only towards the end does Chariton reveal that Aphrodite will ensure the lovers' safety and happiness, and the author does so almost apologetically after everything the couple has suffered. Chaereas, not Callirhoe, had provoked the goddess's irritation with his arrogance, but Aphrodite decides to limit what the couple must endure.

> πρότερον ὀργισθεῖσα χαλεπῶς διὰ τὴν ἄκαιρον ζηλοτυπίαν, ὅτι δῶρον παρ᾽αὐτῆς λαβὼν τὸ κάλλιστον, οἷον οὐδὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Πάρις, ὕβρισεν εἰς τὴν χάριν. ἐπεὶ δὲ καλῶς ἀπελογήσατο τῷ Ἔρωτι Χαιρέας

[232] *Callirhoe* 7.5.
[233] Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 106.

> ἄπὸ δύσεως εἰς ἀνατολὰς διὰ μυρίων παθῶν πλανηθείς, ἠλέσεν αὐτὸν Ἀφροδίτη καὶ ὅπερ ἐξ ἀρχῆς δύο τῶν καλλίστων ἥρμοσε ζεῦγος, γυμνάσασα διὰ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης, πάλιν ἠθέλησεν ἀποδοῦναι.[234]
>
> At first she had been incensed by his misplaced jealousy: she had given him the fairest of gifts, fairer even than the gift she had accorded to Alexander Paris, and he had repaid her kindness with arrogance. But now that Chaereas had made honorable amends to Love, in that he had wandered the world from west to east and gone through untold suffering, Aphrodite took pity on him; having harassed by land and sea the handsome couple she had originally brought together, she decided now to reunite them.[235]

Chariton's third person reference to Aphrodite marks only the second and final reference to her direct interest in the lives of young couple, though obviously the many coincidences which shape their lives can be attributed to the goddess. Fittingly, the last image of the novel is not of Callirhoe and Chaereas but of Callirhoe kneeling at the feet of Aphrodite and thanking her.

> Ἕως δὲ ἦν τὸ πλῆθος ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ, Καλλιρόη, πρὶν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἰσελθειν, εἰς τὸ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἱερὸν ἀφίκετο. λαβομένη δὲ αὐτῆς τῶν ποδῶν καὶ ἐπιθεῖσα τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ λύσασα τὰς κόμας, καταφιλοῦσα "χάρις σοι" φησίν, "Ἀφροδίτη· πάλιν γάρ μοι Χαιρέαν ἐν Συρακούσαις ἔδειξας, ὅπου καὶ παρθένος εἶδον αὐτον σοῦ θελούσης. οὐ μέμφομαί σοι, δέσποινα, περὶ ὧν πέπονθα· ταῦτα εἵμαρτό μοι. δέομαί σου, μηκέτι με Χαιρέου διαζεύξῃς, ἀλλὰ καὶ βίον μακάριον καὶ θάνατον κοινὸν κατάνευσον ἡμῖν."[236]
>
> While the crowd was in the theater, Callirhoe went to Aphrodite's temple before entering her house. She put her hands on the goddess's feet, placed her face on them, let down her hair, and kissed them. "Thank you, Aphrodite!" she said. You have shown Chareas to me once more in Syracuse, where I saw him as a maiden at your desire. I do not blame you, my lady, for what I have suffered; it was my fate. Do not separate me from Chareas again, I beg of you; grant us a happy life together, and let us die together.[237]

Callirhoe once more seeks solitude to communicate with Aphrodite. In an image eerily reminiscent of the adulteress in John who falls at the feet of Jesus and washes his feet with her tears and her hair, Callirhoe's kneeling and letting down her hair on the feet of the image of Aphrodite show her full reconciliation with the goddess, and her willing vulnerability in the divine presence.

Xenophon's *Ephesian Tale* highlights its heroes' relationship with the gods Eros and Isis. While Eros is the mercurial, sensitive divinity who initiates romance between humans out of revenge, Isis takes on the role of savior as she protects and eventually reunites the separated

---

[234] *Callirhoe* 8.1.3
[235] Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 110.
[236] *Callirhoe* 8.8.15.
[237] Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 124

young lovers Anthia and Habrocomes. Xenophon's narrative, practically ignoring sacrifice altogether until the end, suggests it is the lack of respect paid to the image of one god, Eros, and the plaintive, humble appeals of the lovers to another, Isis, which first ignites their love and then persuades Isis to offer the divine assistance necessary for it to flourish. She responds to Anthia and Habrocomes because she listens to them and takes pity on their suffering.

Like the uninvited guest Eris at the feast of Thetis and Peleus in the background story of the *Iliad*, which the ancient Greek novelists imitate and seek in some way to transcend, a scorned god sets in motion the plot of the *Ephesian Tale.* His honor attacked when his temple and his images are mocked, Eros avenges himself. Young, impossibly handsome Habrocomes, "whenever he saw a temple or a statue of Eros, he used to laugh and claimed that he was more handsome and powerful than any Eros."[238] The god, "furious at this," then "looks for some stratagem to employ against the boy."[239] The temple and, especially, the image of the god, substitutes for the god himself, and provokes Eros to ensnare Habrocomes in a love affair where he feels powerless. At a festival of Artemis in Ephesus, Habrocomes sees Anthia, and falls hopelessly in love with her when he sees her in a festival procession. The novel shows that every image of Eros is a node of divine power, and engaging it in the wrong way has consequences. As Fisher concludes in his study *Hybris,* hybris is a "serious, often criminal, attack on the honour of another, typically committed gratuitously and for the pleasures of superiority."[240] Furthermore, *hybris* is more common among the young and the elite;[241] Habrocomes is both. Later in the story, having been separated from Habrocomes, Anthia,

---

[238] Xenophon, *Ephesian Tale*, 1.6. εἰ δέ που ἱερὸν ἢ ἄγαλμα Ἔρωος εἶδε, καταγέλα, ἀπέφανιέ τε ἑαυτὸν Ἔρωτος παντὸς καλλίονα καὶ σώματος καὶ δυνάμει. Xenophon. *EPHESIVS.* Edited by Antonius D. Papanikolaou (Leipzig: Teubner 1973)
[239] *Ephesian Tale* 2.1 Μηνιᾷ πρὸς ταῦτα ὁ Ἔρως· φιλόνεικος γὰρ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ὑπερηφάνοις ἀπαραίτητος· ἐζήτει δὲ τέχνην κστὰ τοῦ μειρακίου· Reardon, *Greek Novels,* 129.
[240] Fisher, N.R.E. *Hybris* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips 1992), 6.
[241] Fisher, *Hybris*, 1.

captive to bandits, is rescued by Polyidos, a kinsman of the prefect of Egypt. Polyidos, though already married, falls in love with Anthia and tries to rape her, but she escapes. Anthia goes to a temple of Isis where she finds "refuge as a suppliant." "Mistress of Egypt," she exclaimed, "who have helped me often, save me yet again. Let Polyidus spare me as well, since I am keeping myself chaste for Habrocomes, thanks to you."[242] Shortly after the very same Polyidus, because he "revered the goddess,"[243] promises to "respect her chastity as long as she wished."[244] That the disrespect of the gods invites suffering may be a common trope in ancient Greek poetry, whether dramatic or epic, but the efficacy of supplication of a god is a newer, rarer one, especially in the realm of eros between humans, which the gods tended to ignore. As if in rebuke of Homer, who shows that Cassandra's prayer in the temple of Athena is rejected when Ajax takes her, Anthia's prayer will be answered. Having been reunited, Habrocomes and Anthia enter the temple of Isis in Rhodes and exclaim, "To you, greatest goddess, we owe thanks for our safety; it is you, the goddess we honor most of all, who have restored us."[245] They then fall down before her altar. Responsible young couple that they are, and Habrocomes having especially learned his lesson about respect of the gods, they remember to honor Artemis as soon as they return home to Ephesus, going "immediately" to the temple of Artemis, where they "set up an inscription in honor of the goddess, commemorating all their sufferings and all

[242] Reardon, *Greek Novels,* 161. ἡ δὲ ἐκφυγεῖν δυνηθεῖσα, ἐπὶ τὸ τῆς Ἴσιδος ἱερὸν ἔρχεται <καὶ> ἱκέτις γενομένη, "σύ με" εἶπεν, "ὦ δέσποινα Αἰγύπτου, πάλιν σῶσον, ᾗ ἐβοήθησας πολλάκις· φεισάσθω μου καὶ Πολύιδος τῆς δῆς διὰ σὲ σώφρονος Ἀβροκόμη τηρουμένης." *Ephesian Tale* 5.6

[243] Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 161. ὁ δὲ Πολύιδος...τὴν θεὸν ἐδεδοίκει *Ephesian Tale* 5.7

[244] Reardon, *Greek Novels*, 161. πρόσεισι δὲ τῷ ἱερῷ μόνος καὶ ὄμνυσι μήποτε βιάσασθαι τὴν Ἀνθίαν, μήτε ὑβρίσαι τι εἰς αὐτήν, ἀλλὰ τηρῆσαι ἁγνὴν εἰς ὅσον αὐτὴ θελήσει· *Ephesian Tale* 5.7

[245] Reardon, *Greek Novels,* 168. οἱ δὲ ἀναλαβόντες ἑαυτούς, διαναστάντες εἰς τὸ τῆς Ἴσιδος ἱερὸν εἰσῆλθον "σοι" λέγοντες, "ὦ μεγίστη θεά, τὴν ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν χάριν οἴδαμνεν· διὰ σέ, ὦ πάντων ἡμῖν τιμιωτάτη, ἑαυτοὺς ἀπειλήφαμεν," προσκυλίονοτό τε τοῦ τεμένους καὶ τῷ βωμῷ προσέπιπτον. *Ephesian Tale* 5.13.4

their adventures."[246] The inscription assumes the participation of Artemis in the young couple's adventures, and of course in their fate, even though the goddess herself is mentioned only at the beginning of the story when they meet. Here, the sacrifice they make is explicitly one of thanksgiving and truly eucharistic to acknowledge their answered prayers. Their inscription, a permanent marker of the perishable gift of the god, her aid, serves as an appropriate means to show honor to the goddess who has brought them happiness.

V Encountering the Gods: Portable Gods

An image need not have an enchanting origin story or even a reputation for divine epiphany to remain a precious object of the pious in ancient Greek and Roman polytheism. Statuettes were the focus of individual acts of piety just as life size statues were, as examples from Cicero, Apuleius, Pliny the Elder, and a recent find in the Athenian agora demonstrate. Statuettes, whether of wax, terracotta, or stone, reveal the personal connections that people maintained with their deities. Cicero offers an excellent example of affection for a statuette, as we mentioned in the introduction. He describes the statuette of Minerva that he rescued from his doomed house and later dedicated in the temple of Jupiter on the Palatine hill in his *On Laws*: "I...would not allow the guardian of the city to be violated by the wicked, even when my own property was snatched from me and destroyed, but conveyed her from my house to my father's."[247] It was not even uncommon for people to carry the statuettes with them, whether on short journeys or permanent relocations. Apuleius, for example, describes the making of

[246] Xenophon, *Ephesian Tale* 5.15.2 ὡς δὲ ἐξέβησαν, εὐθὺς ὡς εἶχον ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ᾖεσαν καὶ πολλὰ ηὔχοντο καὶ θύσαντες ἄλλα <τε> ἀνέθεσαν ἀναθήματα καὶ δὲ καὶ <τὴν> γραφὴν τῇ θεῷ ἀνέθεσαν πάντων ὅσα τε ἔπαθον καὶ ὅσα ἔδρασαν.

[247] Bodel, John. "Cicero's Minerva, *Penates*, and the Mother of the *Lares*: An Outline of Roman Domestic Religion," in *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity: Contextual and Comparative Perspectives*. John Bodel and Saul M. Olyan, eds. Oxford: Blackwell 2008, 252. *De Legibus* 2.42.

the figurine of the god who means so much to him in order to defend himself against the charge of sorcery. Apuleius even introduces the maker of the statuette in court. His name is Cornelius Saturninus, and Apuleius says he retained his services because of his excellence as an artist.

> me, cum apud eum multas geometricas formas e buxo vidissem subtiliter et adfabre factas, invitatum eius artificio quaedam mechanica ut mihi elaborasset petisse, simul et aliquod simulacrum cuiuscumque vellet dei, cui ex more meo supplicassem, quacumque materia, dummodo lignea, exculperet. Igitur primo buxeam temptasse. Interim dum ego ruri ago. Sicinium Pontianum privignum meum, qui mihi <gratum> factum volebat, impetratos hebeni loculos a muliere honestissima Capitonlina ad se attulisse, ex illa potius materia rariore et durabiliore uti faceret adhortatum; id munus cum primis mihi gratum fore. Secundum ea se fecisse, proinde ut loculi suppetebant. Ita minutatim ex tabellis compacta crassitudine Mercuriolum expediri potuisse.
>
> I had seen many geometrical figures in his shop, precisely and ingeniously made of boxwood. His skill was an inducement to ask him to make me certain mechanical devices, and at the same time to carve an image of any god he wished for me to worship in my usual way, using any material provided it was of wood. At first, therefore, he tried one in boxwood. In the meanwhile, I was in the country when my stepson, Sincinius Pontianus, who wanted to do me a kindness, begged some ebony boxes from that excellent woman Capitolina, brought them to him, and urged him to make it from that wood instead, being more rare and more durable; that would make a particularly welcome present. Saturninus followed his instructions as best he could with the boxes available, and by fitting together bits and pieces of the panels, he was able to turn out a small Mercury in the round.[248]

Apuleius presents this sustained, detailed account of the crafting of the image because his accuser has claimed the image was made in secret, of an unnatural material, and in a particularly grotesque form. On the contrary, it was commissioned openly, with wood given him as a gift, and he brings the image out at his trial so people might see it is a recognizable Mercury. Describing why he has it with him, he says, "it is my practice to carry some god's image together with my books everywhere I go, and to worship it on feast days with incense, wine, and the occasional sacrifice of an animal."[249] The courtroom might hardly seem the place where one might see how attached a person is to an image of a god, but Apuleius makes clear how much he treasures the figurine when he passes it around for examination to show it is not a sorcerer's tool.

---

[248] Apuleius, *Apologia,* 61. (Jones, LCL).
[249] Apuleius, *Apologia*, 63. Nam morem mihi habeo, quoquo eam, simulacrum alicuius dei inter libellos conditum gestare eique diebus festis ture et mero et aliquando victima supplicare.

> Em vide, quam facies eius decora et suci palaestrici plena sit, quam hilaris dei vultus, ut decenter utriumque lanugo malis deserpat, ut in capite crispatus capillus sub imo pillei umbraculo appareat, quam lepide super tempora pares pinnulae emineant, quam autem festive circa humeros vestis subtricta est. Hunc qui sceletum audet dicere, profecto ille simulacra deorum nulla videt aut omnia neglegit.
>
> See how handsome and full of athletic bloom the face is, how cheerful the god's expression, how becomingly the down creeps over his cheeks, how the curly hair on his head peaks out from under the brim of his cap, how prettily the pair of feathers rises up over his temples, and how gaily his cloak is tied around his shoulders. Surely someone who dares to call this a skeleton has either never seen images of the gods or disregards them all.[250]

Apuleius upholds his obvious affection for this statuette as the norm, not the exception. Given the ubiquity of temples and altars and images in the ancient world, he could pray almost anywhere when he is traveling, but he chooses his own image, and engages the divine in his own way through it. Fully cognizant as he is of its prosaic, earthly origins, aware even that the image was fashioned from the remnants of a bunch of boxes, he testifies, in court no less, to its divine efficacy, and his affection for it.

In a Roman context, Pliny the Elder offers crucial primary source evidence about statuettes and the personal, emotional connection individuals and even families had with them. He tells the story of the orator Hortensius, who compelled Verres to give him a Sphinx when he stood accused as though the image could offer him some kind of divine aid during the trial. Pliny reports the Hortensius said he could not understand enigmas, whereupon Cicero replied that he should because he had a Sphinx at home.[251] On the subject of Corinthian bronzes, Pliny mentions the practice of people carrying *signa* in their pockets, which may refer to statuettes. Wax figures of members of each family, as well as of family ancestors, seem to have filled elite Roman homes, both in the past as well as in Pliny's day, to be carried in a procession in the event of a funeral. Statues of ancestors might even be placed outside of a home, surrounded by spoils gained from war, and were legally required to remain even in the event of a sale of

[250] Apuleius, *Apologia*, 64. (Jones, LCL).
[251] Pliny the Elder 34.18.8.

the house. Pliny jokes that "the walls each day reproached an unwarlike owner for having thus intruded upon the triumphs of another."[252]

In a fairly recent article from 2014 that lends archaeological support to the depictions of statuettes by Apuleius and Pliny the Elder, Heather Sharpe argues that two caches of bronze figurines found in the agora in Athens reflect a distinction between predominantly Greek and predominantly Roman domestic religious practices from the 1st to the 3rd centuries CE. Her conclusions highlight the personal choices that guided the unregulated domestic religious contexts, in marked contrast to the state sponsored sacrifices and images found in temple complexes. Both groups of bronze figurines, found in wells with material from the Herulian sack of Athens in 267/268 CE, may have been deposited there before or after that cataclysmic event.[253] One group of three figurines included an Aphrodite, an Isis Lactans, and a *lar*, which Roman families often passed down through several generations. The size, material, and subject matter of the *lar*, one of the dancing type, is in keeping with other *lararia* found elsewhere in the Roman Empire.[254] The other group of bronze figurines included Tyche, Aphrodite, Eros, Harpokrates, and Telesphoros.[255] While both groups of statuettes were probably produced by local artists, the first group of three figurines includes Roman and Egyptian deities and is more cosmopolitan, but the second group of five figurines includes more traditional Greek gods.[256] Sharpe points out that although Roman families who moved abroad often carried their *lares* with them, there have been very few finds of *lar* and *genius* statuettes in the Roman east. *Lares*,

---

[252] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 35.2. (Rackham, LCL).
[253] Sharpe, Heather. "Bronze Statuettes from the Athenian Agora: Evidence for Domestic Cults in Roman Greece." (*Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.* Vol. 83, No. 1), 167. Sharpe suspects the figurines were swept into the wells after the event because they were found without their pedestals, and were therefore not carefully secured.
[254] Sharpe, "Bronze Statuettes," 167-168.
[255] Sharpe, "Bronze Statuettes," 160-165.
[256] Sharpe, "Bronze Statuettes," 181.

then, whose worship was not required by the Empire, may have been somewhat unpopular among Greek families. The two groups of figurines may reflect different assertions of ethnic identity, and different preferences and personal connections to deities in the domestic sphere, where these connections and preferences could be expressed. Ancient pagans did not depend only on life-size or larger than life-size images of the gods in order to honor them.

VI Encountering the Gods: Pausanias

Like the two ancient Greek novels we have seen, much of Pausanias' travel narrative evinces the identification of image and god. Compared with those novels, however, the large number of references to images of the gods allow us to see in more detail the ways that these images both receive and distribute honor. Pausanias frequently refers to an image of a god by the god's name, or simply as "the god," in order to recognize the image's, and the god's, power. To take just one example, describing a statue of Pan in a sanctuary of Asclepius near Corinth, Pausanias shifts from ἄγαλμα to θεός almost in the same breath to refer to the same statue: "In the Asklepeion, on each side of the entrance is an image (ἄγαλμα), on one side Pan seated, and on the other Artemis standing. Having entered, there is the god (ὁ θεός) beardless, of gold and ivory."[257] As testimony to the statue's divine origin, and potential capacity to distribute honor, Pausanias records the Sikyonians telling him the god Pan was originally in the form of a serpent when he, that is the image, was brought to them, though he says nothing about the image's transformation. Earlier, in his discussion of a statue of Apollo in Athens near what he calls the Stoa Basileos, in the same area as the 5th century BCE Painted Stoa, Pausanias alludes to a

[257] Pausanias 2.10.2 ἐς δὲ τὸ Ἀσκληπιεῖον ἐσιοῦσι καθ᾽ἑκάτερον τῆς ἐσόδου τῇ μὲν Πανὸς καθήμενον ἄγαλμά ἐστι, τῇ δὲ Ἄρτεμις ἕστηκεν. ἐσελθοῦσι δὲ ὁ θεός ἐστιν οὐκ ἔχων γένεια, χρυσοῦ καὶ ἐλέφαντος, Καλάμιδος δὲ ἔργον. (Jones, LCL).

general understanding, or at least a popular myth, about the power of the statue. He gives an account of how the dedication of the image of Apollo stopped the plague during the Peloponnesian War.[258] The image is not erected to commemorate the ending of the plague, but as part of a ritual to catalyze the end the plague, as Chris Faraone notes. Lest we ascribe such practice to the category of magic, the authority commanding the construction of the statue is the Delphic oracle, the epitome of sacred authority and conventional practice, if we can speak of such a thing in ancient Greek religion. Both this statue and others like it may have continued to be the focus of piety to prevent outbreaks of plague, as a 3rd century BCE sacred law from Cyrene suggests, according to Faraone.[259] The image that distributes honor in the form of efficacious power, then, is the more likely to be the beneficiary of extraordinary demonstrations of honor.

First, we will focus on the ways that images of the gods receive honor, and especially on images located outside of temple complexes. While it is clear that many ancient Greeks treated statues of the gods as the gods themselves, it is also clear that such behavior assumed or included an affective component because elites criticized emotional responses to statues and disapproved of them. Treating statues of the gods like the gods themselves appears to be more prevalent among lower socioeconomic classes. In an echo of Heraclitus's disparaging reference to worshippers talking to statues, in the first century CE Plutarch, for example, in his *De superstitione*, denigrates people for bowing before statues. As part of his general critique that fear of the gods is foolish, he adds that those who frequently fear the gods commission

[258] Pausanias 1.3.4 πρὸ δὲ τοῦ νεὼ τὸν μὲν Λεωχάρης, ὃν δὲ καλοῦσιν Ἀλεχίκακον Κάλαμις ἐποίησε. τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τῷ θεῷ γενέσθαι λέγουσιν, ὅτι τὴν λοιμὼδη σφίσι νόσον ὁμοῦ τῷ Πελοποννησίων πολέμῳ πιέζουσαν κατά μάντευμα ἔπαυσεν ἐκ Δελφῶν.
[259] Faraone, Chris. *Talismans and Trojan Horses*, 64.

anthropomorphic images of the gods, "dress them up, and kneel before them."[260] Kneeling before images of the gods was common enough that such a gesture was reserved for the gods. Van Straten notes that Arrian describes two different attempts, one probably historical, the other probably not, to introduce προσκύνησις, the act of bowing down or kneeling, before Alexander the Great at Bactria in 337 BCE. While the second attempt to introduce the practice is not historical, Arrian adds that the Greeks distinguished between ανθρώπιναι τιμαί and θεῖαι τιμαί, human honors and divine honors. Προσκύνησις belongs to divine honors. For Plutarch however, the gesture is a mistake because it, like all superstition, depends upon emotion. Plutarch argues that while atheism and superstition are both errors, superstition is worse because it frequently involves emotion and "every emotion is likely to be a delusion that rankles."[261] Plutarch claims, "Superstition is an emotion engendered from false reason," and one must necessarily be wary of images of the gods, which exacerbate it.[262]

The evidence of emotion, whether restrained or effusive, as an aspect of demonstrating honor to statues emerges implicitly and explicitly in several examples from Pausanias. In Corinth, he describes a bronze goat in the agora, who is honored because when the star called the "Nanny-goat" rises, the vineyards often suffer.[263] The people honor the goat to prevent any interference with their grapes. The statue is gilded and honored in "other ways" also, which Pausanias does not specify, but the investment of the vineyard owners and workers in this particular act of piety must have been significant. Their livelihoods depended upon it. In Achaia, Pausanias describes the statue of Laphrian Artemis, which Augustus gave to the city

[260] Plutarch *De superstitione* 6. εἶτα χαλκοτύποις μὲν πείθονται κα`τοιαῦτα πλάττουσι καὶ κατασκευάζουσι καὶ προσκυνοῦσι. (Babbitt, LCL).
[261] Plutarch. *De superstitione* 1.1 πᾶν γὰρ πάθος ἔοικε ἀπάτη φλεγμαίνουσα εἶναι· (Babbitt, LCL).
[262] Plutarch, *De superstitione* 1.2. ἡ δὲ δεισιδαιμνία πάθος ἐκ λόγου ψευδοῦς εγγεγενημένον. (Babbitt, LCL).
[263] *Descr.* 2.13.6 ἀνάκειται δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀγορᾶς αἴξ καλκῆ, τὰ πολλὰ ἐπίχρυσος: παρὰ δὲ φλιασίος τιμὰς ἐπὶ τῷδε ἔιληφε.

of Patrai and which was placed on its acropolis, where it "had honor" in Pausanias's own day.[264] This particular statue is the focus of one of the most spectacular, if gruesome, rites in Pausanias' entire narrative, which he claims to have witnessed. The people stand enormous, 30 foot long logs around the altar, drive a veritable menagerie of animals into the circle, and set the fuel alight. That this particular statue was imported suggests the fact that these images had their own significant histories, and that they could not be replaced if destroyed. Whatever the people of Patrai felt about Augustus, the statue he gave them was the focus of a premiere ritual in their city. In one of the few instances of Pausanias recording his own personal act of piety, and one of the many of identifying an image of the god with the god, he specifically mentions sacrificing to the image of the god. On Aigina Pausanias says, "I saw the images (ἀγάλματα) and sacrificed to them."[265] Pausanias remarks upon honoring statues, some of them outside temples, in ways that imply more explicit displays of emotion as though it were common behavior.

On the way to Pellene, Pausanias sees a Hermes on the road, whom he describes as "ready to fulfill the prayers of men."[266] An image of Dionysius, which Pausanias also sees in Achaia, is credited with answering the prayers of one Coresus, who was frustrated in love. Coresus presents himself as suppliant to the image of Dionysius, and Dionysius answers his prayer.[267] The Calydonians who were presumably the focus of Coresus's prayer, perhaps for mocking his desire, go insane and shortly thereafter die. Coresus's prayer recalls the slaughter provoked by the aggrieved parent Chryses in the first book of the *Iliad;* Chryses' prayer for the

[264] *Descr.* 7.18.9 ὅ δὴ καὶ ἐς ἐμὲ ἔτι ἐν τῇ ἀκροπόλει τῇ Πατρέων εἶχε τιμάς. (Jones, LCL).
[265] *Descr.* 2.30.4 εἰδόν τε τὰ ἀγάλματα καὶ ἔθυσά σφισι." (Jones, LCL).
[266] *Descr.* 7.27.1 ἰόντων δὲ ἐς Πελλήνην ἄγαλμά ἐστιν Ἑρμοῦ κατὰ τὴν ὁδόν, ἐπικλησιν μὲν Δόλιος, εὐχὰς δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἕτοιμος τελέσαι. (Jones, LCL).
[267] *Descr.* 7. 21.2. ἐκομίζετο ἱκέτης ἤδη παρὰ τοῦ Διονύσου τὸ ἄγαλμα. ὁ δὲ ἤκουσε τε εὐχομένου τοῦ ἱερέως.

return of his daughter brings Apollo's arrows down in the form of a plague on the entire Greek army. In another story, Pausanias describes the Phocians, who were fighting the Thessalians, placing under guard their assembled women and children, together with the images of their gods, so that a contingent of 30 Phocian soldiers might slaughter them all should the Phocians lose. The images of the gods were to be burned with the dead women and children.[268] The implication, as Robertson Smith noted in an ancient Canaanite context, is that the images of the gods are beloved members of the community, and need to be destroyed if the community is destroyed. The threat of losing their women, children, and gods inspired the Phocians to fight so ferociously that they win a resounding a victory. In each of these instances, the honor these images receive reflect the most cherished hopes, of love and posterity and survival, of the people who interact with them. Three examples of Pausanias narrating stories of oracular images only strengthens this fact.

In Achaia, in the market at Pharai, stood a statue called the Hermes of the Market, before which was a hearth. An inquirer would burn incense upon the hearth, place a coin on the altar to the image's right, and then ask his or her question in the ear of the statue.[269] The inquirer then covers his ears, leaves the market, opens his ears, and "considers an oracle," "μάντευμα ἡγεῖται," whatever words he or she hears next. The image is hardly superfluous to the sacrifice. How can the god know the question without ears to hear it? The ritual requires the appropriate physical gesture on the part of the questioner. Also in Achaia, on the way down from Boura, Pausanias describes an image of Heracles with oracular powers in a cave. One prayed to the god, rolled some dice next to it, and divined the future with the aid of a tablet

[268] *Descr.* 10.1.6 τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ παῖδας καὶ ὅσα τῶν κτημάτων ἄγειν ἦν σφίσιν ἢ φέρειν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἐσθῆτα καὶ χρυσόν τε καὶ ἄργυρον καὶ τὰ ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν ἐς ταὐτὸ συλλέξαντες πυράν ὡς μεγίστην ἐποίησαν, καὶ ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῖς ἀριθμὸν τριάκοντα ἄνδρας ἀπολείπουσι.
[269] *Descr.* 7.22.3 καὶ ἐρωτᾷ πρὸς τὸ οὖς τὸν θεὸν ὁποῖόν τι καὶ ἑκάστῳ τὸ ἐρώτημά ἐστι.

which showed an oracle corresponding to the number of the dice roll.[270] Clearly, the assumption is that Heracles hears the words spoken to his image. In Beoetia, Pausanias writes at length about the oracle of Trophonios. As part of the elaborate series of rituals one must undergo to get an answer from Trophonios, one must pray before a statue reportedly made by Daedalus, which no one is allowed to even see unless one is explicitly going to see Trophonios.[271] The specific contemplation of the statue, "θεραπεύσας," comprises a necessary part of the ritual of obtaining an answer from the oracle.

Finally, people honored the gods by clothing their images, as Cecilie Brøns has shown.[272]An honorary decree from 1st century BCE Mantinea commends one Nikippa Pasia for "her cooperation in the adornment of the Goddess,"[273]while other epigraphic evidence of clothing inventories from sanctuaries, including Brauron,[274] Samos,[275] and Delos,[276] underscore the need to record the specific individuals and items of clothing used to honor certain deities. Pausanias, again, observes images of Eileithyia,[277] Demeter,[278] and Ascelpius[279] wearing garments, and I would argue those involved in the dressing of these statues were participants in this aspect of honoring the gods, as the epigraphic evidence noted earlier suggests.

---

[270] *Descr.* 7.25.10 "ἔυχεται μὲν γὰρ πρὸ τοῦ ἀγάλματος ὁ τῷ θεῷ χρώμενος"
[271] *Descr.* 9.39.8 θεασάμενος δὲ ἄγαλμα ὅ ποιῆσαι Δαίδαλόν φασιν--ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν ἱερέων οὐκ ἐπιδείκνυται πλὴν ὅσοι παρὰ τὸν Τροφώνιον μέλλουσιν ἔρχεσθαι--τοῦτο τὸ ἄγαλμα ἰδὼν καὶ θεραπεύσας τε καὶ εὐξάμενος, ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ μαντεῖον.
[272] Brøns, Cecilie. *Gods and Garments: Textiles in Greek Sanctuaries in the 7th to the 1st Centuries BC* (Oxford: Oxbow Books 2017), 242.
[273] Brøns, *Gods and Garments*, 242.
[274] Brøns, *Gods and Garments*, 239.
[275] Brøns, *Gods and Garments*, 240.
[276] Brøns, *Gods and Garments*, 241.
[277] *Descr.* 7.23.3
[278] *Descr.* 7.25.5
[279] *Descr.* 7.20.5, 2.11.5-7.

Mortals, therefore, honor images of the immortals in myriad ways: standing before them, kneeling before them, offering themselves as suppliants before them, talking to them, gilding them, washing them, and clothing them. The process of honoring the gods frequently involved a range of specific physical behaviors around the images, and such behavior reflected, implicitly or explicitly, a host of emotional reactions towards the images. Occasionally, as we know from the fictional character of Habrocomes mocking images of Eros in the Ephesian Tale, or the anonymous, historical characters in Thuycidides[280] who mutilate herms in Athens before the Sicilian expedition, people also dishonored images of the gods, to the general disapproval of the public or to the horror of posterity. These instances, however, only underscore the widespread understanding that a range of acceptable, emotionally charged behaviors surrounded interactions with images of the gods.

VII The Agency of Statues in the Honor Economy

So often the focus of verbal and somatic expressions of honor, images of the gods many dispense honor as well. Deborah Tarn Steiner insists that ancient pagans regarded images of the gods as potential divine agents.

> Whether apotropaic, talismanic, monitory, consolatory, votive, or commemorative in intent, statues were first and foremost regarded not as representational or aesthetic objects...but as performative and efficacious agents, able to interact in a variety of ways with those who commissioned, venerated, and even on occasion defaced them.[281]

Images of the gods dispensed honor, and punished dishonor, in a variety of ways, as we already saw in the *Ephesian Tale,* find again in Pausanias, and see especially clearly in an example from Lucian. Though with fewer specific references to animated statues, Pausanias records

[280] Both Demosthenes and Plutarch regard the mutilation of the herms as an act of *hybris*. *Thuc.* 6.28.1. Fisher, 145.
[281] Steiner, Deborah Tarn. *Images in Mind: Statues in Archaic and Classical Greek Literature and Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2002), xii.

multiple instances of the divine origins of images, evidence of their role as medium for divine intervention in human affairs, channels for the gods' intention to honor groups and individuals. While the famous account of the wooden statue of Athena, in Pausanias's time still on the Acropolis, falling from heaven may be the most famous of images with divine origins,[282] Pausanias records other tales of images of the gods inserting themselves into people's lives. In Achaia, at Erythrai, Pausanias describes the origin of the statue, presumably of Heracles, from the Herakleion.

> σχεδία γὰρ ἦν ξύων, καὶ , καὶ ἐπ᾽αὐτῇ ὁ θεὸς ἐκ Τύρου τῆς Φοινίκης ἐξέπλευσε· καθ᾽ἥντινα δὲ αἰτίαν, οὐδὲ αὐτοι τοῦτο οἱ Ἐρυθραῖοι λέγουσιν. ὡς δὲ ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν ἀφίκετο ἡ σχεδία τὴν Ἰώων, φασὶν αὐτὴν ὁρμίσασθαι πρὸς ἄκρᾳ καλουμένῃ Μεσάτῃ· ἡ δὲ ἔστι μὲν τῆς ἠπείρου, τοῖς δὲ ἐκ τοῦ Ἐρυθραίων λιμένος ἐς νῆσον τὴν Χίων πλέουσι τοῦτό ἐστι μεσαίτατον. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ σχεδία κατὰ τὴν ἄκραν ἔσχεν, ἐνταῦθα πολὺν μὲν οἱ Ἐρυτραῖοι πόνον, οὐκ ἐλάσσονα δὲ ἔσχον οἱ Χῖοι ποιούμενοι σπουδὴν παρὰ σφᾶς καταγαγεῖν ἑκάτεροι τὸ ἄγαλμα· [283]
>
> There was a wooden raft the god sailed on from Phoenician Tyre, though why this should happen even the Erythraians are unable to say: but when the raft reached the Ionian sea they say it anchored at the Middle cape. When the raft came to the cape, the Erythraians took great trouble and the Chians showed no less enthusiasm each to bring the statue to their own city.

A local fisherman dreams that the women of the town must cut off their hair, and the men must braid it into a rope with which to haul the statue away, in order to secure the statue. The women of Erythrai refuse, but female Thracian slaves and metics agree; consequently, "Thracians are the only women allowed into the Herakleion, and the people there still preserve the rope of hair even in my time."[284] The statue sails to the coast by itself, a less direct, less dramatic means of entering the lives of the pious than falling from heaven, but equally effective. The story, with its precise instructions, its skeptical, unwilling audience on the one hand, and its faithful, unlikely heroines on the other, presents itself as something of a divine test, with a suitable divine reward for those who pass it--special proximity to and favor from the god. In another

[282] *Descr.* 1.26.6.
[283] *Descr.* 7.5.3
[284] *Descr.* 7.5.3 ἔσοδός τε δὴ ταῖς θράσσαις ἐς τὸ Ἡράκλειόν ἐστι γυναικῶν μόναις, καὶ τὸ καλῴδιον τὸ ἐκ τῶν τριχῶν καὶ ἐς ἐμὲ ἔτι οἱ ἐπιχώριοι φυλάσσουσι· (Jones, LCL).

tale of an image as a medium of divine help, this from the Corinthian countryside, some starving Greek soldiers, shipwrecked on the coast upon returning from Troy, happen upon an image of Dionysius in a cave where they have sought shelter from a storm. An unfortunate herd of mountain goats, also sheltering in the cave, ends up as food and clothing for the soldiers--a clear sign of the aid of Dionysius. The men take the image home and "continue to honor it to the present day."[285] A story about Seleuceus, the famous general of Alexander, includes firewood levitating off of the altar when Seleuceus is making a sacrifice to Zeus. The firewood moves off the altar and stops before the image of Zeus, where it "burned without being touched."[286] The tale is an impenetrable enigma without the statue, which otherwise confers honor on Selecus and foreshadows his coming success, his "εὐδαιμονίαν." In Phocis, the Magnesians tell of a grotto of Apollo where the image of Apollo can bestow extraordinary power upon others.[287] Those to whom the image of Apollo grants his power can leap from high cliffs, pull up massive trees, and walk along narrow mountain paths with their burdens. Just as people in distress who happen upon an image of a god may find help and take the image with them, people fleeing distress take their gods with them. In Ionia, the founders of Myous had to abandon their city because of a flood. Even after the waters receded, the stagnant water produced a swarm of mosquitoes who made life there unbearable: "The people from Myous withdrew to Miletos with everything they could carry, including the images of the gods."[288] These images, then, whether of explicitly of divine origin or not, retain the potential to serve as media for divine communication and activity. Although particular statues may, at least by

[285] *Descr.* 2.23.1. καὶ διατελοῦσιν ἐς τόδε τιμῶντες ἔτι. (Jones, LCL).
[286] *Descr.* 1.16.1 Σέλεύκος γάρ, ὡς ὡρμᾶτο ἐκ Μακεδονίας, σὺν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, θύοντι ἐν Πέλλῃ τῷ Διὶ τὰ ξύλα τὰ ἐπὶ τοῦ βωμοῦ κείμενα προύβη τε αὐτόματα πρὸς τὸ ἄγαλμα καὶ ἄνευ πυρὸς ἥφθη. (Jones, LCL).
[287] *Descr.*10.32.4 τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος τὰ μάλιστα ἀρχαῖον καὶ ἰσχὺν ἐπὶ ἔργῳ παρέχεται παντί.
[288] *Descr.* 7.2.11. ἀπεχώρησαν δὲ ἐς Μίλητον Μυοῦσιοι τά τε ἄλλα ἀγώγιμα καὶ τῶν θεῶν φερόμενοι τὰ ἀγάλματα (Jones, LCL).

reputation, be more likely to manifest divine power than others, such power lies dormant in all of them.

In his *Lover of Lies,* a satire of just the sort of conviction in the latent divine power of statues we see presented less skeptically in Pausanias, Lucian's character Eucrates, crediting a statue of Pellichus with healing him, engages with a skeptical interlocuter in a scene that nicely reflects the patterns of interacting with images of the gods, from the identification of the image with the god to the participation of the image in the ancient honor economy.

> "Νὴ Δί'," ἦν δ'ἐγώ, "εἶδόν τινα ἐπὶ δεξιὰ τοῦ κρουνοῦ, ταινίας, καὶ στεφάνους ξηροὺς ἔχοντα, κατακεχρυσωμένον πετάλοὺς τὸ στῆθος." "Εγὼ δέ," ὁ Εὐκράτης ἔφη, "ἐκεῖνα ἐχρύσωσα, ὁπότε μ'ἰσάτο διὰ τρίτης ὑπὸ τοῦ ἠπιάλου ἀπολλύμενον." "Ἦ γάρ καὶ ἰατρός," ἦν δ'ἐγώ, "ὁ βέλτιστος ἡμῖν Πέλλιχος οὗτός ἐστιν;" "Μὴ σκῶπτε," ἦ δ'ὅς ὁ Εὐκράτης, "ἤ σε οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν μέτεισιν ὁ ἀνήρ· οἶδα ἐγὼ ὅσον δύναται οὗτος ὁ ὑπὸ σοῦ γελώμενος ἀνδριάς. ἤ οὐ νομίζεις τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἶναι καὶ ἐπιπέμπειν ἠπιάλους οἷς ἂν ἐθέλῃ, εἴ γε καὶ ἀποπέμπειν δυνατὸν αὐτῷ;"[289]
>
> "Yes by Zeus," said I, "I saw a statue on the right of the fountain, with some dry fillets and garlands, his chest covered with gold leaf."
> "It was I applied the gilt," said Eucrates, "after he cured me when I was dying of the tertian ague."
> "So was this excellent Pellichus a physician too?" said I.
> "Yes he is, and do not mock," said Eucrates, "or the man will come after you in a moment. I know how powerful this statue that you're laughing at is. Or do you doubt that one with the ability to dismiss agues is also able to inflict them upon whomever he wishes?"[290]

Eucrates loves the statue, the proxy of the god, but he fears him also. The god healed Eucrates through his image, and Eucrates honors the god by applying gold leaf, as well as fillets and garlands. Eucrates knows, though his friend doubts it, that the image of the god must receive the honor that is his due in a tangible, material expression, and considers the mocking laughter of his friend the risky, arrogant act of one who forgets the fragility of mortals.

---

[289] Lucian. *Lover of Lies, or The Doubter.* LCL.
[290] Ogden, Daniel. *In Search of the Sorcerer's Apprentice: The Traditional Tales of Lucian's Lover of Lies* (Oxford: The Classical Press of Wales 2007), 53.

Conclusion

Identifying images of the gods with the gods themselves appears relatively early in the ancient Greek literary record, as does the elite disdain for the practice, as the examples from Heraclitus, Plato, and Plutarch illustrate. The same can be said for attitudes towards individual honor, and acceptance of the exchange of honor as a way of cultivating and maintaining relationships, but in this case concern for honor permeates all social classes. The abundant philological evidence for the identification of image and divinity, paired with the equally abundant philological evidence for the inclusion of the gods in the social system of honor, demands that we recognize behavior surrounding statues as part of the process of attributing and distributing honor. The process could be fraught with anxiety given how much was at stake--the affection or contempt of a god. The process could also be an occasion for the demonstration of affection on the part of mortal or immortal, whether found in the description of a favorite statuette, an act of supplication or thanksgiving before a statue, or the granting of a special privilege to those who cared for a statue in a particular way. Standing before a statue like the Zeus of Olympia might suggest pious awe, as for Pausanias; clothing an image of god might express intimacy with the divine; weeping at the feet of a statue exposes grief. All of these behaviors depended upon a concern for individual honor, and assumed the image was a manifestation of the honor of the god. However we might regard the historicity of the many tales told in the late Republic and early Empire that reflect the host of emotions people expressed as they honored images of the gods, tales that often included the gods granting honor to mortals in the form of love, or power, or luck, or even a kind of earthly salvation, we need to take seriously images of the gods as essential landmarks used by innumerable ancient pagans in the ordering, pursuit, and fulfillment of their lives.

Chapter 3 Honoring Demons: Pauline Discourse for Images of the Gods

In the previous chapter, I argued that the category of idolatry should be abandoned as an indigenous category when trying to understand ancient Greek and Roman perspectives on images of the gods. For Jews of course, idolatry is an indigenous category used for images of gods, and in this chapter we will analyze the Hellenistic Jewish discourse for idolatry employed by Paul of Tarsus. When we compare these pagan and Jewish discourses, we will see that although Paul's views about images of the gods diverge from the perspectives on images we saw in two ancient Greek novels, Pausanias, and early Imperial archaeological evidence, Pauline discourse of idolatry also shows surprising parallels with the indigenous pagan categories of honor and of identifying an image with a god. I will argue that while Paul of Tarsus employs a strictly polemical vocabulary to describe images of the gods, and certainly does not identify the image with the god, he shares the ancient pagan perspective that images of the gods contain latent divine power. Paul also assumes, with his contemporary pagans, that these images participate in a social system of honor exchange, whose hierarchies he attempts to undermine within the church, while tolerating them outside of it, in his hope that more might be saved from the coming judgment of God. In discussing images of the gods, however, Paul splices a generically Greco-Roman discourse of pollution with a specifically Jewish apocalyptic discourse of judgment, sin, and death. Paul uses apocalyptic discourse not only to describe the act of eating food sacrificed to idols, but to denigrate any association with idols. Although Paul deploys apocalyptic discourse in order to control the Corinthian Christian interaction with images of the gods and prioritize the harmony of the *ekklesia*, Paul's application of apocalyptic discourse to images of the gods debases the material currency of ancient social relations in spite of his efforts to permit Christians to engage socially with

pagans. More specifically, Paul's use of Exodus 32, the episode of the golden calf, transforms the notion that idols are nothing into a claim that associating with idols cultivates a temptation to apostasy and carries a death sentence. For Paul, the human body remains the only locus for the exchange of honor, while the world of artificial objects is at best fraught with deception and at worst a means of destruction.

II The Context and Interpretation of 1 Corinthians

The text of 1 Corinthians offers a precious, fleeting vision of the issues encountered by the Jesus movement barely two decades after his crucifixion. Written c. 54 CE,[291] probably from Ephesus, Paul is responding to a letter he has received from Corinth, now lost, regarding a number of problems the Christian communities in Corinth are trying to resolve: competition between particular teachers, indications of specific cases of sexual immorality, lawsuits between Christians, the role of marriage in the Christian life, the appropriate behavior surrounding the Lord's Supper, and the eating of food that has been sacrificed to pagan gods. How long the members of Paul's audience have identified themselves as members of Paul's community is uncertain, but the time has been short enough that they remain unsure how faith in the resurrection of Jesus should affect their behavior in a city dominated by worship of the ancient Greek pantheon of gods and suffused with ancient Greek philosophical and ethical ideas.[292] Members of the community are in conflict with each other, and they ask Paul for guidance.

---

[291] Witherington proposes a date of 53-54 CE, as does C.K. Barrett. Witherington, Ben *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1995), 73. Barrett, C.K. *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row 1968), 5. Conzelmann argues for a date of c. 55 CE. Conzelmann, Hans. *1 Corinthians*, James W. Leitch, trans. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1975), 4. 1 Cor. 16:8 suggests Paul is in Ephesus.

[292] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 15.

The question of which ethnic groups comprised the first-century CE Corinthian community has remained open and contested because geography, chronology, and the Greek language of the letter implicate three different groups--Greeks, Romans, and Jews. With respect to Greeks and Romans, I am assuming Paul's audience in Corinth is primarily a group of poor Greeks[293] who have some familiarity with Judaism, and possibly a few Jewish members, all of whom live under Roman leadership in a built environment that is Roman. Razed by the Romans in 146 BCE and refounded by Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, Corinth had been repopulated by the urban poor of Rome who "for the most part belonged to the freedman classes," according to Strabo.[294] Anthony Spawforth, in an analysis of epigraphic and numismatic material, confirms Strabo's account when he concludes that freedmen "dominated the upper echelons of Corinthian society in the early years of the colony."[295] The number of people with Roman *praenomina* and *nomina*, but Greek *cognomina*, indicates they were either freedmen or their descendants.[296] At the same time, local Greeks did not completely abandon Corinth after its destruction in 146 BCE, according to ceramic evidence dated to the late Hellenistic period. A small community of Greeks remained in the city at least until 75 BCE, and perhaps even until the city was rebuilt in 44 BCE.[297] After the resources Caesar put into rebuilding Corinth, the city's fortunes rose quickly, and by 27 BCE Corinth was the seat of the governor of the province of Achaia.[298] The presence of Latin as the official language of

[293] Friesen, Steven. "Prospects for a Demography of the Pauline Mission: Corinth Among the Churches," in *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2005), 367.
[294] Strabo, *Geog*. 8.6.23.
[295] Spawforth, Anthony, "Roman Corinth: The Formation of a Colonial Elite" from *Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspects*, Rizakis, A.D., ed. (Athens: Research Center for Greek and Roman Antiquity 1996), 169.
[296] Spawforth, Anthony, "Roman Corinth,"169.
[297] James, Sarah. *Corinth. Volume VII.7. Hellenistic Pottery: The Fine Wares* (American School of Classical Studies at Athens: Princeton 2018), 4.
[298] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 12.

inscriptions in first-century CE Corinth[299] testifies to Roman jurisdiction, but a host of scholars, including a generation that brought attention to issues of ethnicity and class in Paul's churches, maintains that the Corinth of Paul's time was strongly Hellenized.[300]

A more nuanced answer to the question of how Greek and Roman culture were entangled in first-century CE Corinth is given by Millis, who acknowledges the hybridity of Roman Corinth, and who maps the power differential between Roman and Greek citizens. Millis argues that Corinth's elite citizens, the freedmen, "seem the most capable, or willing, to straddle the cultural divide, while the lower strata seem more solidly Greek in outlook."[301] Although the early Roman colonists eagerly cultivated a relationship with the city's classical Greek past,[302] the colony's architecture, layout, and public political allegiance were Roman.[303] Millis notes that Roman features of Corinth manifest themselves more readily in public contexts within the city, such as monumental architecture, but in private contexts, such as in the graffiti, mason's marks, and manufacturer's marks excavated at Corinth, indications of Greek identity predominate, at least in the material evidence unearthed so far.[304] In short, both Greek and Roman identity was, for the Corinthian colonists at least, to some degree a performance. Corinthian citizens could foreground a Roman or Greek identity depending on

[299] Millis observes that "simply counting the number of Latin inscriptions versus Greek inscriptions is not a reliable indicator of the colony's dominant cultural affiliation." The context of the inscription more likely determines its language. "The Social and Ethnic Origins of the Colonists in Early Roman Corinth," Millis, Benjamin, from *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society*, Friesen, Schowalter, and Walters, eds. (Leiden and Boston: Brill 2010), 31.
[300] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 54. Meeks (1983),47, Furnish (1984), 12, and Litfin (1994), 141
[301] Millis, "Colonists in Early Roman Corinth," 31-32.
[302] Spaeth, Barbette. "Greek Gods or Roman? The Corinthian Archaistic Blocks and Religion in Roman Corinth," in *The American Journal of Archaeology* Vol. 121, Issue 3 (Boston: American Journal of Archaeology 2017), 399.
[303] Millis, "Colonists in Early Roman Corinth," 15.
[304] Millis, "Colonists in Early Roman Corinth," 27-29, 34-35.

their needs and context, and the elite in particular, the freedmen, may have had much to gain from being ethnically ambidextrous, as it were.[305]

The religious background of Paul's audience is primarily pagans who have some familiarity with Judaism. As Finney points out, "It is apparent from the text of 1 Corinthians that the majority of the Christ-followers had come from a background in Greek and Roman religion."[306] Not just concerns about eating food sacrificed to idols, but questions about going to city magistrates for adjudication, attitudes towards marriage and the clearly negative response towards bodily resurrection "all point to a predominantly Greek and Roman community." The big tent of Greek religion included those who studied philosophy[307] and were skeptical of the existence of the gods as well as those who attended every festival and piously honored the gods in their homes. Although Paul may not mention such pagan activities specifically, assuming the Corinthians once engaged in a variety of pious practices common to Greek religion helps us better imagine the specific contexts to which Paul might be referring when he advises the Corinthians on interacting with the people and institutions of the city. Some Judeans may have been among the Corinthian church, as well as those gentiles known as "God-fearers" who were known to have paid homage to the God of Israel,[308] but I would underscore how little we know about the "God-fearers," especially their sense of obligation to the Torah. Paul does assume his audience has enough familiarity with Judaism that he can cite the Torah as an authority to win an argument, as he does in 1 Cor. 10 when he refers to Israelite idolatry.

---

[305] Millis, "Colonists," 34.
[306] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 59. Økland agrees that 1 Cornithians "addresses a mainly pagan audience who lives in a city where Jewish presence is only sporadically evidenced before the second century CE." Økland, *Women in Their Place*, 30.
[307] Hadot, Pierre. *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell 1995).
[308] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 59.

When interpreting 1 Corinthians 8-10, scholars generally agree about what question the Corinthian Christians are asking, but they diverge sharply about what Paul's answer is. Although this project is not a commentary, a summary of the issues Paul addresses with a brief comment about major sections of his text will be useful. Certain members of the Corinthian church have asked Paul whether it is permissible for them to eat food[309] that has been sacrificed to idols, whether it is sold to them in the market or served to them as invited guests in a pagan temple or a private home. Aware that the God of Israel has prohibited idolatry, some Corinthian Christians are concerned about it. In light of this project's focus on Greek and Jewish conceptions of images of the gods, I will highlight where I can two issues crucial for our interpretation of these verses--the issue of ethnicity in determining one's attitude towards images, and the issue of where, exactly, in the built environment of Corinth Paul thinks idolatry will be a problem for members of the Corinthian church.

Having discussed in 1 Cor 7 whether or not he recommends marriage for the unmarried, or divorce for the married, given how close the second coming of Jesus is,[310] Paul turns to the issue of such food sacrificed to idols in 1 Cor 8, and ultimately disparages the claim that knowledge of idols' "nonexistence" should determine whether what has been sacrificed to them should be eaten or not.

> Περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων, οἴδαμεν ὅτι πάντες γνῶσιν ἔχομεν. ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ, ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ· εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἐγνωκέναι τι, οὔπω ἔγνω καθὼς δεῖ γνῶναι· εἰ δέ τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν θεόν, οὗτος ἔγνωσται ὑπ᾽αὐτοῦ. Περὶ τῆς βρώσεως οὖν τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων, οἴδαμεν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἴδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς.
>
> Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him. Hence, as to the eating of food sacrificed to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." (1 Cor. 8:1-4).

---

[309] Gooch, *Dangerous Food:1 Corinthians 8-10 in its Context* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1993), 53-54. There is nothing in the text to suggest the food sacrificed to idols is meat, although many commentators have assumed so. In 10:25 as well, 'meat market' means more generally 'food market.'

[310] 1 Cor 7:29. "I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short."

While Paul appears to concede by the end of these verses what seems to be a common Corinthian position, or possibly even a slogan, that "all of us possess knowledge,"[311] that is, that everyone knows idols do not represent existing deities, he simultaneously criticizes an over-emphasis upon knowledge with his opening barb, "Knowledge puffs up, but loves builds up." Therefore, although Paul appears to be ready to allow members of the Corinthian churches to eat food that has been sacrificed to idols because he knows idols do not represent actual gods, he suggests appeals to "knowledge" divide rather than unite the community, and uniting the community becomes his main priority. Paul subordinates knowledge of the philosophical truth that "idols are nothing" to the love he has for God, to the knowledge God has of those who love him, and, later in these chapters, to the love each member of the community should have for each other. Paul's implication here is that knowledge is not the highest authority, God is. God's knowledge, not the Corinthians' knowledge, Paul suggests not too subtly, will also serve as the basis for judgment, a subject he reserves for 1 Cor 10 when he is trying to close out his argument.

Immediately after his insistence that "there is no God but one," however, Paul concedes the reality of other incorporeal divine beings, even if they do not merit the name of "god," and presages his later, apocalyptic warnings about the need to choose a side in the conflict between God and forces of evil. The choice between God and evil is not made just once, Paul suggests, in some ultimate moment with permanent consequences. A member of the church chooses

[311]While interpreters largely agree that οἴδαμεν ὅτι πάντες γνῶσιν ἔχομεν references a quotation from the Corinthians, both Conzelmann and Longenecker point out that the quotation may begin with οἴδαμεν. Paul may have added πάντες in order to needle the Corinthians and strengthen his case that varying degrees of knowledge are insignificant in the context of a confession of faith in the crucified Christ. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 140. Longenecker, Bruce and Brookins, Timothy, *1 Corinthians 1-9:A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco: Baylor University Press 2016), 193.

between God and evil over and over and over again when he or she decides where, how, and with whom to socialize.

> καὶ γὰρ εἴπερ εἰσὶν λεγόμενοι θεοὶ εἴτε ἐν οὐρανῷ εἴτε ἐπὶ γῆς, ὥσπερ εἰσὶν θεοὶ πολλοὶ καὶ κύριοι πολλοί,
>
> > ἀλλ᾽ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ
> > ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν,
> > καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς
> > δι᾽οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι᾽αὐτοῦ.
>
> Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth--as in fact there are many gods and many lords--yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (1 Cor. 8:5-6).

As Conzelmann points out, Paul's perspective may not be as "enlightened" as some of the members of the Corinthian churches.[312] Assertion of the incomparable power of the God of Israel is not enough: "The formal knowledge of the fact that there is *one* God is not yet insight into the truth about the powers of the world."[313] Paul is worried.[314] After he has affirmed his and the Corinthians' joint confession in the dual realities of "one God, the Father" and "one Lord, Jesus, Christ," Paul develops his concern about the limits of knowledge in the Corinthian community, and reveals there are dangers surrounding images of the gods (1 Cor 8:7-9).

> Ἀλλ᾽οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γνῶσις· τινὲς δὲ τῇ συνθείᾳ ἕως ἄρτι τοῦ εἰδώλου ὡς εἰδωλόθυτον ἐσθίουσιν, καὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτῶν ἀσθενὴς οὖσα μολύνεται. βρῶμα δὲ ἡμᾶς οὐ παραστήσει τῷ θεῷ. οὔτε ἐὰν μὴ φάγωμεν ὑστερούμεθα, οὔτε ἐὰν φάγωμεν περισσεύομεν. βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν.
>
> It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 'Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak (1 Cor 8:7-9).

---

[312] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 143.
[313] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 143.
[314] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 173. "The presupposition of vv.19-20 is the same as that of 8:5: behind the gods lurk demons. Paul bases this view on Deut 32:17. This makes his demand clear. Sacrifices would make the demons into gods, powers, and bring the participants into bondage with them."

Paul suggests that those without the appropriate knowledge of the emptiness of idols, the weak,[315] a group he mentions for the first time in the letter, risk the pollution of their συνείδησις, translated here as "conscience," an issue to which we will return to later, if they do eat food that has been sacrificed to an idol. The confidence that some in the Corinthian churches have in their knowledge of the supreme lordship of God, or the inferiority of the power represented by images, does not inoculate others, who don't have such knowledge, from harm.

Paul adds that misplaced confidence of those with knowledge, which can infect another without knowledge, may incite others to eat food sacrificed to idols in their very sanctuaries and "destroy" them. To damage the συνείδησις of another, says Paul, is to sin against Christ, and therefore the temples of pagan gods are dangerous places.

> ἐάν γάρ τις ἴδῃ σὲ τὸν ἔχοντα γνῶσιν ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενον, οὐχὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτοῦ ἀσθενοῦς ὄντος οἰκοδομηθήσεται εἰς τὸ τὰ εἰδωλόθυτα ἐσθιεν; ἀπόλλυται γὰρ ὁ ἀσθενῶν ἐν τῇ σῇ γνώσει, ὁ αδελφός δι'ὅν Χριστὸς ἀπεθανεν. οὕτως δὲ ἁμαρτάνοντες εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ τύπτοντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδεσιν ἀσθενοῦσαν εἰς Χριστὸν ἁμαρτάνετε. διόπερ εἰ βρῶμα σκανδαλίζει τὸν ἀδελφόν μου, οὐ μὴ φάγω κρέα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἵνα μὴ τὸν ἀδελφὸν μου σκανδαλίσω.
>
> For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall. 1 Cor 8:10-13.

While Paul does not specify here how eating food sacrificed to an idol could destroy someone, his vehement denunciation of idolatry in chapter 10, together with an account of God's vengeance for it, suggests idolatry is the real danger for those with insufficient or improper

[315] Who the "weak" are has been a matter of much disagreement. Conzelmann thinks the weak "do not represent a position. They are simply weak." Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 147. Gooch, by contrast, thinks there are no "weak" among the Corinthian Christians. The "weak" are a rhetorical invention of Paul's. Gooch, *Dangerous Food,* 68. Martin argues that the "Strong" are higher status Christians, and the "Weak" are lower status Christians, and that these status concerns are the primary reason for the conflicts in the letter. Martin, *Corinthian Body,* 61. Friesen, however, responds that claims about status based on Paul's letters rely on sparse data, and often equate status with wealth, whereas the majority of the congregation was poor. See no. 278.

knowledge, and serves to mark pagan temple complexes, as well as private homes where food sacrificed to idols would have been served, as sites of danger.

In 1 Cor 9:19-27, Paul explains how concern for the gospel should preempt any consideration of where one spends time, and with whom. It is the responsibility of the Christian to act first and foremost "for the sake of the gospel" (1 Cor 9:23). Paul says he uses the freedom he has earned to serve others, a thematic connection with his advice in 1 Cor 8:13 to the "strong," those with knowledge, to abstain from eating food sacrificed to idols out of concern for the "weak."

> Ἐλεύθερος γὰρ ὢν ἐκ πάντων πᾶσιν ἐμαυτὸν ἐδούλωσα, ἵνα τοὺς πλείονας κερδήσω. καὶ ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος, ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω· τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον, μὴ ὢν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον, ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον κερδήσω. τοὶς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος, μὴ ὢν ἄνομος θεοῦ ἀλλ᾽ἔννομος Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κερδάνω τοὺς ἀνόμους· ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν ἀσθενής, ἵνα τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς κερδήσω· τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα, ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω. πάντα δὲ ποιῶ διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἵνα συγκοινωμὸς αὐτοῦ γέγωμαι.
>
> For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I become as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I become as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I become as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak, I become weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings (1 Cor 9:19-23).

As we will see later, Paul argues that for Greeks to become part of the covenant with Israel through Christ[316] requires a transformation of their understanding of their social obligations.

In 1 Cor 10:1-11:1, Paul returns to the specific issue of food sacrificed to idols with increased vehemence and alarm, and by implication marks with anxiety any site where an image of a god was honored--homes and temples especially, but other places as well. The anxiety Paul expresses concerning the association of demons with idolatry, in fact, seems to undermine thoroughly his earlier confirmation in 1 Cor 8:4 that "no idol in the world really

[316] I agree with Boyarin that Paul intended to bring Greeks into God's covenant with Israel through Christ. Paul does not think he is creating a community separate from Judaism. Boyarin, Daniel. *A Radical Jew* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press 1994), 137.

exists." Paul opens 1 Cor 10:1-7 with an oblique reference to Exodus 32, the construction and worship of the golden calf on the slopes of Mt. Sinai. While Paul never mentions the golden calf per se, he says of "our" ancestors, "God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness," a reference to Exodus 32:25-28, when Moses commands the sons of Levi to slaughter their fellow Hebrews for worshipping the golden calf, and they kill about 3000 people.[317] In 1 Cor 10:6-7, then, Paul uses the example of the slaughter of the idolatrous Hebrews to warn the Corinthian Christians against idolatry: "Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.'" Paul references LXX Exodus 32:6, where "to play," παίζειν, can mean "dance," participate in the worship of an idol.[318] Having raised the issue of idolatry specifically, Paul begins the catalogue of woes that attend idolatry, including sexual immorality and the judgment of God (1 Cor 10:8-10). He reminds his audience of what is at stake for them and for everyone: "These things happened to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages of come" (1 Cor 10:11). The world is ending soon, and it is the church's responsibility to apply the lessons of the past to prepare for it. The Hebrews at Mt. Sinai were tempted to worship the golden calf because they feared Moses, who was speaking with God on Mt. Sinai, had left them. Confident in their knowledge of the impotence of idols, some followers of Jesus may be tempted, like the Israelites on Sinai were, to overlook the dangers idols pose as they wait for the second coming of Jesus. The church will be tested, warns Paul, but God will give them the strength to endure the testing (1 Cor 10:12-13).

[317] cf. Num. 14:22.
[318] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 167.

Beginning to conclude his discussion of eating food sacrificed to idols and of idolatry in general, Paul sounds his most dire warning about idolatry yet. He repeats his assertion that although idols are not connected to gods, they are connected to divine beings.

> Διόπερ, ἀγαπητοί μου, φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας. ὡς φρονίμος λέγω· κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὅ φημι. Τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστιν; ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἕν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν, οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν. βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα· οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίοντες τὰς θυσίας κοινωνοὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου εἰσίν; Τὶ οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστιν ἢ ὅτι εἴδωλών τί εἰσίν; ἀλλ᾽ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῷ. οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι. οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων, οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων. ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; μὴ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτου ἐσμεν;
>
> Therefore, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake in the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? 1 Cor. 10:14-22.

For the first time, Paul reveals his deeper concern than eating food sacrificed to idols, which he grants through the freedom accorded by knowledge of the truth, but limits through concern for one's fellow Christian.[319] Idolatry itself, εἰδωλολατρία, the worship of idols, is strictly forbidden. Paul's exhortation, "flee idolatry," φεύγετε εἰδωλολατρία, acknowledges the peril always surrounding images of the gods--the divinities they represent engage in relationship with humans just as Christ does. To be a follower of Christ, however, demands an exclusive commitment to Christ, which Paul explains through his example of the eucharist.

Paul concludes his warnings against idolatry by recapitulating his main theme--consider the needs of your fellow Christian before you consider your own. At the same time, he ignores his previous concerns about idolatry.

> Πάντα ἔξεστιν ἀλλ᾽οὐ πάντα συμφέρει· πάντα ἔξεστιν ἀλλ᾽οὐ πάντα οἰκοδομεῖ. μηδεὶς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ζητείω ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ ἑτέρου. Πᾶν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρκίοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν. *τοῦ κρυίου γὰρ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς.*

[319] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 170.

> "All things are lawful," but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other. Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience, for "the earth and its fulness are the Lord's." 1 Cor. 10:23-26.

Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to think of how their actions might affect other Christians has been consistent since 1 Cor 8, but Paul's specific instruction to "eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience" glosses over his previous admonitions about idolatry.

In a more specific example of eating as a guest in the home of one who is not a Christian, Paul again expresses apprehension about how one's actions affect the συνείδησις of another. The home of an acquaintance or a friend thus becomes a site of existential decision, just as the site of a pagan temple does.

> εἴ τις καλεῖ ὑμᾶς τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ θέλετε πορεύεσθαι, πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν. ἐὰν δέ τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν, μὴ ἐσθίετε δι᾽ἐκεῖνον τὸν μηνύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν. συνείδησιν δὲ λέγω οὐχι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλά τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου. ἱνατί γὰρ ἡ ἐλευθερια μου κρίνεται ὑπὸ ἄλλης συνειδήσεως; εἰ ἐγὼ χάριτι μετέχω, τί βλασφημοῦμαι ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εὐχαριστῶ;
>
> If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, out of consideration for the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience--I mean the other's conscience, not your own. For why should my liberty be subject to the judgment of someone else's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why should I be denounced because of that for which I give thanks? (1 Cor. 10:27-30).

Paul seems to affirm the freedom of the believer to eat "whatever is set before you," but then acknowledges that his ethical advice is situational. Paul's caution against affecting the conscience of the non-Christian host is not paired with any warning about corruption or God's judgment, and yet it is difficult to read the previous three chapters and imagine Paul recognizes no adverse effects from harming another's συνείδησις.

Paul concludes his discussion about eating food sacrificed to idols with an exhortation to glorify God and to live in peace with everyone, both Jews and Greeks.

> Εἴτε οὖν ἐσθίετε εἴτε πίνετε εἴτε τι ποιεῖτε, πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιεῖτε. ἀπρόσκοποι καὶ Ἰουδαίοις γίνεσθε καὶ Ἕλλησιν καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, καθὼς κἀγὼ πάντα πᾶσιν ἀρέσκω μὴ ζητῶν τὸ ἐμαυτοῦ σύμφορον ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν, ἵνα σωθῶσιν. μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε καθὼς κἀγὼ Χριστοῦ. 1 Cor 10:31-11:1.
>
> So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

The relatively simple exhortation to prioritize God in all things and refrain from creating conflict with anyone serves as a grand rhetorical flourish, and yet logically undercuts several of Paul's specific directives about how to behave around idols and his sweeping warnings about their dangers in private homes and pagan temples.

Scholarly interpretation of 1 Cor 8-10 has only relatively recently focused on Paul's audience. Instead, scholars attempted to isolate the principles that guided Paul's letter, and as a consequence were somewhat blind to a series of assumptions about Paul's principles or about his audience's response to them. Peter Gooch, one of the first scholars to focus on the social setting of the Corinthian churches to which Paul wrote, criticizes such an exclusive focus on Paul's principles: "If the point of the text is Paul's principles, then the centre of concern is Paul--Paul as authority, Paul as founder of a religious system or exponent of a religious/ethical approach to conflict--and not the situation or the persons he addresses."[320] Furthermore, such approaches often assume that Paul's principles merit approval and that they could have solved the problem in Corinth of Christians eating food that had been sacrificed to idols.[321] Subsequent approaches to 1 Corinthians 8-10, which have paid far more attention to the social setting of Corinthian Christianity and to the applicability of Paul's recommendation concerning idolatry, have highlighted the impracticality, or at least the difficulty and the social consequences, of

[320] Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 48.
[321] Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 48.

avoiding food sacrificed to idols. Gooch himself writes: "The problem Paul describes could not be avoided,"[322] and insists that "To avoid even nominally tainted meals would require an awkward and uncomfortable distance not from strangers (such as prostitutes) but from family, friends, and associates."[323] Finney comes to a similar conclusion: "It would appear that the consumption of what Paul calls idol-food in 1 Cor 8--11.1 was unavoidable in normal social intercourse."[324] In a telling remark about the effect of implementing Paul's directives, C.K. Barrett, says: "Refusal to eat food sacrificed to idols would lead one into a self-imposed ghetto; this, it appears is what the Jews did and the Jewish Christians, and what most Christians eventually did."[325] Barrett wisely avoids speculating on how the Greek Christians among the Corinthians responded to Paul's advice, because we do not know. Dale Martin says bluntly, "Those Corinthian Christians interested in status or social advancement could scarcely have avoided such situations; to do so would have amounted to social suicide."[326] While we cannot recover the response of the Corinthian church members to Paul's advice about idols without fresh evidence, we can analyze the assumptions Paul shares with his Greek audience about images of the gods, and the perspectives about images of the gods he was attempting to impart to them.

III Paul and the Latent Power of Idols: Paul in his Jewish Context

We will first see that Paul, like the former pagans in Corinth he addresses, agrees with at least some of them that images of the gods are latent vessels of divine power, not harmless

[322] Gooch, *Dangerous Food,* 46.
[323] Gooch, *Dangerous Food,* 106.
[324] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 154.
[325] Barrett, C.K. "Things Sacrificed to Idols" in *Essays on Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1982), 50.
[326] Martin, *Corinthian Body,* 75.

objects, and yet he strives to live at peace in the cities of the Greek east. Paul's position was common, but by no means dominant, in Hellenistic Judaism, where Jewish perspectives regarding other religions, and ancient Greek religion specifically, range from accommodation to outright rejection, with guarded respect perhaps an attempt at tolerance and a middle way. When Antiochus IV Epiphanes tries to institute reforms in the Jerusalem Temple in the mid-2nd century BC, some Jews clearly supported his effort to make Jewish worship resemble pagan worship.[327] Those who endorsed the building of a gymnasium in Jerusalem and even removed the marks of circumcision, according to 1 Maccabees,[328] wanted Israel to become more like other nations.[329] Judah the Maccabee and his followers violently opposed any alteration of traditional Jewish practice in the Temple. During the revolt that bears his name he sometimes destroyed pagan sacred places, though whether for religious, military, or political reasons, 1 Maccabees does not say.

The LXX, that great monument to the impact of Hellenization on the Jews, contains several revealing additions to its text regarding this range of attitudes towards paganism. Deut 23:17 prohibits prostitution or soliciting prostitutes, but the LXX adds the prohibition of participation for girls of being τελεσφόρος and for boys of being τελισκόμενος; these probably are best translated as “initiates” into the mysteries.[330] There is no need for prohibition where there is no temptation. On the other hand, the LXX version of Exodus 22:7 reads "Do not speak ill of gods," a remarkable admonition given that the Maccabean revolt of 168-165 BCE, frequently interpreted as a revolt against Greek culture, marks "the most violent episode in

[327] Sandelin, Karl. *Attraction and Danger of Alien Religion*, 4. Sandelin notes “there is no independent documentation of the voice of those who were attracted to Hellenistic culture” during the Maccabean period.
[328] 1 Maccabees 1:15.
[329] Cohen, *Maccabees to Mishnah*, 33.
[330] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger,* 20.

Judean history since the return from the Babylonian exile."[331] Both Philo and Josephus, in fact, highlight this LXX version of Exodus 22:7, "unparalleled in any other ancient Jewish translation" and "attested in all known texts of the Septuagint" as "a reflection of the true Jewish attitude toward other religions."[332] To be sure, Philo in particular frequently attacks pagan religious notions, and therefore embodies the tension between respect and critique found throughout Hellenistic Jewish responses to pagan religion. Philo is inconsistent in his attitude towards pagan religion because the Jewish Scriptures are inconsistent about it, as we will see later.[333] By the first century CE, when the books of the Tanakh had been completed, if not necessarily canonized,[334] Judaism had been engaged with Hellenism for several centuries, and included memories of violent encounters between the two detailed in second and first century BCE Jewish apocryphal literature. Therefore most Jewish literature of the late Hellenistic and early Imperial period regards the worship of other gods with a hostile eye.[335] Goldenberg reminds us, however, that while earlier biblical materials might be more accepting of paganism than later, "it would be an error simply to argue that the latter attitude became normative while the former was left behind with the passage of time."[336] With admissions of the existence of other gods and tolerance towards worship of them enshrined in the Jewish scriptures that came to be known as the Tanakh, there would always be a voice advocating respect for other religions sounding through any engagement with the Scriptures; one could ignore such respect,

[331] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 20.
[332] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 66.
[333] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 57.
[334] The concept of canon does not apply to the entire Tanakh in the 1st century CE. Cohen points out that in *Jewish Antiquities*, one cannot tell "whether Josephus has any notion of canon." *Maccabees to Mishnah*, 175. "All Jews agreed that the first five books of the canon were the Torah; most Jews agreed that these were followed by the historical books Joshua-Kings; after that the near unanimity breaks down completely," 188.
[335] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 51.
[336] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 29.

or downplay it, or drown it out, as the later rabbis of the Talmud did,[337] but not excise it. For Paul, commitment to apocalyptic expectations of Jesus' return and judgment conflict with whatever accommodation he tries to make with paganism. If Paul's approach to paganism seems contradictory and ambiguous, the approach to other religions in the Tanakh might partly explain why.

Ambiguity found in the Tanakh, written between the tenth and second centuries BCE, concerning the existence of other gods and the power of idols manifests itself in Paul's understanding of idols and other gods. As with a host of issues, the Tanakh does not uphold a consensus position regarding the value of other religions, or the question of whether all the nations are obligated to worship YHWH alone.[338] Although the covenant outlined in Exodus 20 demands the exclusive loyalty of Israel to the God of Abraham and prohibits the manufacture of any images, the Tanakh does not explain clearly why or even if other nations should worship the God of Israel.

> If the demand for Israelite monolatry was based on an appeal to covenantal loyalty, then presumably such an appeal had no relevance in the lives of other nations who did not share in Israel's covenant with YHWH. If, however, the prophets' claim was to be understood as implying the unreality of other divinities altogether--if the worship of other deities was understood as involving a truly cosmic error, if the worship of other gods was wrong because those gods were false--then other nations too had to be weaned of such worship: intellectual integrity and simple human decency demanded no less. On this matter, the biblical canon taken as a whole has no consistent point of view.[339]

While some texts from the Hebrew Bible state all other gods are false, some imply the existence of other gods, and some even assume their existence. For example, Deut 4:19 suggests God directs the worship of gentiles; God has placed the sun, moon, and stars in the sky for the nations to worship, while the Israelites worship God alone.[340] Stories of Namaan and Rahab,

---

[337] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 83. "Rabbinic literature has nothing good to say about gentile paganism, indeed rabbinic literature goes out of its way to speak ill of pagan deities."
[338] Goldenberg, Robert. *The Nations that Know Thee Not* (New York: New York University Press 1998), 2.
[339] Goldenberg, *Nations*, 9.
[340] Cohen, Shaye. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press 2014), 26. "And when you look up to the heaven and see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, do not be

from 2 Kings and Joshua, contain declarations of YHWH's greatness by Gentiles, but do not suggest Gentiles should quit worshipping their gods or that their gods are false.[341] In Jer 44:16-18, the Israelites themselves, who have fled to Egypt out of fear of the Babylonians, reject Jeremiah's exhortation to worship YHWH alone. They interpret the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians as the wrath of the "Queen of Heaven," the goddess they had been worshipping in Jerusalem.[342] The people debate with Jeremiah about the power of the gods, not their existence. They recognize the covenant with YHWH, but not Jeremiah's demand that they worship YHWH only.[343] Even the virulent attack upon idolatry in Isaiah 44:9-20, in which a man cuts down a tree and uses some wood to make an idol and some to make a fire, is not necessarily aimed at pagan practice, and does not necessarily declare that pagan gods do not exist.[344] The Jewish encounter with Hellenism, however, accelerated and aggravated by the late fourth century BCE conquests of Israel by Alexander the Great and his successors, will force clarification about Jewish perspectives towards other religions and their gods as Jews debate and eventually fight over the adoption of Greek practices within Israel itself.

While Paul's suspicion of other gods reflects much of his Hellenistic context, then, so too does the double conviction he shares with many pious pagans that images of the gods are nothing, and that they are vessels of divine power. In opposition to at least some among the Corinthian Christians, those from 8:1 who claim to "have knowledge," and perhaps in accord

---

led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that the Lord your God has allotted, to all the peoples everywhere under heaven."

[341] Cohen, *Maccabees to Mishnah*, 17.

[342] Cohen, *Maccabees to Mishnah*, 13.

[343] Cohen, *Maccabees to Mishnah*, 14.

[344] Cohen, *Maccabees to Mishnah*, 24. Yehezkel Kaufmann regards Isaiah 44:9-20 "the most vivid expression" of "the biblical conception of pagan worship." Other gods are false. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, Moshe Greenberg, trans. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1960), 17. Claus Westermann, however, argues that the gods of the nations are involved in litigation against the God of Israel, who in fact addresses them in Isa. 41:23. The reality of other gods is acknowledged. Westermann, Claus. *Isaiah 40-66*. D.M.G. Stalker, trans. (Old Testament Library; London: SCM Press 1969), 140.

with others who first expressed anxiety about behavior around images of the gods, Paul suggests images of the gods do attract, if not contain, divine power. While the distinction between "attracting" and "containing" divine power may be a subtle one with respect to images of the gods, I would argue that the difference respects Paul's dual assertion that an idol is "nothing," and that engaging in rituals around idols entangles one in partnership with δαιμονία. Paul's understanding of images of the gods resembles Chariton, Xenophon, and Pausanias, then, in one crucial respect: these objects are not gods, but they are matrices for divine activity. For Paul, certain kinds of activity in the presence of an image of a god, such as sacrifice, or prayer, catches the attention of the wrong kind of divine being and brings them closer. When responding to the Corinthians' question about eating food sacrificed to idols, Paul first contests the appellation of these idols as "gods," but then attests to the existence of other divine beings, as we saw in 1 Corinthians 8.[345] Paul's restriction of naming these beings εἰδωλα breaks with the contemporary Greek practice, attested in the Greek novels, as well as in Pausanias, of identifying the image of the god with the god. These images of gods are not θεοί. Paul diminishes the stature of the beings connected with images of the gods by calling them λεγόμενοι θεοὶ in 8:5, a label that suggests his familiarity with the identification of image and god, and later simply refers to them as δαιμονία. He follows the tradition of Isaiah 44 in claiming that an image of a god is a "fraud,"[346] and he follows the tradition, evinced in several texts of the Tanakh, that other divine beings exist, even if they cannot rival the power of the God of Israel.

[345] "Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth--as in fact there are many gods and many lords--yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist." (1 Cor. 8:5-6).
[346] Isaiah 44:20.

Paul could not be clearer about the reality of these other divine beings, as Paula Fredriksen has argued in a recent paper critiquing the application of the term "monotheistic" to 1st century CE Judaism.[347] In 1 Cor 8:5, Paul essentially advocates what Angelos Chaniotis has called "megatheism," not "monotheism;" he claims the superiority and singularity of the God of Israel and of Jesus Christ, but concedes that other divine beings exist,[348] with cosmic and social consequences.[349] Fredriksen notes that Paul's association of εἴδωλα with δαιμονία parallels a LXX translation of Ps. 96. The Hebrew text of Ps. 96 calls the gods of the nations "idols." According to Fredriksen, Ps. 95.5 LXX says "these gods were not images, but *daimonia*...This translation from Hebrew 'idols' to the Greek 'godlings' at once both elevated and demoted these foreign gods." For those with knowledge among his Corinthian audience, who had considered idols "nothing," Paul, in contrast with the LXX Ps. 95.5, actually promotes the status of these objects. Objects that some in Corinth consider "nothing," Paul associates with *daimonia.* These divine beings, represented throughout homes, streets, markets, and temple precincts with their images, oppose Paul and Christ alike. "Paul's *enemies* are the same as Christ's enemies, and they and all who associate with them are doomed to suffer God's wrath at the last judgment. Paul combats in this realm, *now*, the same cosmic forces that Christ will combat and conquer, *soon*," declares Fredriksen.[350] At this point in Paul's letter, then, Paul has acknowledged the existence of other divine beings, without necessarily implying that any specific behavior in the presence of idols affects these divine beings.

---

[347] Fredriksen, Paula. "Philo, Herod, Paul, and the Many Gods of Ancient 'Monotheism," 6. Unpublished MS cited with permission of the author.
[348] Fredriksen, "Many Gods," 8.
[349] Fredriksen, "Many Gods," 7, from Chaniotis, Angelos, "Megatheism: The Search for Almighty God and the Competition of Cults," 112-140, in *One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*, ed. Stephen Mitchell and Peter van Nuffelen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010). Chaniotis's "megatheism" differs from henotheism, the choice to worship one god among many, only in its emphasis that one's chosen god is more powerful than all the others.
[350] Fredriksen, "Many Gods," 12.

Later in his letter, however, after his excursus on the individual's use of freedom, Paul declares that eating food that has been sacrificed to idols brings one into relationship with δαιμονία, the divine beings that idols represent. Certain kinds of activity attract these divine beings and cultivates a relationship with them. The eucharist, in fact, works under the same principle, as Paul himself acknowledges.

> Διόπερ, ἀγαπητοί μου, φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας. ὡς φρονίμος λέγω· κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὅ φημι. Τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὅ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστιν; ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἕν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν, οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχμομεν. 1 Cor. 10:14-17
>
> Therefore, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

Although Paul here mentions the cup of blessing before the bread, and therefore reverses the order of the eucharist, he assumes that drinking from the cup and eating the bread bring the worshipper into partnership with the god. For the Christian, the cup is κοινωνία τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, participation in the blood of Christ. Paganism operated under a similar principle. The notion that eating food that has been sacrificed forges a bond between the worshipper and the god is an assumption of ancient Greek religion. To sacrifice to a god is to share a meal with the god, to invite the god to the table, as texts from Demosthenes to Plato to Aelius Aristides show.[351] Although Paul's writings do not necessarily indicate that images of gods serve as a vast directory for powers in the universe, his use of the vocabulary of Middle Platonism to refer to these powers in 1 Cor 15:23-24 and Romans 8:38-39 suggests Paul may actually have

[351] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 171-172.

in mind a vague taxonomy of divine beings.[352] When one sacrifices to an idol, these powers are notified and come closer.

For Paul then, as for many pious Greeks all over the eastern Roman Empire, Corinth included, an image of a god is a marked object, both "nothing" and something else altogether. It is worth mentioning here that we are not assuming a Cartesian dualism, where "bodies" and "souls" partake of radically different realms of reality.[353] The incorporeal *daimonia* behind the stone image of the god are still nonetheless material; for "most ancient philosophers, to say that something was incorporeal was *not* to say that it was immaterial."[354] Paul knows an image may indeed be destroyed, or melted, or dismantled and made into any other object as Isaiah 44 suggests. Contrary to Isaiah 44, however, and in agreement with LXX 95.5, Paul believes images of gods represent and attract potent divine entities, enemies of his, of Christ's, and of course of all Christians, with an agenda opposed to the will of God.

IV Idols and the Discourse of Honor

Just as Paul's discourse of idols shares more with his formerly pagan audience than has been acknowledged, the same can be said for Paul's discourse of idols and his assumption that honor is at stake when he prescribes decorum around them. We have seen how a concern for honor in general suffuses both Greek and Roman social relations, and as a Greek-speaking Jew living in the Roman East, Paul is no exception. The subject of honor is very much on Paul's mind both when he proclaims his bona fides and when he tries to shape the social and divine

[352] Rom. 8:38-39. Forbes, Chris. "Pauline Demonology and/or Cosmology? Principalities, Powers, and the Elements of the World in their Hellenistic Context" (*Journal for the Study of the New Testament* no. 85, 2002), 72.
[353] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 6.
[354] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 15.

relations of the new Christian community in his letter to the Corinthians, for the concept of honor is inextricably linked with human behavior. Notwithstanding the parodies of Corinthian social life provoked by Strabo's[355] casual, now discredited reference to 1000 priestess-prostitutes[356] serving Aphrodite in her temple on the Acrocorinth, "what most controlled the city's life and defined its moral character was not sexual decadence, but a relentless competition for social status, honor, wealth, and power."[357] In his persuasive study on the role of honor and conflict in 1 Corinthians, Finney argues that Paul employs his theology of the cross in order to undermine and reorient the system of honor, which has been guiding Corinthian church members' behavior in a way that threatens the harmony of the community.[358] Applying what we have learned about the roles of images of the gods as participants in the system of honor exchange, I am arguing that Paul wants to permit members of the church to continue to engage in honor exchange with non-Christians, but only by limiting or even denying them much of the currency that governed such exchanges--appropriate behavior towards images of the gods.

For Paul too, honor defines his relationship to his deity and to others.[359] "*The* locus of superlative honor in the OT is Yahweh, for he alone is to be honoured," Finney reminds us.[360] Paul, "blameless in the eyes of the Law," would surely confirm this (Phil. 3:6). As with the Greek gods, honoring the God of Israel is a two-way street, for "there is ascription of honour to those who honour God and for those who live in the 'fear of the Lord.'"[361] To be a worshipper

---

[355] *Geogr.* 8.6.20c.
[356] Lanci, J.R. "The Stones Don't Speak and the Texts Tell Lies: Sacred Sex at Corinth," in D.N. Schowalter and S.J. Friesen (eds), *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2005), 210.
[357] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 60, quoting Furnish, *Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press 1999), 2-3.
[358] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 71.
[359] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 101.
[360] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 116. Ex 12:42; 20:24; Lev 10:3; Num 27:14; 1 Sam 6:5; 1 Chron 29:12; Ps 45:11; Isa 26:13, 49:5, 60:9; Jer 3:17
[361] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 116.

of God is to receive honor as well as to give it. Although the LXX, from which Paul quotes freely, makes a philological distinction between the honor given God and humans, the emphasis upon the honor system in which both God and humans are entrenched remains. The LXX typically applies τίμη to humans and reserves δόξα, usually translated as "glory," for God. Δόξα, however, shares semantic range with τίμη in the LXX, in the New Testament, and in contemporary Greek and Roman comparanda.[362] The two words are frequently synonyms. Where Paul expresses concern for the glory of God, he expresses concern for the honor God alone merits. Conversely, when Paul warns against idolatry, he follows the tradition in the Hebrew Scripture: "the OT perspective upon idolatry consistently views it within an honour-shame framework, with concomitant acts of divine violence directed against those who would undermine proper respect for God."[363] As we have seen, Paul invokes the paradigmatic episode of divine retribution for idolatry in Exodus 32, the execution of those who worshipped the golden calf fashioned by Aaron on Mt. Sinai, in order to warn against such an assault on God's honor. To honor an image of a foreign deity is to dishonor the God of the Israelites.

With respect to relationships among humans, Paul is as fluent as the Corinthians are in the language of honor. In fact, Paul recognizes that conflicts in the Corinthian community have arisen precisely because the group's members are vying for honor The churches' ostensible conflicts, about sexual immorality, or lawsuits among believers, or marriage, or food sacrificed to idols, or the time and manner of holding the Eucharist, stem from the different expectations people have of the honors they should be accorded.[364] The problem is not unique to Corinth.

[362] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 101.
[363] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 156.
[364] Dale Martin agrees that status differences lie at the heart of many of the conflicts in the Corinthian churches, but adds that those of high and low status have vastly different visions of the human body, which better explains the precise elements of these conflicts. *Corinthian Body*, xv.

Finney highlights the surprising fact that "statistically, the combined lexicography of honour-shame terms within the Pauline corpus is more prevalent than those word-groups which are considered to form the predominant Pauline themes (such as righteousness, grace, law, faith, or S/spirit."[365] Finney highlights Paul's engagement with the competition for honor at Corinth in the first four chapters of 1 Corinthians, as well as his appeal to the crucifixion to critique Corinthian assumptions about honor and restore the community to harmony.

Paul's call for unity in 1 Cor 1:10, and throughout the entire letter, places it in the ancient Greek genre of *homonoia* speeches, a plea for some specific course of action and general concord among the group.[366] Paul's *homonoia* speech uses the theology of the cross to critique the hierarchy of honor that is at the root of much of the strife among Corinthian church members. Having urged the Corinthian Christians in 1:10 to "be united in the same mind and purpose,"[367] and reminded them in 1:23 that "we proclaim Christ crucified," Paul offers evidence of the various expectations of honor among the Corinthian Christians. In 1 Cor 1:26-31, Paul uses terms indicating various ways to mark those in the community who expected different degrees of honor. Paul writes "Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth" (1 Cor 1:26). These descriptive terms applied to some Corinthians, σοφοί, δυνατοί, and εὐγενεῖς, are "all characteristics of those honoured in Greco-Roman society,"[368] though of course Paul is saying there are not many of them. While some scholars, such as Martin, assert that there is a simple division of high and low status members in the Corinthian church, and

[365] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,*14.
[366] Martin, 38-39, quoting Margaret Mitchell. Mitchell shows 1 Corinthians follows the traditional strategies and topoi of homonoia speeches. *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1991).
[367] ἦτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοὶ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ.
[368] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 95.

some like Theissen try to tease out a more complicated hierarchy of status, the actual number of status levels within the community, if indeed there even are different levels,[369] is irrelevant for Paul, who in 1:27-31 tries to reorient them all based on Christ rather than on human perception.

> ἀλλα τὰ μωρὰ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός, ἵνα καταισχύνῃ τοὺς σοφούς, καὶ τὰ ἀσθενῆ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός, ἵνα καταισχύνῃ τὰ ἰσχυρὰ, καὶ τὰ ἀγενῆ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὰ ἐξουθενημένα ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός, τὰ μὴ ὄντα, ἵνα τὰ ὄντα καταργήσῃ, ὅπως μὴ καυχήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. ἐξ αὐτου δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὅς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις, ἵνα καθὼς γέγραπται· *ὁ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω*.
>
> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

As both Martin[370] and Finney[371] claim, Paul is trying to educate recently converted Christians familiar with the Greco-Roman world of honor about a different conception of honor founded on worship of Jesus, a criminal executed by the Roman Empire. Finney suggests Paul wants to "shame his opponents into recognition of their own foolishness and, by so doing, to nullify the honour-bound influences upon them by a process of re-education on the true nature of apostleship."[372] The Corinthians are "no longer to participate in the bondage of an honour-shame culture where personal or group significance revolves around the status achieved in human eyes."[373] It is imperative to note that for Paul, the Corinthians need not necessarily stay unified for long, because the time until the apocalypse is short.

Paul's attempt at this resocialization included the expectation that Jesus would return to overthrow and judge the dominant political powers, and therefore his vocabulary for

---

[369] Friesen critiques several decades' worth of attempts to identify status differences at Corinth because the data from the New Testament itself is insufficient. "Prospects for a Demography," 358.
[370] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 57.
[371] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 59.
[372] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 52.
[373] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 145.

Christian honor includes apocalyptic discourse. Paul wants to place two different worlds in opposition, "the world of Greco-Roman rhetoric and status, with its attendant upper-class ideology, and a somewhat hidden world of apocalyptic reality proclaimed in the gospel of Christ."[374] Instead of simply appealing to the lordship of Christ as another more elevated level, a divine level within the hierarchy of honor, Paul reminds the Corinthians the figure they worship was executed in the most ignominious, shameful way imaginable.[375] In 1 Corinthians 1:23, Paul associates "Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles," with the "power of God and the wisdom of God." Paul "appropriates the terminology of honor ('wisdom,' 'power,') and claims for it the oppositional realm of apocalyptic discourse," a realm represented by the cross.[376] Though Paul reminds the Corinthians that the dishonored Christ is the one they worship, in 1:27-29 Paul insists that God, who "chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise," and "what is weak in the world to shame the strong" retains the highest honor, "so that no one might boast in the presence of God." This same God has made the Corinthians unified in Christ,[377] who became "for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." "Wisdom," usually a marker of high honor in the hierarchy of Greco-Roman society, is in an apocalyptic worldview associated with the crucified Christ, so that even wisdom is not sufficient for honor; righteousness, sanctification, and redemption are needed also. Paul's exhortation in 1 Cor 1:31, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord," is only somewhat a sarcastic critique of the jostling for honor in the Corinthian churches. There was nothing socially unacceptable about claiming honor for oneself: "Public claims to honour would have been especially common in a large competitive city like Roman Corinth and would

[374] Martin, *Corinthian Body,* 57.
[375] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 89.
[376] Martin, *Honour and Conflict, 59*.
[377] 1 Cor 1:30

have been considered a necessary part of normal life, especially if one wanted to be successful."[378] Indeed, many such public claims to honor would have been effected through images of the gods, whether commissioned by individuals, voluntary associations, or the government. Paul wants to shift the grounds for demanding honor from pride in human lineage and achievement to pride in the saving work God has accomplished in Christ so that Christians are firmly rooted in the oppositional world of apocalyptic expectation until the Lord comes.

Despite Paul's attempt to reroute the networks of honor among the Corinthian Christians by orienting them towards Christ, he displays some concern and sympathy for their need to navigate the traditional networks of honor in a first-century CE Roman city, if only so they can keep preaching the gospel and rescue others from the wrath to come. When the Corinthians ask if they should eat food sacrificed to idols when they are guests in another's house, Paul offers a qualified yes.

> εἴ τις καλεῖ ὑμᾶς τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ θέλετε πορεύεσθαι, πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν. ἐὰν δέ τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν, μὴ ἐσθίετε δι᾽ἐκεῖνον τὸν μηνύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν. συνείδησιν δὲ λέγω οὐχι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλά τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου. ἱνατί γὰρ ἡ ἐλευθερια μου κρίνεται ὑπὸ ἄλλης συνειδήσεως; εἰ ἐγὼ χάριτι μετέχω, τί βλασφημοῦμαι ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εὐχαριστῶ; Εἴτε οὖν ἐσθίετε εἴτε πίνετε εἴτε τι ποιεῖτε, πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιεῖτε. ἀπρόσκοποι καὶ Ἰουδαίοις γίνεσθε καὶ Ἕλλησιν καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, καθὼς κἀγὼ πάντα πᾶσιν ἀρέσκω μὴ ζητῶν τὸ ἐμαυτοῦ σύμφορον ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν, ἵνα σωθῶσιν. 1 Cor. 10:27-29
>
> If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, out of consideration for the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience--I mean the other's conscience, not your own. For why should my liberty be subject to the judgment of someone else's conscience?
>
> So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved.

Paul clearly encourages the Corinthian Christians not to completely cut themselves off from pagan society. While we will reserve a discussion of the internal logic of the whole of Paul's claims for later in this chapter, we can see how Paul understands that eating a meal as a guest

[378] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 103.

in the home of another implicates the guest in the honor claims of the host. He does not tell the Corinthians to interrogate the source of a host's food; he advises them to wait until they are told the food has been sacrificed to an idol to refuse it. His "Don't ask, don't tell" policy about whether or not to eat food that has been offered in sacrifice might seem ludicrous, given the likelihood that any meat served at the table had been offered in sacrifice, and yet it reveals a rabbinic ingenuity about how to navigate a potentially difficult social situation. Paul foregrounds two issues--active social engagement with unbelievers, and the ultimate goal of proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers. He commands the Corinthians to "Give no offense" to anyone, and he offers himself up as an example of how to behave in service of his broader goal "that they may be saved." Paul's apocalyptic expectation skews all of his arguments, away from the fear of the unseen powers arrayed against him and towards the hope that others might join the Christian community.

Although Paul never directly identifies images of the gods as participants in an honor system implicating both the human and the divine, his injunctions concerning Christian behavior around images of the gods evince his understanding of images of the gods as currency in a social system dependent upon the attribution of honor. Rather than a fixed "dress code," honor is a "kind of genetic code--a structure of relations--generative of possibilities."[379] As a kind of genetic code for behavior, then, honor includes not only patterns or signs for honor, but patterns or signs for dishonor, "intention to challenge, perceptions of being challenged, and gestures: to bow down before, to reverence, to bend the knee."[380] Paul understands the

[379] Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 71, quoting Delaney, "Seeds of Honor, Fields of Shame" in *Honor Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean,* D.D. Gilmore, ed. *AAA* Special Publication 22 (Washington: American Anthropological Association 1987), 35-48.
[380] Finney, *Honour and Conflict,* 14, apud Malina and Neyrey, *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson 2016).

Christians' need to abide by the genetic code of honor operative in Corinth even as he tries to transform the genetic code of honor operative in the Corinthian community.

Paul's efforts to conclude his answer about concerning whether or not to eat food sacrificed to idols emphasize his understanding of God as the only proper object of honor, and his realization that Greek efforts to honor the God of Israel exclusively will be met with confusion from their Greek friends. Paul's parenetic directive in 10:31, "whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God" upholds the God of Israel as the primary source of honor, from which all honor emanates and to which all honor should return. His next verse, however, "Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God," suggests he knows that honoring God alone in a Greek city like Corinth will cause offense. To refuse to eat sacrificed meat at the marriage of a pagan friend's son or daughter, to fail to celebrate the Thesmophoria with your pagan friends, to abstain from feasting at a funeral banquet--such behavior would hardly go unnoticed. As we have seen, the system of honor binds people both to other people and to gods through behavior around images of the gods. To disrespect an image of a god is to potentially damage relationships with a friend who honors the god as well as the divinity, or the *daimon*, the image represents. Paul tries to justify whatever tolerance he advocates towards behavior around idols through his conviction that the Greeks who do not know Christ and jockey for honor by means of the traditional channels are all in terrible danger.

V Idols and the Discourse of Pollution

In order to discourage his Corinthian audience from having anything to do with idols, even those who know idols are nothing, Paul uses what seems a curious strategy. Paul first relies upon a generic discourse of pollution, and so alludes to social systems outlining purity

and impurity with complicated, extensive histories in Judaism and paganism alike. Paul does not in fact specify the kind of pollution to which he refers, ritual, or corporeal, but as Dale Martin has argued forcefully, in Imperial Rome all pollution was connected: "In the ancient world, notions of the body and pollution were related to concepts of disease. Although disease and pollution do not automatically go together in the modern mind, the logics of the discourses surrounding them are interconnected and mutually informative--possibly in modern culture, certainly in ancient."[381] To his generic allusion to pollution, Paul adds the more specifically Jewish discourse of apocalyptic, and transforms his discussion with the Corinthians about food sacrificed to idols into a broader diatribe against idolatry itself.

In 1 Cor 8, Paul applies a generic discourse of pollution to the concepts of γνῶσις and συνείδησις. In 1 Cor 8:7-9, Paul says the συνείδησις, translated in the NRSV as "conscience," though perhaps better rendered in English as "active self-awareness,"[382] can be polluted, μολύνεται.

> Ἀλλ᾽οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γνῶσις· τινὲς δὲ τῇ συνθείᾳ ἕως ἄρτι τοῦ εἰδώλου ὡς εἰδωλόθυτον ἐσθίουσιν, καὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτῶν ἀσθενὴς οὖσα μολύνεται. βρῶμα δὲ ἡμᾶς οὐ παραστήσει τῷ θεῷ. οὔτε ἐὰν μὴ φάγωμεν ὑστερούμεθα, οὔτε ἐὰν φάγωμεν περισσεύομεν. βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν.
>
> It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 'Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

While μολύνω can mean simply to stain or smear with dirt, pagan writers employ it to mean "defile" in the religious and moral sphere, a usage found in the LXX also. In the LXX and in Hellenistic Jewish apocryphal literature, μολύνω, while not common, refers more specifically

[381] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 140.
[382] v. Soden, H., "*Sakrament und Ethik bei Pls.* (1931) 242, no. 3, found in *TDNT,* ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromley, "σύνοιδα, συνείδησις," Maurer, Christian (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1971), 914.

to cultic defilement.[383] Used three times in the entire New Testament, two of which are in the book of Revelation, Paul uses μολύνω in 1 Cor 8:7 to proclaim his fear that συνείδησις can be polluted,[384] and so invokes tropes of impurity from the Hebrew Scriptures describing both ritual impurity and sin. In the Tanakh, it must be emphasized, sources of ritual impurity are "generally natural and more or less unavoidable;"[385] with a very few exceptions, such as certain narratives in which leprosy is a punishment for a moral failure, "It is not sinful to be ritually impure, and ritual impurity does not result from sin."[386] Neusner observes, however, that in the Tanakh impurity and purity "may serve as metaphors for moral and religious behavior, primarily in regard to matters of sex, idolatry, and unethical action."[387] Paul instead brings these distinct, though analogous systems of sin and ritual impurity quite close together when he says that to defile the συνείδησις of a fellow Christian is to sin against Christ.

Paul's συνείδησις,[388] the "active self-awareness" to which he refers, has a more comprehensive application than the English "conscience," which denotes the ability to discern between right and wrong in the future and perhaps has Kantian overtones of the Moral Law implanted in egalitarian fashion within each individual. Paul's συνείδησις looks to behavior in the past. Paul's συνείδσησις checks a person somewhat painfully, like a bit in a horse's mouth, *after* someone has already acted, "if he overstep the moral limits of his nature."[389] If one acts

---

[383] Isa. 59:3, hands are defiled. Jer. 23:11, a priest is defiled. Is. 65:4, a vessel is stained by unclean food. In Zech. 14:2, raped women are considered defiled. In apocryphal literature, defilement with a specifically cultic denotation of μολύνω appears in Tob. 3:15, 1 Esdras 8:80, 1 Macc. 1:37, 2 Macc. 6:2, and especially 2 Macc. 14:3, where it specially refers to a Jewish high priest who had participated in pagan rituals.
[384] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 181.
[385] Klawans, Jonathan, *Impurity and Sin*, 23.
[386] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 41.
[387] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 10, quoting Neusner.
[388] Maurer, Christian, "σύνοιδα, συνείδησις," found in *TDNT,* 914. Paul never defines συνείδησις himself and his meaning must be determined from the context. Of the 14 times Paul uses the word and its cognates, 8 are in his discussion of food sacrificed to idols in 1 Cor. 8-10. Maurer argues that for Paul συνείδησις "has now become the central self-consciousness of knowing and acting man," 917.
[389] Pierce, C.A. *Conscience in the New Testament* (London: SCM 1955), 41, from Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 180.

and remains "unconvicted by one's *syneidēsis*, one may assume that no wrong--or at least no intentional wrong--has been committed."[390] Returning to his theme of critiquing the confidence his audience has placed in the γνῶσις, then, the knowledge everyone has that "idols are nothing," Paul assumes facile intellectual assent to this proposition is not the γνῶσις to which he refers, and so one cannot simply protect oneself from a tainted συνείδησις with right thinking. Indeed, Paul implies συνείδησις can be polluted through an act of perception--seeing a fellow Christian eat food that has been sacrificed to idols. The "active self-awareness," the συνείδησις, of some, having been "used to," "acquainted with," or "intimate with" idols "until now," is weak, and therefore vulnerable. Συνείδησις cannot be strengthened or transformed overnight, not even by instruction. Until the συνείδησις of the weak is strengthened or protected (a regimen for which Paul does not detail), their συνείδησις might deteriorate further. A "weak" συνείδησις, having witnessed a fellow Christian eating food sacrificed to idols, becomes polluted when it looks to the past, regards recent association with idols as acceptable, and feels the temptation to return to old behavior.

Paul does not think believing the right things, orthodoxy, will strengthen or protect συνείδησις, and therefore the "strong" cannot simply educate the "weak" with the proper kind of knowledge. Indeed, far from trying to get his audience to agree on the proper kind of gnosis, I would suggest Paul is trying to get them off the subject of gnosis altogether, a motive which prompts his quip at the beginning of the chapter, "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up."

Paul's use of συνείδησις, then, a term probably used by the Corinthians themselves when they write Paul, does not accord with the Corinthian understanding because Paul uses μολύνεται in a way contrary to its typical use.

---

[390] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 180.

> For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Paul surprisingly indicts the strong, who may well have been charged with sinning by the weak because they were eating in the temples of idols, with sin, for a different reason. Paul argues that those who eat in pagan temples because they think "idols are nothing" can both wound the συνείδησις of a fellow Christian and therefore sin against Christ themselves. While Paul has no systematic theory of συνείδησις, his use of it suggests he undermines its normal meaning.

> Logically, therefore, a strong syneidesis is one that successfully convicts a person and correctly influences behavior and recognition of past misdeeds. For Paul, on the contrary, it is a weak syneidesis that convicts and a strong that has no scruples. The sign of a weak syneidesis in the Corinthian church is its ability to convict its possessor. Thus for Paul the function of syneidesis has nothing to do with moral guidance or reliable self-knowledge. Syneidesis may very well be a false guide: a weak syneidesis may be mistaken about the existence and power of idolatrous gods, but it can still be polluted by eating their food![391]

As Martin emphasizes, "in the end, the only significant aspect of syneidesis in Paul's view is that it can be polluted."[392] I would add that Paul's use of συνείδησις suggests it can be polluted through an act of perception.

Paul's application of the notion of impurity, a generic concept familiar to both Jews and pagans, to συνείδησις, though without outlining any means of removing it, perhaps raises the question of how much Paul is actually invested in the idea of a polluted συνείδησις, especially given its absence in his other letters. Our focus, however, is not on Paul's theology per se, but on the underlying logic of his reflection, and its consequences. Paul's attempt to control the behavior of the Corinthian Christians with the possibility of the polluted συνείδησις, contracted through perception, oddly resembles the operation of the panopticon prison, designed by Jeremy Bentham, analyzed by Foucault, which controls prisoners through the probability, but

[391] Martin, *Corinthian Body,* 181.
[392] Martin, *Corinthian Body,* 181.

not certainty, that they are being watched. The assumptions of Bentham, who thought effective power was both visible, and unverifiable,[393] are eerily mirrored in Paul's discourse of idols and pollution. Images of the gods remain a source of pollution, not, ironically, for the "brother" with γνῶσις who is eating food sacrificed to them, but for the whole body of Christ *if* one of the "weak" witnesses the same "brother" eating. Pollution may lead to the sin of actual idolatry, resulting in the destruction of the idolater, and a sin against Christ. Every image of a god is a potential source of pollution for the community of Christians, and images of the gods were literally everywhere. The images of gods, everywhere visible, contain the latent power of divinities, and the power to pollute the weak συνείδησις of anyone witnessing another Christian's behavior around an idol. The pollution of συνείδησις is, of course, an unverifiable event, at least during the "incubation" period, while the polluted one processes what he or she has witnessed, and until they return to worshipping idols outright. Paul's concluding rhetorical flourish in 1 Cor 8 only magnifies his portrayal of what is at stake for the whole community in eating meat sacrificed to idols: "Therefore if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I do not cause one of them to fall." To be a Christian in the pagan city of Corinth is to encounter everywhere, daily, images of the gods, visible contaminants whose capacity to infect the weak συνείδησις of a fellow remains an unverifiable, constant threat. Paul's use of the concept of pollution, whether a carefully considered or spontaneous rhetorical decision, assumes an extensive, visible, unverifiable network of power.

[393] Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books 1977), 201.

VI Idols and Apocalyptic

Having either taken a rhetorical excursus in 1 Cor 9 to reinforce his apostleship,[394] or attempted to shore up his defenses against actual attacks, in 1 Cor 10 Paul proceeds to the broader topic of idolatry in general, and suffuses his entire discussion of images of the gods with apocalyptic discourse, foreshadowed in 1 Cor 8. More specifically, Paul's use of Exodus 32, the episode of the golden calf, in the service of his broader apocalyptic expectation transforms the claim that idols are nothing into a claim that associating with idols is a potential death sentence. The significance of Paul's use of apocalyptic discourse in his discussion of idolatry is the expansion of God's judgment into a subject he has attempted to manipulate with nuance--appropriate behavior in the presence of images of the gods. Paul's use of Exodus 32 undermines the logic of the careful distinctions he attempts to draw between avoiding food one knows has been sacrificed to a pagan god and eating food one merely suspects may have been sacrificed to a pagan god. Paul's apocalyptic language overwhelms his casuistry, and he therefore obliterates rather than answers the unresolved question in Hellenistic Judaism of how idolatry is even defined.

Paul begins his warning against idolatry by invoking stories from Exodus, with which he assumes his audience is familiar, though they may not have heard his interpretation of them.[395]

> Οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν πάντες ὑπο τὴν νεφέλην ἦσαν καὶ πάντες διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διῆλθον καὶ πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν εβαπτίσθησαν ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν βρῶμα ἔφαγον καὶ πάντες τὸ αὐτὸ πνευματικὸν ἔπιον πόμα· ἔπινον γὰρ ἐκ πνευματικῆς ἀκολουθούσης πέτρας, ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός. Ἀλλ᾽οὐκ ἐν τοῖς πλείοσιν αὐτῶν εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεός, κατεστρώθησαν γὰρ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ. Ταῦτα δὲ τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγενήθησαν, εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἐπιθυμητὰς κακῶν, καθῶς κἀκεῖνοι ἐπεθημησαν. μηδὲ εἰδωλολάτραι γίνεσθε καθώς τινες αὐτῶν, ὥσπερ γέγραπται. *ἐκάθισεν ὁ λαὸς φαγεῖν καὶ πεῖν καὶ ἀνέστησαν παίζειν.* μηδέ πορνεύομεν, καθώς τινες αύτών ἐπόρνευσαν καὶ ἔπεσαν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ εἴκοσι τρεῖς χιλιάδες. μηδὲ ἐκπειράζωμεν τὸν Χριστὸν, καθώς

[394] Martin argues the excursus in 1 Cor. 9 is not a real apology, but another standard rhetorical technique to present his own actions as a model for behavior. *Corinthian Body,* 52.
[395] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 165.

> τινες αὐτῶν ἐπείρασαν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ὄφεων ἀπώλλυντο. μηδὲ γογγύζετε, καθάπερ τινὲς αυτῶν ἐγόγγυσαν καὶ ἀπώλοντο ὑπὸ τοῦ ὀλοθρευτοῦ. ταῦτα δὲ τυπικῶς συνέβαινεν ἐκείνοις, ἐγράφη δὲ πρὸς νουθεσίαν ἡμῶν, εἰς οὕς τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντηκεν. 1 Cor 10:1-11.
>
> For I would not have you be ignorant, brothers, of the fact that our ancestors were all under the cloud and all came through the sea, and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food and all had the same spiritual stuff as their drink. For they were drinking from the spiritual, ever-following rock; and that rock was the Christ. But not with the majority of the was God pleased, for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now, these things happened as typifications of us, so that we might not become desirous of evil things, as some of them desired evil. And do not become idolaters, as some of them did--as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and they rose up to play." And let us not play the part of fornicators, as some of them committed fornication, so that there fell, in a single day, three thousand souls. And let us not test Christ, as some of them tested him and found themselves being smitten by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them grumbled and were brought to nought by the Destroyer. Now these things were happening to them archetypically and were written down for our exhortation, (we) on whom the ends of the ages have come.

Paul's efforts to inscribe the Greek Christian community in Corinth into the paradigmatic, founding myth of Israel both serves his goal of incorporating the Greek followers of Jesus into the people of Israel and of setting a boundary between these new members of the community and pagan Greeks. Moreover, Paul's additions to the Exodus narrative (whether from Paul himself or from pre-Pauline teaching)[396] concerning the baptism into Moses and the rock as Christ, as well as allusions to the Eucharist, underscore his warning that just as some of the Israelites who were at Sinai committed apostasy, so too can Christians if they are not careful.

Paul's additions to the Exodus narrative, although perfectly in keeping with Hellenistic Jewish interpretations of the Torah,[397] reflect his concerted effort to draw parallels between the Israelites in the primordial covenant narrative and the Greeks who have been baptized into the church. More subtly, Paul suggests the Israelites God freed from bondage in Egypt are analogous to the Greeks "on whom the ends of the ages have come." Through Christ, God has liberated the Greeks from judgment, but like the Israelites who were released from bondage, Greek Christians are not out of danger. Idolatry remains a temptation.

[396] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 165-166.
[397] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 164.

In warning his audience that idols can bring the judgment of God, Paul obviously appeals to centuries-old Jewish traditions reflected throughout the Torah and the Prophets, but Paul's concerns about the enduring attraction of images of the gods have multiple contemporary parallels. More recent Hellenistic traditions also claimed that associating with idols could inflame God's wrath. In 2 Maccabees,[398] after a battle with the Greeks, fallen Jewish soldiers were said to have objects consecrated to idols on their bodies. These are the rebels against Greek rule, and yet their cause of death was disobedience of Torah.[399] Moreover, mistreating idols could bring on the wrath of God's divine enemies, Satan and his attendant demons. In the *Testament of Job,* written between the first century BCE and CE, the entire narrative is provoked by God calling Job, in this text a Gentile king, to worship him and destroy a temple and its idol in his own land. God warns Job that destroying the temple and its idol will provoke Satan to attack him, but Job destroys the temple anyway, fully aware of the consequences.[400] From this Hellenistic Jewish perspective, a perspective Paul shares, the idols of the pagan gods have their own divine champions.

On the other hand, Paul's initial attempt to permit Greek Christian participation in pagan social life parallels Hellenistic Jewish attempts to participate in Greek cultural and civic activity while retaining Jewish identity. Such Hellenistic Jewish participation in Greek social life covers a range of activities, and might include passive, indirect, and voluntary participation. For example, although in 1 Maccabees[401] the initiative to construct a gymnasium

---

[398] 2 Maccabees 12:39-40. "On the next day, as had now become necessary, Judas and his men went to take up the bodies of the fallen and to bring them back to lie with their kindred in the sepulchres of their ancestors. Then under the tunic of each one dead they found sacred tokens of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbids the Jews to wear. And it became clear to all that this was the reason these men had fallen."
[399] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger,* 6.
[400] *Testament of Job* 5:1-3. From *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, James H. Charlesworth, ed. (New York: Doubleday 1983), 829-867. R.P. Spittler, trans.
[401] 1 Maccabees 1:14.

in Israel prompted violent revolt, Philo of Alexandria, living in the same century, endorsed attendance at *gymnasia* because he attended one himself.[402] As more evidence for the participation of Jews in the Greek educational system, lists of ephebes from Cyrene, one from the end of the first century BCE, the other dated to 3 or 4 CE, contain Jewish names.[403] While Philo disapproves of idolatry, associating it with sensuality and femininity,[404] and thinks images are dangerous because they seduce,[405] he nonetheless commends Phidias as an artist.[406] In the text *Joseph and Aseneth,* written sometime between the second centuries BCE and CE, about the marriage of Joseph to the daughter of an Egyptian priest, Joseph prays for this Egyptian woman who loves him, and she abandons the worship of the Egyptian gods with their idols after praying to God herself. The archangel Michael even appears to Aseneth and promises her protection from Satan, sure to be angry because she has abandoned the idols he oversees.

In another first century Jewish text, idolatry is notable for its complete absence. The *Testament of Abraham*, a Jewish work probably written in late first century CE Egypt,[407] includes a vision of the judgment of souls in the afterlife, like apocalyptic, but never once mentions either the covenant in general or idolatry in particular. Abraham, having refused to die until he is taken on a journey by the archangel Michael to see "all the inhabited earth," witnesses people committing moral and immoral actions, and being held accountable by God for them, but the text makes no distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The *Testament of Abraham,* endorsing "good works," not adherence to the covenant, and counseling the

[402] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger,* 10, *Spec 2.229-230.*
[403] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger,* 10.
[404] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 35.
[405] Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger*, 37.
[406] Sandelin *Attraction and Danger*, 61.
[407] Sanders, E.P., trans. "Testament of Abraham," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, James H. Charlesworth, ed. (New York: Doubleday 1983), 875.

avoidance of moral sins, therefore testifies to "the existence in Egypt of a form of Judaism that stressed neither the philosophical interpretation of Judaism, as did Philo, nor the need to retain strictly the commandments that set Jews apart from Gentiles, as did the author of *Joseph and Aseneth*."[408] Of these texts, Paul's approach, with his assumptions about cosmic enemies and the way he regards abandonment of idols as a condition for Greeks entering into God's covenant with Israel through Jesus, most closely resembles *Joseph and Aseneth.* In 1 Cor 10:14-22, however, Paul turns from discussion of idolatry in Exodus as an example for Greek Christians to a full-throated condemnation of idolatry as a whole, and its implications for the end times.

Paul infuses his fiercest warning about idolatry with his conviction that eating food sacrificed to an idol may result in partnership with *daimonia*, the enemies of Christ and of God. Paul's warning has a larger scope than Chaniotis's "megatheism," the worship of one god exclusively as the strongest god in a world of many divine beings. Paul's apocalyptic vision has no neutral ground, and whoever worships a god other than the God of Israel sides with God's enemies.

> βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα· οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίοντες τὰς θυσίας κοινωνοὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου εἰσίν; Τὶ οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστιν ἢ ὅτι εἴδωλών τί εἰσίν; ἀλλ᾽ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῷ. οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι. οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων, οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων. ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; μὴ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτου ἐσμεν;
>
> Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagan sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? 1 Cor 10:18-22.

Paul marks the body as a site of battles between good and evil, even in the absence of an apocalyptic worldview.[409] We recall in chapter two how a Greek speaking writer within one

[408] Goldenberg, *Nations That Know Thee Not,* 74-75.
[409] Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 161.

hundred years of Paul, Lucian of Samosata, confirms the prevalence of Paul's fear, though he is satirizing it. The divinity behind Eucrates's statue resembles the *daimonia* Paul believes lurk around the images of the gods. Paul's assumption that there are "enemy agents everywhere in the cosmos" exacerbates his concern for the vulnerable human body.[410]

Several scholars have commented on the extremity of Paul's views of *daimonia*, whether in Hellenistic Judaism or Hellenistic Greek religion. Possibly drawing on Deuteronomy 32:17,[411] Paul thinks anyone who eats food sacrificed to idols may be brought into bondage with demons.[412] Those with the proper *gnosis* are, as we have already discussed, immune, but the proper *gnosis* is not immediately available. Paul's apocalyptic vision, then, adds an urgency to his message, unusual even in Hellenistic demonology,[413] which "would have struck Greek and Roman intellectuals as bizarre in the extreme."[414]

Conclusion

As we have already seen, Paul's tone softens by the end of his discussion about idols, as though his recommendations were fairly simple. Paul's injunction, "Do everything for the glory of God," is an anodyne administered to his overall arguments, perhaps in hopes that he can move on to the pressing concerns in 1 Cor 11, the behavior of women in worship and of the entire community at the Lord's Supper. The discourses Paul shares with his Greek audience about images of the gods, their role as matrices of divine power and their participation in honor exchange, are stamped with Paul's peculiar application of the discourse of pollution, and his

[410] Martin even speculates that some at Corinth expressed concern that a demon could be ingested. *Corinthian Body*, 188.
[411] "They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to deities they had never known, to new ones recently arrived, whom your ancestors had not feared." Deut. 32:17
[412] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians,* 173.
[413] Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 173.
[414] Martin, *Corinthian Body,* 135.

appeal to the fulminant discourse of apocalyptic. Paul's apocalyptic discourse in particular, laced as it is with fears about the pollution of the συνείδησις of the weak, sinning against Christ, and making alliances with demons, transforms images of the gods into sources of contagion. The logic of apocalyptic is a logic of identifying polarities, hardly congruent with the situational ethics Paul attempts to prescribe with some of his advice about how to behave around images of the gods. Perhaps this is why the rabbis who compiled the Talmud, the forerunners of Rabbinic Judaism, rejected apocalyptic altogether--apocalyptic is ill suited to the minutiae of daily life, the small, still significant choices the pious make as they navigate a material, embodied world in an attempt to discern the will of God.

Chapter 4 Fleeing Idolatry and Affective Conversion

The congruence, and divergence, between the perspectives of images of the gods in Paul and in the pagan writers who bookend him chronologically compels us to reckon with the role of these objects in narratives of early Christianity, particularly studies of early Christian worship spaces, and in accounts of early Christian experience, problematic as the latter category has proven to be in religious studies. This chapter's twofold aim is to assess the significance of images of the gods in early Christian worship spaces and to argue for the implications of Paul's apocalyptic discourse on pagan converts' experience of paintings and statues of gods. First, I claim that the overlapping discourses used for images of the gods by Jews and pagans allows for a whole host of historical and interpretive possibilities for the first century CE Corinthian church. At the very least, we must acknowledge, as Økland says in her analysis of how discourses of gender and sacred space inform new Christian perspectives in the pagan milieu of Corinth, "what the texts meant, or mean, Paul can influence, but not determine."[415] Given that "idolatry" is nowhere defined precisely, neither in pagan, nor Jewish, nor Christian literature, historians of first century Christianity must consider as a possibility the continued participation of some Greek Christians in pagan rituals, as J.Z. Smith suggested almost two decades ago,[416] and as Jenn Cianca[417] has argued much more recently for house church Christianity all across the Mediterranean basin. Unfortunately, the lack of first person accounts of the pagans who joined the Corinthian Christian community prevents us from studying in more detail the discourses these new Christians were using in order to navigate

[415] Økland, *Women,* 242.
[416] Smith, J.Z. "Re: Corinthians," in *Relating Religion* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 2004), 340-361.
[417] Cianca, Jenn. *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space: The Roman House as Early Christian Meeting Place* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2018).

Paul's prohibition of idolatry and their new commitments to a crucified, divine man. We just do not know exactly what interactions formerly pagan Christians had with polytheism. We have some archaeological models of Christian worship space, access to the pagan and Jewish discourse used to describe images of the gods, and an extremely limited amount of first century archaeological evidence for domestic space in Corinth. For this reason, although I endorse the claims that some former pagans who comprised Paul's audience in 1 Corinthians were engaging in some pagan rituals surrounding images of the gods, especially in domestic, commercial, and social contexts where to spurn them would have been socially disadvantageous,[418] and although I lay out both Smith's and Cianca's arguments on this front, I want to avoid overtaxing claims dependent on circumstantial evidence.

In the second part of this chapter, then, I take a different approach in order to propose a theoretical model that raises a different set of possibilities about early Christian religious experience, particularly early Christian emotions, around images of the gods. We began this investigation into images of the gods by claiming that they had been dismissed by scholars for centuries with the polemical category of idolatry. The category of emotion to which we have linked images of the gods through the indigenous category of honor has been similarly problematic. Using a concept of emotional regimes in religion developed in sociology, I will argue that Paul's application of apocalyptic discourse to images of the gods reveals his attempt to convert his audience emotionally as well as doctrinally. Paul wants to demolish any lingering emotional attachments to statues and paintings and to mark them, and those who worship with them, for future destruction, even as he encourages his audience to maintain their social commitments. Paul's use of apocalyptic discourse, however, inhibits any negotiation with

[418] Gooch, *Dangerous Food,* 46.

images of the gods, and subverts the emotional regime he wants to cultivate. Scholars of first century Christian experience must foreground the role of pagan images of the gods as palimpsests of pagan memory overwritten with Christian exhortations of apocalyptic fear, a pattern which flourishes in the second century.

II "Flee Idolatry?" or Don't Ask Don't Tell?

Lacking first century C.E. primary texts authored by gentile Christians describing how they understood Paul's directive to "flee idolatry," J.Z. Smith and Jenn Cianca both rely on comparanda to suggest that at least some of the recently converted pagans who were the intended audience of Paul's Corinthian correspondence either creatively found a way to keep participating in pagan rituals or attempted to ignore them entirely as they worshipped in spaces replete with pagan images and memories of pagan rituals. Smith deals directly with 1 Corinthians, a text he admits has, maybe more than any other New Testament text, guided missionary responses to the religions of other people.[419] Cianca, whose focus is on house-church Christianity of the first three centuries C.E., has broader, more speculative aims, and wants to "creatively, but responsibly, present a series of options for worship space" among early Christians;[420] she then argues for a model of early Christian sacred space in house churches.[421] Both Smith and Cianca claim we should assume the continued involvement of at least some early Christians in pagan rituals.

---

[419] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 340.
[420] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space*, 33.
[421] Cianca's approach, her dependence on southern Italic archaeological comparanda to model early Christian experience of space, has some notable predecessors, such as Peter Oakes *Reading Romans in Pompeii* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2009).

Smith cites two examples of people practicing indigenous religions responding to Christian missionary efforts, more specifically to an ecclesiastical authority's prohibition of missionaries from eating food that has been sacrificed to another god. Smith demonstrates how the prohibition was more of a starting point for negotiating relationships between Christian missionaries and indigenous groups rather than an ending point that prevented any association between Christians and non-Christians at mealtimes framed by animal sacrifice. In one example from 1934, of a 20th century Dutch Calvinist missionary effort in West Sumba, Indonesia, an ecclesiastical authority, the Special Assembly of Missionaries, issues a directive regarding the eating of food sacrificed to other gods. The directive parallels Paul's message in 1 Cor 8-10.

> A Christian, through the accepting and eating of meat brought to the house [that comes] from animals slain according to pagan *adat* [custom], of which he knows the source, has objective communion with the worship of the devil...the accepting and eating of such flesh is in conflict with God's Word, for which reason...our Christians must hate and eschew such a thing from the heart.[422]

Although successful missionary efforts led to the decline of traditional Sumbanese religious rituals, continued practice of traditional animal sacrifice actually depended on Christian support and creative interpretation of the prohibition. At least since the 1980's, practitioners of traditional Sumbanese animal sacrifice omitted a pig from their sacrificial prayers so that Christian guests could eat it: "a 'legal fiction' was created that one pig was slaughtered in an ordinary act, in contradistinction to its fellows, which were ritually slain."[423] Other similarly creative ways to cut or distribute the meat of sacrificed animals allowed Christians and the practioners of indigenous Sumbanese religion to interact with each other at meals. In another 20th century example from Papua New Guinea, Smith cites Christian missionary attempts to

---

[422] Keane, W. "Materialism, Missionaries, and Modern Subjects in Colonial Indonesia," in P. van de Veer, ed. *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* (New York and London: Routledge 1996), 152. Apud Smith "Re: Corinthians 2004), 341.
[423] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 341.

convert the Atbalmin, and to force them to abandon their indigenous religious tradition. Indigenous religious practices of the Atbalmin, much like ancient Greek polytheistic practices, were "so intercalated into the fabric of everyday Atbalmin social and material relations that such abandonment was, practically speaking, impossible."[424] Responses to both nativistic and Christian revivals in succeeding decades among the Atbalmin resulted in an ethnographer admitting that attempts to label Atbalmin practices as "indigenous" or "Christian" were counter-productive: "What was indigenous in Atbalmin in the early to middle 1980s was...not so much how they were Christian but how they were both Christian and non-Christian at the same time."[425] Smith acknowledges Paul's waffling on the subject of how his audience should regard idols, "his shift on 'idols' from meaningless to meaningful,"[426] and argues that rather than assume complete compliance with Paul's prohibitions of associating with images of the gods, Paul's own ambivalence primes a diversity of responses, misunderstanding, and experimentation on the Corinthian Christians' part. I would add that, compared to these two examples Smith cites, first century Christians may have experienced a different power differential between themselves and their teachers than the one between Indonesian natives and Christian missionaries, but the likelihood of creative interpretations to negotiate social interactions remains.

Of particular interest for our purposes is Smith's suggestion that comparison of Pauline and indigenous Corinthian understanding of the term *pneuma* can allow for a redescription of the category of *pneuma*, understood by Paul (and consequently, the majority of exegetes) to

---

[424] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 343.
[425] E. Bercovitch, "The Altar of Sin: Social Multiplicity and Christian Conversion among a New Guinea People," in S. Mizruchi, ed, *Religion and Cultural Studies* (Princeton 2001), 228. Apud Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 345.
[426] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 350.

refer to the "Holy Spirit," the Spirit of God. Possibly, from the Corinthian Christians' perspective, *pneuma*, which Paul mentions in 1st Cor 5:3-4, 7:40, 11:20-21, and 15:29, and which he associates with special knowledge (*gnosis*) refers to spirits of the dead,[427] especially if these poor Greeks in the Corinthian milieu are familiar with Roman paganism, where honoring the ancestors was so common. Elsewhere in the New Testament, *pneuma* can mean ghost, as in Luke 24:37, 39 or the righteous dead, as in Heb 12:23.[428] Smith, assuming the Corinthians to whom Paul writes are comprised of recently resettled freed slaves from Greece, Syria, Judaea, and Egypt, further posits this group longing for contact with the ancestors of the dead they have literally left behind in their former homes: "Some Corinthians may have understood Paul as providing them, in the figure of Christ, with a more proximate and mobile ancestor for their new, nonethnic 'Christian' *ethnos*."[429] The body of Christ image (1 Cor. 12:27) Paul uses to refer to the church then becomes, for these Christians, a mobile, collective ancestor, albeit one "experienced in a traditional way, in a meal" (1 Cor 10:17).[430] The scholarly rush to associate *pneuma* with the Holy Spirit as part of a channel of meaning that extends back to the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew *rûaḥ* and forward into the New Testament *pneuma* ignores tributaries of other meanings, and overlooks possible interpretive windows for better understanding first century CE domestic religion in Roman Greece.

If, as Leopold Bloom muses in *Ulysses,* a good puzzle would be to walk through Dublin without coming across a pub, a more challenging puzzle would be to walk through an ancient Roman city without coming across a shrine, common as they were in private and public spaces. In her study designed to place "house-churches" in their Roman, pagan context, Cianca uses

[427] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 351.
[428] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 348.
[429] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 351.
[430] Smith, "Re: Corinthians," 351.

archaeological and literary sources about Roman domestic religion to argue that, in the first three centuries C.E., objects and images associated with domestic worship would have been in every domestic space, a common worship space in early Christianity,[431] from the *atrium-peristyle* homes of the elite to the *insulae* and one-room apartments and workshops of the working poor.[432] Furthermore, second, third, and even fourth century Christian literary sources suggest some ambiguity about whether Christians even refrained from practicing domestic religious rituals, despite the alarm raised by Christian writers such as Tertullian,[433] Cyprian,[434] and Lactantius, all of whom believe Roman gods, and especially Roman household gods, were demons.[435]

> It is clear that first and second century attitudes toward the domestic gods were not always consistent. On the one hand, idols and frying pans do not pose a threat to Christianity, but on the other hand, performing rituals to these same deities can sometimes be seen as actively harmful. This inconsistency...indicates a lack of clear, incisive prohibition of the domestic cult within Christian homes and meeting places.[436]

Even as late as the fourth century, Augustine, in a sermon, complains about people coming to church after they have participated in domestic cult, and has to remind people that domestic worship is idolatrous.[437] If Roman domestic worship, though at its most prominent in the late Republic and early Empire,[438] thrived even in the post-Constantinian era, pagan domestic religious rituals were performed in the same spaces, and sometimes *by the same people*, as early Christian rituals such as baptism and the eucharist.[439]

---

[431] Cianca, Jenn. *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space*, 22. Edward Adams challenges the view that 1st century Christians met "almost exclusively" in houses. *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* (London and New York: T&T Clark 2013)
[432] Cianca uses archaeological data from Pompeii, Ostia, Dura Europos, and a Roman villa at Lullingstone.
[433] In *De Anima* 39.1, Tertullian indicates Christians have been conducting apotrapaic rituals that accompany childbirth, an event that would take place at home. Cianca, *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space*, 84-85.
[434] Cyprian, *Quod idola dii non sint*, 4. Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 86.
[435] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual,* 86-87.
[436] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual,* 87-88.
[437] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 88-89.
[438] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 54.
[439] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 89, 100-101, 110.

Cianca's focus on the Roman *domus*, based largely on evidence from the Italic peninsula,[440] the primary source for our knowledge of the first century C.E. *domus*, emphasizes the prominence and significance of domestic religion in the most public areas of the Roman house, the ones most likely to be seen by those outside of the family. These spaces include the *atrium*, the *triclinium*, or dining room, and the *tablinum*, or office. These most public spaces in the Roman house were the most elaborately furnished, including *lararia*, the typical shrine used to house images of the homeowner's ancestors, and often other important gods as well,[441] because the family needed to perform its Roman identity, represented by his efforts to honor his ancestors, for guests. In the *atrium-peristyle* homes of the wealthy elite, the homeowner would entertain and confer with clients in the atrium or perhaps another one of these public spaces during the *salutatio*, and the guests could affirm that the homeowner appropriately honors his ancestors. Not only were sacrifices to the *Lares* made every day at meals, they were made during important rites of passage, such as the donning of the *toga virilis* for a young man or for an infant nine days after its birth.[442] Worship of the domestic gods took place outside the homes of the elite as well, in the "workshops, baths, depots, shops, bars, markets, hotels, and apartments" frequented by the less fortunate: it is clear, in short, that "every type of space in which people lived and worked has some evidence of the worship of the domestic gods."[443]

Cianca's more specific examples of the confluence of pagan images and Christian worship focus on two ancient spaces renovated for use as churches, the well-known house church at Dura Europos in Syria, and a less well-known villa at Lullingstone, in Kent in Great

[440] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 36. While some may object to basing claims about Roman domestic architecture on evidence from southern Italy alone, it is hardly different from basing claims about ancient Greek religion on evidence that is predominantly from Athens.
[441] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 63.
[442] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 56-57.
[443] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 62.

Britain. Her analysis of these spaces reveals at the very least a Christian tolerance of, and at the most some pious engagement with, pagan images of divine figures. At Dura Europos in Syria, a third century C.E. house was renovated to include both an assembly hall for Christian meetings and a baptistery. Much has been written about Dura, but scholars have turned most of their attention to the Christian elements of the space, such as the biblical scenes painted on the walls of the baptistery, and neglected the pagan imagery and objects still contained in the house--the Bacchic frieze in the assembly hall and the presence of small circles of blue and green glass embedded in the walls of Room 5, objects with purportedly apotropaic functions.[444] The scholarly assumption seems to be that the assembly hall, where the celebration of the eucharist was held and where teaching occurred, was less sacred than the baptistery.[445] These pagan images and objects, however, "both indicate a certain level of comfort with some vestiges of traditional Roman life"[446] on the part of the Christians who worshipped at Dura. If they felt the full force of a prohibition of pagan artifacts, the Christians who worshipped here did not show it.

The Roman villa at Lullingstone in Great Britain presents the more intriguing possibility of a person or a group who honored Christ and engaged in pagan rites simultaneously. According to Cianca's interpretation, in the villa's later centuries of occupation, Christ is honored on the main floor while the ancestors of the dead are honored in a basement room directly below. The villa at Lullungstone in Kent was constructed in the second century C.E. around what was originally a first century C.E. farmhouse, and included a bath complex, some kitchens, and several additional rooms.[447] The villa was expanded in the

[444] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 95-97.
[445] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 98.
[446] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 102.
[447] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 105.

late third century, and again in the late fourth century. In some of the fourth century ruins, walls painted with Christian *orans* figures and several chi-rho monograms, part of a chapel according to the excavator's plausible interpretation, were discovered, having collapsed into the basement cellar after a fire.[448] This basement room, called the "Deep Room," was part of the original second century expansion of the farmhouse, and contained a well, which was the water source for all the subsequent inhabitants of the site, and a niche painted with water nymphs set in the basement's south wall.[449] A set of tiled stairs led from the house directly down to the painted niche, considered by the excavator G.W. Meates a focus of pious activity.

In the late third century renovation of the villa, the new owners continued to use the well but left the stairs down to the painted niche blocked off. On this set of stairs someone carefully deposited two damaged marble busts, possibly the property of one of the villa's second century residents, or even the new third century owners.[450] In the concrete floor of the basement, the third century owners built two votive pots, whose necks jutted up out of the floor, receptacles for libations.[451] When the basement floor was renovated again in the fourth century, two more pots were built into the floor. If these vessels were libations for the dead, as seems likely, they were used until the structure burned down in the fifth century. Cianca concludes that "while the Christian chapel was fully functioning directly above, pagan ritual practice continued below."[452] She suggests that a similar acceptance of Roman domestic religion is probable in the unrenovated, and possibly even renovated, spaces where Christians

[448] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 106.
[449] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 106-107.
[450] Cianca attributes the busts to the 2nd century owners because they seem to have been damaged already, but in my opinion they could be images of the ancestors of the new owners, who brought them to the villa from elsewhere.
[451] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 107.
[452] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 107.

gathered for worship.[453] Although the practice of honoring ancestors is different from honoring pagan gods, engaging in ritual activity directed towards images skirts dangerously close to behavior Paul clearly considered idolatrous.

Even the rejection of Cianca's thesis, on the grounds of her appeal to comparanda for domestic worship from Pompeii and Ostia, or Christian worship at Dura and Lullingstone, or of our limited evidence for first century domestic spaces in the Roman east, makes it difficult to place first century C.E. Christians in worship spaces absent images of the gods. Edward Adams, who devoted an entire study to critiquing the decades-old scholarly consensus that first century C.E. Christians met only in houses,[454] shows that a multiplicity of locales blending private and public uses, equally plausible worship spaces for the first Christians,[455] housed images of gods. Niches for *lararia* have been found not only as expected in the spheres of domestic life, such as kitchens, dining rooms, *atria*, peristyles, and gardens,[456] but in those spaces that commonly engaged those outside the family-- *tabernae*, ubiquitous throughout the Roman world,"[457] other workshops,[458] and *horrea*, warehouses found throughout the empire.[459]

In his study of domestic and workplace religion in Ostia, Jan Bakker identifies *lararia* and niches for images of gods throughout the workshops and warehouses of the city, most of them dating to the early to mid-second century. In one location, a shrine dating to the Hadrianic period was honored by the local Fullers.[460] In a warehouse, the Horrea Epagathiana et

---

[453] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 110.
[454] Adams, Edward. *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* (London: T&T Clark International 2013), 1.
[455] Adams, *Earliest Christian*, 7. Jewett, Balch, and Oakes agree that workshops in particular would have been typical meeting places for 1st century Christians.
[456] Adams, *Earliest Christian*, 114, citing Bodel.
[457] MacMahon, Ardle, cited in Adams 138.
[458] Boyce, G.K. 'Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii,' *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 14.
[459] Adams, *Earliest Christian Meeting Places*, 154.
[460] Bakker, Jan. *Living and Working with the Gods* (Amsterdam: Gieben 1994), 67.

Epaprhoditiana, two wall niches with *aedicula* facades were constructed near the entrance to its courtyard and two in the actual courtyard.[461] Where the original designs of a building did not include wall niches for paintings or statues, people hacked them out of the walls, as in the Magazzino dei Doli. Roman inscriptions in *horrea* attest to the variety of deities worshipped by the workers there-- the Genius Loci, Fortuna, Bona Dea, Silvanus, Jupiter, Hercules, and Sol, among others.[462] The shops and bars of second century C.E. Ostia, likely the homes as well as work spaces of many manual laborers and shopkeepers,[463] and therefore possible meeting places for small groups of Christians in other cities of the Empire, often contained wall niches for images of gods.[464] Larger complexes of shops with courtyards may have included a separate room for a shrine, as the Casegiatto del Serapide, which in one room depicts Serapis enthroned, Isis, and Isis-Fortuna on a stucco relief near a masonry altar.[465] These examples demonstrate the malleability of the category of "domestic" religion in the ancient world, and offer some indication of how common small, privately supported shrines were in the domestic and commercial spaces of ancient Mediterranean cities.

For Paul's Corinthian audience then, there is no escaping encounters with images of the gods, whether they are meeting in domestic contexts, as Cianca shows, or in mixed use structures like *tabernae*, warehouses, or courtyards, as Adams argues, and it is unlikely these encounters were uneventful for all new Christians. To paraphrase Faulkner, new Greek Christians' pagan past with images of the gods is neither dead nor past, a claim modeled by Pierre Bourdieu's theory of *habitus*, which examines "the practice of the body over time"[466] as

[461] Bakker, *Living and Working*, 68.
[462] Bakker, *Living and Working*, 75.
[463] Adams, *Earliest Christian Meeting Places*, 143.
[464] Bakker, *Living and Working*, 85.
[465] Bakker, *Living and Working, 85*.
[466] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space*, 157.

it "translates [social] structures into activity."[467] Past experience of piety with these images is not simply erased without consequence, and replaced with an intellectual conviction that "idols are nothing," as Paul believes; new Greek Christians bring their past experiences with them into these spaces. Domestic rituals in particular, which like all rituals were both "emplaced and embodied," and therefore on some level impossible to erase, probably continued for some Christians because "to assume that [domestic] cult would have ceased is to fail to recognize the power of the relationship between place and ritual."[468] The dominant metaphor for religious growth is geological, remarks E.R. Dodds. Newer ideas and practices usually agglomerate over older ones; they are not substituted for them.[469]

> A new belief-pattern very seldom effaces completely the pattern that was there before: either the old lives on as an element in the new—sometimes an unconfessed and half-unconscious element—or else the two persist side by side, logically incompatible, but contemporaneously accepted by different individuals or even by the same individual.

The negotiation of the prohibitions to "idolatry" enjoined by Paul and the polytheistic cultural expectation to honor the gods, then, did not happen overnight. That early Christians congregated in spaces where images of gods were still the object of pious activity suggests a "slower-moving development of early Christian sacred space"[470] than the historical narrative that claims Christian sacred space begins only with explicitly Christian architectural renovations and original designs. Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, with its emphasis on how the body encapsulates experience and memory, suggests "there could be no easy transition from one set of rituals to another, especially in a place already steeped in ritual practice of another

---

[467] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 165.
[468] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 161.
[469] Dodds, *Greeks and the Irrational*, 179. Smith expressed a similar notion. "[T]he record of the religious thought of mankind, as it is embodied in religious institutions, resembles the geological record of the history of the earth's crust; the new and the old are preserved side by side, or rather layer upon layer," *Semites*, 26.
[470] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual,* 167.

kind"[471] for former pagans practicing baptism, the eucharist, and praying in spaces full of images of the gods.

Domestic ritual in particular replicates the hierarchical social structure of Rome with the Emperor as the head of the household. The *pater*, who as a child participated in domestic rituals that confirmed the status of his own father, now invites the participation of his family in the same rituals that render him "the microcosmic equivalent of the *pontifex maximus*,"[472] even when he is not conscious of the effects of this process. Indeed, the unconscious aspect of *habitus* is one of its most significant aspects: "it is because subjects do not, strictly speaking, know what they are doing, that what they do has more meaning than they know."[473] Shall we believe that prohibitions to idolatry overcame obligations to family, or pagan friends, among every member of Paul's Corinthian audience? Økland makes a similar argument about how social structures might unconsciously affect decisions for Paul himself in *Women in Their Place*. Økland argues that Paul, through his demand that women in Corinth be silent and cover their head during worship, replicates Greco-Roman discourses of gender and sanctuary space and Jewish discourses of separating male and female roles in worship. Women are to be integrated into a male ritual body, but at the bottom of a hierarchy, silent spectators to male Christian laity learning from male teachers.[474]

Økland, we recall, analyzed pagan temple complexes at Corinth in order to lay out pagan discourses for sacred space there, but she refrained from attempting to link the existing archaeological evidence at the site to places where Paul's Corinthian audience gathered to

[471] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 164.
[472] Cianca, *Sacred Ritual*, 165. Also Økland, *Women in Their Place*, 162.
[473] Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977), 78-79. Apud Cianca, *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space*, 165.
[474] Økland, *Women in Their Place*, 207.

worship. This was a wise decision, says Schowalter, because "The sample size of domestic space in 1st century Corinth is simply too meager to generalize about where and how the majority of the population would have lived," much less where members of Paul's community would have met.[475] Instead, Økland argued that these spaces were defined discursively, a claim Cianca echoes to some degree in her effort to describe early Christian sacred spaces being cultivated within existing pagan space. Although my own approach obviously reflects this discursive focus, and I privilege the discursive construction of images of gods over attempts to locate particular statues and paintings in specifically first-century, Christian meeting places, an examination of two domestic spaces identified in the Corinth excavations does well illustrate the entanglement of Greek and Roman domestic religion in the first-century, Roman, built environment of the city.

In two buildings east of the theater in Corinth, evidence of domestic religion has been found.[476] Originally constructed in the first century CE, and destroyed by earthquake sometime in the mid-second century, these two buildings, named 5 and 7, contained several terracotta figurines, mostly of Aphrodite. The Building 5 assemblage included kitchen ware, table ware, assorted storage vessels, and, important for our purposes, plaster walls upon which Greek had been written by at least two different people. The content of the Greek writing is unclear, but the shape of the letters does not suggest doodling or graffiti.[477] In one room, of the five figurines found, three were of Aphrodite, one was of Artemis, and one was of an indeterminate

[475] Schowalter, Daniel. "Seeking Shelter in Roman Corinth: Archaeology and the Placement of Paul's Communities," in *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society*, Steven Friesen, Daniel Schowalter, and James Walters, eds. (Boston and Leiden: Brill 2010), 328. Schowalter later suggests "finding ways of talking about the 1st century assemblies of believers without attempting to tie them to particular locations may provide a foundation for advancing the subject in the future" (341).
[476] Williams, Charles K. "Roman Corinth: The Final Years of Cult Facilities Along East Theater Street," in *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth*, 227.
[477] Williams, "Roman Corinth," 227.

female deity. In another floor of the same room were five figurines that had once been rattles, two still intact with pebbles in their hollows. Two of these were of Aphrodite, two were seated dogs, and one was a bust of Athena.[478] In addition to the figurines, bowls, lamps, and an incense burner were uncovered here. Painted plaster fragments were also found, probably from a lararium in the south wall. One of the fragments portrayed the "head of a figure wreathed with green leaves, without much doubt a lar," and the other depicted legs with winged feet, probably Hermes.[479] All of this evidence points to a "private or domestic shrine to Aphrodite,"[480] as well as to a lararium.

While the Greek writing in Building 5 perhaps indicates Greek use of the domestic shrine, the presence of the lararium obviously clouds a simple identification of the space as Greek or Roman. Building 7 hardly clarifies the matter, for here, a fresco portrays Aphrodite Hoplismene, armed Aphrodite, a deity explicitly identified with pre-Roman Corinth,[481] but clearly supported by the Roman state,[482] at least in the second century, when her image appears on coins from Corinth. Without going down the rabbit hole of the issue of Greek identity in the domestic sphere in Roman Corinth,[483] I simply want to suggest that even these two buildings indicate the entanglement of Greek and Roman pious activity in private spaces.

Until new textual or archaeological evidence is uncovered that offers us a better sample size, and more direct evidence, of formerly pagan attitudes and behavior around images of

[478] Williams, "Roman Corinth," 229.
[479] Williams, "Roman Corinth," 234.
[480] Williams, "Roman Corinth," 231.
[481] Williams, "Roman Corinth," 243.
[482] Williams, "Roman Corinth," 245.
[483] Barbette Spaeth and Nancy Bookidis, both experts on the material culture of Corinth, agree that first century Corinthian religious institutions embodied Roman deities and practices. Spaeth argues that given the Roman built environment of the city, the public cults at Corinth should be assumed Roman until proven otherwise, although as we said earlier (no. 287) the Roman state sought to link itself to some degree with the archaic Greek past. Spaeth, "Corinthian Archaistic Blocks," 421. Bookidis, Nancy. "Religion in Corinth: 146 B.C.E. to 100 C.E.," in *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth*, 157.

ancestors and gods, we must be guided by the (admittedly ample) circumstantial evidence and theoretical models as best we can to imagine their interactions with them. It is towards one such model, a model of religious emotion, that we now turn in order to bring fresh attention to the importance of the complicated relationship between images of the gods and early Christian experience.

III Locating the Heart: Scholarship of Religious Emotion

We first encountered the importance of emotional experiences in our efforts to locate an indigenous category for images of gods in ancient Greek and Roman religion. The concept of honor in the ancient Roman Republic and early Empire exposes a Roman "physics of the emotions," a model we argued can be applied to images of the gods to better explain their roles as objects of piety. Honoring statues in the right way, or the wrong way, orders human emotions, provokes divine emotions, strengthens human and divine bonds, and therefore offers a place for working out relationships with the divine. Though part of a tradition without images of the gods, Paul, too, is concerned with how responses to idols work out a relationship with the divine. Paul hopes to order the emotions of formerly pagan Christians, as several recent investigations into Paul's rhetoric of emotion have revealed.[484] In one, Stephen Barton shows how in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Paul attempts a conversion of the emotions of his audience, from fear of death to eschatological hope.[485] I fully concur with Barton's reading, which offers a template of Paul's determination to transform the emotional attachments of his audience. Paul's use of apocalyptic discourse in 1 Corinthians 8-10 reflects another attempt at conversion

[484] Barton, Stephen. "Eschatology and the Emotions in Early Christianity." *Journal of Biblical Literature*. Fall 2011. Vol. 130. No 3, pp. 571-591. Von Gemünden, Petra. *Affekt und Glaube: Studien zur historischen Psychologie des Frühjudentums und Urchristentums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 2009), 207-225.
[485] Ibid, 586-589.

of the emotions of his audience, in this case from indifference or attachment to eschatological fear. In this section, after we acquire a working definition of religious emotion, we will describe the implications of Paul's apocalyptically informed prohibition of idolatry upon an emotional landscape already shaped by experiences with images of the gods.

Studies of the category of emotion in religion have a history at least as complicated as the category of idolatry, and are far more contested. Since the 19th century, scholars of religion situating themselves outside of religious traditions, and, well before, pious thinkers working within them, have often tried to foreground the significance of emotion, or the larger category under which emotion is often subsumed, experience,[486] to check an exclusive focus upon belief or practice. We have already seen such arguments in Chapter 1, in the work of the 19th and early 20th century scholars of what was then called the "Science of Religions." Robertson Smith, we recall, claimed "It is not with a vague fear of unknown powers, but with a loving reverence for known gods who are knit to their worshippers by strong bonds of kinship, that religion in the only true sense of the word begins."[487] Religion, Smith argues, is more than an unconscious, creative response to intellectual conundrums about how natural processes work, as Tylor argued. Jane Ellen Harrison, too, echoing Durkheim, claimed the substance of gods, "when analysed turns out to be just nothing but the representation, the utterance, the emphasis of these imaginations, these emotions, arising out of particular social conditions."[488] Following Smith's and Harrison's prioritizing of emotion in their understanding of religious practices, in the early 20th century William James, in *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* and Rudolf

[486] I am not equating emotion and experience, but showing the overlap these categories have as authorities that may stand over or against reason.
[487] Smith, *Lectures*, 55.
[488] Harrison, *Themis*, 28.

Otto, in *The Idea of the Holy*, make exclusive studies of emotion (and in James' case experience) and even more sweeping claims for both.

These scholarly efforts to explain the significance of emotion have antecedents from within religious traditions, which prefigure scholarly frustration with an excessive focus upon right belief. The proclamation of Isaiah, paralleled throughout the Hebrew prophets, has its echoes in subsequent centuries: "The Lord said: Because these people draw near with their mouths/ and honor me with their lips,/ while their hearts are far from me,/and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote;/ so I will again do/ amazing things with this people,/ shocking and amazing." (Isa. 29:13-14a). In both Judaism and Christianity, the theological zeal to inculcate orthodoxy and orthopraxy, however, is never met with an equal zeal to systematically delineate orthopathy--right passion or emotion--despite some impressive efforts. In *Duties of the Heart*, the 11th-12th century Spanish rabbi Bahya Ben Joseph Ibn Paquda attempts to give an account of the "secret duties of the heart,"[489] and justifies his project when he says that in all of his education "the knowledge of the duties of the heart, was neglected, not contained in any book comprising all its origins."[490] Jonathan Edwards, in his *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, postulates "True Religion, in great part, consists in holy affections,"[491] and gives emotion a theological priority it had not necessarily enjoyed in systematic theological traditions.[492] Perhaps the most famous and one of the most influential examples of an attempt to focus on emotion leads us back to the 19th century, and comes from one working within the tradition of Christianity in order to justify it to critics from without.

---

[489] Ibn Paquda, Bahya Ben Joseph. *The Book of Direction to the Duties of the Heart*, Menahem Mansoor, trans. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul), 87.
[490] Ibn Paquda, *Duties of the Heart,* 88.
[491] Edwards, Jonathan. *Religious Affections.* John E. Smith, ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1959), 95.
[492] Riis, Ole and Woodhead, Linda. *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010), 56.

Friedrich Schleiermacher, in *On Religion,* and later in *The Christian Faith*, highlighted emotion as essential for understanding religion: "Religion's essence is neither thinking nor acting, but intuition and feeling,"[493] and the essential feeling is a "feeling of absolute dependence."[494] At least since Schleiermacher, studies of religious emotion have, often unfortunately, overlapped with or been equated with the more capacious category of religious experience, a category that has met with severe criticisms in the wake of the popularity it enjoyed in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The fields that Robertson Smith and Durkheim are often given credit for launching, sociology, as well as its close relative, anthropology, embraced their initial focus on emotion in the early 20th century, but by the century's close, sociologists had grown wary of emotion as an object of study, despite some voices still advocating its significance in the fields of classics, anthropology, and religion.

> Within sociology an important part of the explanation lies in the supervening influence of positivism, which led to a focus upon those aspects of religion that, like church attendance or neurological activity, can be observed and measured in a way that is disassociated from the personality and social position of the investigator. From this perspective, even belief, in so far as it can be clearly articulated and recorded, seems more solid and significant than feeling.[495]

Anthropology too, though less oriented towards positivism than sociology, maintained a focus on "meaning systems" that "has led to some neglect of emotional, bodily, and relational factors."[496] Sociology, anthropology, and every other sphere of the social sciences, including the humanities, felt the effects of the "cultural" or "linguistic" turn late in the 20th century, with its focus on language and rationality, which made "religion and culture into systems of

---

[493] Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers.* Richard Crouter, trans. (Cambridge, England and New York 1988), 102.
[494] Proudfoot, *Religious Experience* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press 1987) xiii-iv.
[495] Riis and Woodhead, *Sociology*, 2.
[496] Riis and Woodhead, *Sociology*, 3.

signs that could be decoded without their social and affective contexts."[497] In the linguistic turn affective context threatens to obscure the systems of signs under investigation, and must be discarded. Finally, the primacy of texts as objects of study, especially in the ancient world, and analyses of the elites who produced them, kept the gaze of many scholars throughout the social sciences trained on textual traditions and their participation in rational, philosophical and theological systems.

A handful of 20th century scholars in classics, anthropology, and religious studies more broadly did focus on experience and emotion. E.R. Dodds, for example, knew in 1951 he was making himself a target when he used anthropological and psychological models to highlight the significance, and often the embrace, of irrationality and irrational experiences in ancient Greek culture. Note the defensive posture he adopts in his introduction to his Sather lectures on aspects of ancient Greek religious experience.

> [M]any of the theories to which I have referred are admittedly provisional and uncertain. But if we are trying to reach some understanding of Greek minds, and are not content with describing external behaviour or drawing up a list of recorded "beliefs," we must work by what light we can get, and an uncertain light is better than none.[498]

As well received as *The Greeks and the Irrational* was,[499] and as effective as it was in freeing ancient Greek culture from the Procrustean bed of "rationality" into which its phenomena had so often been forced,[500] only a few of the seeds of Dodds' emphasis upon experience and emotion fell outside the field of classics, although inside the field of classics Dodds' work altered the course of scholarship about ancient Greek religion. Studies of early Christian

[497] Riis and Woodhead, *Sociology,* 3.
[498] Dodds, *Greeks and the Irrational*, iv.
[499] Reviews of the book at the time of its publication in 1951were enthusiastic. Walton, Francis R. *Classical Philology.* Vol. 48, No. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1953), pp. 249-252. Solmsen, Friedrich. *American Journal of Philology*. Vol. 75, No. 2 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1954), pp. 190-196.
[500] Riis and Woodhead, *Sociology*, 14.

emotion have been conducted in the name of early Christian experience,[501] and spirituality,[502] a stark contrast to the fairly well defined category used to understand what they were thinking-- theology. In religious studies more generally, Dodds' work did not dissolve all obstacles to the study of emotion, frequently regarded as "irrational and unintelligible," "not only difficult to study, but unworthy of study."[503]

Objections to the use of experience and emotion as scholarly categories stem from an understandable mistrust of their deployment in apologetic contexts. Schleiermacher bears much of the blame for this. Schleiermacher's own emphasis on the subject's point of view as "the only legitimate account that can be given of that experience" is a "protective strategy" designed to defend the believer from the empirically-based scientific skeptics of religion, the "cultured despisers" of Schleiermacher's audience.[504] Beyond the 19th century, appeals to religious experience resurface to serve as a bulwark against a legacy of colonialist disparagement of non-Western traditions; "the one defense against the tendency to objectify, to domesticate, to silence, and to eviscerate the other has been to sanction the other's singular and irreducible experience of the world."[505] Even where scholars sympathize with a reluctance to objectify, domesticate, and silence the other, they may agree with Robert Sharf's charge that appeals to experience too often serve apologetic agendas and act as "a mere placeholder that entails a substantive if indeterminate terminus for the relentless deferral of meaning."[506]

Although cognizant of Sharf's warnings about using the category of experience to make

---

[501] Bornkamm, Günther. *Early Christian Experience* (New York: Harper &Row 1969). Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Religious Experience in Earliest Christianity: A Missing Dimension in New Testament Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress 1998).
[502] Dunn, James D. G. *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM Press Ltd 1975).
[503] Riis and Woodhead, *Sociology*, 14.
[504] Proudfoot, *Religious Experience,* 228.
[505] Sharf, "Experience,"112.
[506] Sharf, "Experience," 113.

historical claims, I do not share his pessimism, or reject the use of the category as a whole. Certainly Paul's experiences, and the experiences he is trying to cultivate in his audience, recognizable through his language, are fair grounds for interpretation. Otherwise we must throw emotion out of historical interpretation, like Thomas Jefferson excising the miracles of Jesus in his revised New Testament, and construe ancient texts as a series of logically consistent (or inconsistent) intellectual claims. Luke Timothy Johnson observes that "the category of religious experience, for all its elusiveness and ambiguity, remains necessary if we are not to deny or neglect certain important forms of human discourse and behavior."[507] "Longing on a large scale is what makes history," wrote Don DeLillo.[508] Analyzing accounts of longing, or of abhorrence, helps historical interpretation retain the dynamism with which human life is actually lived.

IV New Duties of the Heart: Images and the Conversion of Emotion

Given this project's focus on 1 Corinthians 8-10 and early Christianity more generally, I will argue, using a sociological model for religious emotion, that the pagan past of the Greeks who joined Paul's movement has been overlooked in accounts of early Christian experience. As much scholarly attention as the identity of the first Christians has received in the last several decades, the analysis of how ethnicity, class, and gender has shaped early Christian thought and practice, this is somewhat surprising.[509] The significance and ubiquity of pagan

[507] Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Religious Experience in Earliest Christianity: A Missing Dimension in New Testament Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1998), 59.
[508] DeLillo, Don. *Underworld.* (New York: Scribner 1997), 11.
[509] Økland's *Women in Their Place,* one of the models for this work, is a notable exception. She foregrounds the pagan identity of the women in Paul's Corinthian churches by analyzing models of womanhood prominent in ancient Greek mythology. Luke Timothy Johnson also tries to lay out a typology of pagan experience, much like H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*, in his *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2009).

attachments to images of the divine, whether for personal or for social reasons, demands a reckoning with those relationships, with both people and objects, that these new Greek Christians compromised, or strained, or lost as they negotiated the Torah's prohibition of honoring images in a world where so much behavior around images nourished familial and communal bonds. The alternative is to treat these early, formerly pagan Christians as *tabulae rasae* onto which we inscribe Paul's experience and theology and call it theirs.

Recent studies of emotion, both literary and sociological, help foreground affective relationships with images of the gods, and serve as "a correction of a long-standing bias towards intellectual and elite forms of religion."[510] Understood as "private, personal and subjective," emotion becomes a poor place to investigate first century CE pagan, Jewish, and Christian relationships with statues, but understood as dependent upon "the interplay between social agents and structures,"[511] we can look at emotion in a different light, particularly its expression within a defined religious community. An essential aspect of this interplay between social agents and structures, material culture in the analysis of emotion directed towards divine beings turns out to be indispensable.

> Our emotional life is shaped by encounters not only with living beings, but with dead ones, imagined ones, transcendent ones, and inanimate ones. To consider only self and society is to miss the significance of the culture, material objects, memories, places, and symbols...Religious emotion has to do not only with social relations in the narrow 'human' sense, but with 'supersocial' relations--such as those we may have with sacred sites, landscapes, artefacts, and beings.[512]

In chapter 2, we recognized this sociological confirmation of people's strong bonds with images of the gods manifest in Chariton, Xenophon, Pausanias, Cicero, and Lucian. Material objects possess a remarkable power to generate emotion and even alter consciousness, as the anthropologist Roy Rappaport claims:

---

[510] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion,* 19.
[511] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 5.
[512] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 7.

> [I]t almost goes without saying that the significata of ritual representations--the general points of the ritual--are generally capable of arousing strong emotions, thus altering consciousness. Also obvious, but less frequently remarked upon and therefore meriting rather more discussion, is that the physical nature of some signs themselves, distinct from their significata, can carry consciousness away from rational thought toward an awareness characterized more by feeling than by logic.[513]

We can accept Rappaport's depiction of the ability of an object to affect consciousness, but the dichotomy he references between rational thought and emotion, described here as "an awareness characterized more by feeling," needs some critique and explication.

In contrast to the frequent portrayal of emotions as intrusions of an "animal nature," amorphous energies that have their source in corporeality as opposed to cognition, recent philosophical and sociological work has stressed emotions' cognitive content and social context. Martha Nussbaum has argued that emotions are judgments of value ascribed to things outside an individual's control that are important for a person's flourishing.[514] In this way emotions reflect the neediness of an individual before the world, an acknowledgment of dependence,[515] but they also assess needs. Not to be too dramatic, but to some degree to locate emotion is to locate meaning.

Riis and Woodhead, in their *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, concede that they cannot generate consensus with a definition of emotion, but insist, in contrast with the claim that emotions are "private, interior states," emotions are "psycho-physical orientations and adjustments within relational contexts."[516] To emphasize the relational contexts of emotions, especially religious emotions, Riis and Woodhead use Reddy's notion of an emotional

---

[513] Rappaport, Roy. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), 259.
[514] Nussbaum, Martha. *Upheavals of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001), 21.
[515] Nussbaum, *Upheavals*, 89.
[516] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion,* 21.

regime[517] to construct the concept of a religious regime,[518] which accounts for interactions between individual agents, a social group, and symbols.[519] Religious emotions are first and foremost those emotions that are integral to religious regimes. All emotions can be "religious," then, but it is their role in the social and symbolic relations of the religion that matter. The religious regime's goal is the ordering of emotions.

> [R]eligious regimes display, regulate, and enforce the standards by which some emotions are exalted and others are abased. They offer a structured emotional repertoire that guides how adherents feel about themselves, one another, and their wider circumstances. They educate and structure sensibility not only in relation to daily tasks and duties, but across the life course, and they help in the navigation of transitions and crises.[520]

Crucial for Riis and Woodhead's concept of a religious regime is the fact that these regimes, with their own distinct emotional programs, may include variation among their members, but they are nonetheless enforced, consciously and unconsciously.[521] For example, in explaining emotional regimes they cite a study of an American law firm that documented the differences between expectations of emotional expression between female paralegals and male law partners. Whereas the female paralegals were expected to be "patient, cheerful, warm, and nurturing, and avoid displays of anger," the expectation of projecting confidence for male partners encouraged some displays of anger and aggressiveness.[522] Refusal to abide by the emotional regime of the law firm, embodied in an aggressive, confident, angry female paralegal, or a cheerful, warm, nurturing male partner, resulted in subtle or overt sanctions of the deviant behavior. An insufficiently cheerful paralegal would be met with responses such

---

[517] Reddy used the term "emotional regime" in an analysis of revolutionary France, but "restricts it to an ordering imposed by a state," according to Riis and Woodhead, 49. Reddy, William. *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001).
[518] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 49.
[519] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 95.
[520] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 11.
[521] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 48.
[522] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion,* 48.

as "What's the matter with you, give me a smile!" or "You look like someone just died!"[523] The impact of such reprimands masquerading as humor may be difficult to measure, but concurrent with these sorts of sanctions is the "formal and informal approval" given those who "exhibit the correct emotions in the right settings at the right times and in the right ways."[524] Important for our purposes, Riis and Woodhead note, in a comment reminiscent of Bourdieu, that material symbols, too, may serve as agents of enforcement, "not only through their continuing material presence, but in the passing-on of established ways of relating and feeling."[525] In a more explicitly religious context, and one of my all-time favorite stories, Riis and Woodhead describe the "ice-cold stares" that confronted a boy at a Lutheran confirmation in Denmark, who at communion took the cup of wine from the priest and said, "Cheers."[526] In an example much closer to the subject of my project, in 1 Corinthians, Paul's harsh denunciation of women who pray or prophesy without a veil, and of men who pray or prophesy with one, perhaps best evinces how material implements can be agents of control during worship, with the goal of maintaining a particular emotional regime. (1 Cor 11:4-5).

. Riis and Woodhead highlight the significance of symbols in religious communities because in the triadic framework of agent, group, and symbol common in sociology, symbols typically receive less attention,[527] despite the crucial fact that they are often ascribed a "supra-human" agency of their own.[528] Riis and Woodhead observe, in a study of images in iconophobic Protestantism, how the "the gap between signifier and signified is at least partially

[523] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 49.
[524] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion,* 49.
[525] Riis and Woodhead state elsewhere that "the relations between individuals and symbols is more neglected in sociological study," *Religious Emotion,* 8.
[526] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 111.
[527] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 95.
[528] Morgan, David. *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1998), 9.

closed for the believer."[529] A Protestant must therefore treat the image, the signifier, the same as he or she would treat its representation, the signified, whether that signified is Jesus, or Mary, or the cross, or whatever. Riis and Woodhead's observation is a remarkable Protestant echo of the pagan identification of image and divinity. Even where images do not produce miracles, they can provoke tears. Simply put, objects involved in pious activity generate emotion. Riis and Woodhead name this process (somewhat unfortunately given these terms' use in other contexts) a dialectical relationship between "objectification" and "subjectification." Objectification is focused on the object itself, and "the expression of personal emotions in a symbolic object, and to that extent, in a public idiom,"[530] whereas subjectification refers to the religious emotions elicited in the apprehension of the object.[531] Aesthetic quality is irrelevant; frequent interaction makes certain objects "the basis of a chain of memories"[532] and the bond between object and devotee grows stronger. Particularly when bonds between people and objects form in childhood, any rituals involving them "are likely to retain great emotional power, not only when re-enacted, but even when merely recalled."[533] The existence and social acceptability of affective relationships between the pious and objects involved in worship also tend to reflect class distinctions, note Riis and Woodhead, regarding the kind of power the objects have:

> There is a difference between relating to sacred objects as symbols and regarding them as possessing divine power. While intellectuals tend to take the former position, devotees take the latter... What we see here, in effect, are attempts by religious elites to impose order on popular emotions, and to purify religious emotional regimes. [534]

[529] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 96.
[530] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion,* 96. .
[531] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 99.
[532] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 96.
[533] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 93.
[534] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 108.

Although none of Riis and Woodhead's examples come from ancient Greek religion, we have only to recall Heraclitus' notorious disdain for people who talk to statues[535] to find confirmation of their claim, or revisit Theophrastus's satirical account of the Superstitious Man.[536] The example of Cicero and his sincere, unashamed concern for his statuette of Minerva shows us it was acceptable to care for a sacred object, but at least for many elites assuming divine power in it was another matter, as it was for Lucian. Paul as we know admits that images of the gods are matrices of divine activity, and so according to Riis and Woodhead's metric he would not have been among the elite. In Paul's case, his reliance on apocalyptic discourse to shape the behavior of this Corinthian audience around images of the gods does expose his attempt to "purify" a particular religious emotional regime grounded in redemption through Christ.

Control of the affections was not of course solely a Pauline concern. Emotional discipline was a laudable goal in both ancient Greek philosophical texts and in the Hebrew Bible, which enjoins Israel to love God with heart, soul, and strength.[537] As a Hellenistic Jew Paul stands within both traditions, and yet we can see his distinctively "Christian," and unmistakably apocalyptic, understanding of human relationship to the emotions when we compare him with his contemporary Philo, definitely an elite member of his community in Alexandria. Philo regarded reason and the Law of God as complementary, and did not hesitate to condemn a lack of emotional control, as he did in *Against Flaccus* in 42 C.E., where he attributed a pogrom against the Jews to emotions run amok.[538] Paul, however, does not share Philo's faith in the devotion to the Law and Reason as effective reins for the emotions; only

[535] See Ch. 1, no. 14.
[536] Theophrastus. *The Characters of Theophrastus*. R.G. Ussher, ed. (London: Bristol Classical Press 2005), 135-157.
[537] Von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube*, 7.
[538] Von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube,* 8.

redemption through Christ leads to control of the emotions, whose disorder and excessive power Paul explicitly associates with idols.[539]

In Romans, one of several goals of Paul's letter is to effect a conversion of the emotions of new Christians, as von Gemünden has shown. In the letter, we see how Paul's understanding of the relationship between idols and the emotions, as well as the two portraits of God he draws, serve to incite in his audience terror and love in equal measure. The wrathful God whom Philo, and some Christian apologists, reject for his unseemly lack of emotional control appears early in the letter, in Romans 1:22-26a:

> φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν καὶ ἤλλαξαν τὴν δόξαν τοῦ ἀφθάρτου θεοῦ ἐν ὁμοιώματι εἰκόνος φθαρτοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πετεινῶν καὶ τετραπόδων καὶ ἑρπετῶν. Διὸ παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίας τῶν καρδιών αὐτῶν εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν τοῦ ἀτιμάζεσθαι τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς· οἵτινες μετήλλαξαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ψεύδει καὶ ἐσεβάσθησαν καὶ ἐλάτρευσαν τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα, ὅς ἐστιν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶας, ἀμήν. Διὰ τοῦτο παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας
>
> Claiming to be wise, they became fools; and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lust of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason, God gave them up to degrading passions.

Idolatry, the dominance of the passions, and the wrath of God are all connected for Paul,[540] just as in his invocation of the golden calf episode in 1 Corinthians 10:7-11. Paul presents two courtroom scenes to contrast the god whom idolaters will encounter, and the god whom the worshippers of Jesus will embrace. In Romans 1-3 God's courtroom is in his heaven, and he is both judge and district attorney; the people have no defender, the verdict of the accused is certain, and *iustitia distributiva* is assured. In Romans 8, however, the courtroom is in the hearts and minds of people, where the thoughts of people accuse and defend each other, while the role of Judge is open.[541] Jesus appears as the advocate, and Paul is confident that nothing

[539] Von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube*, 213.
[540] Von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube*, 209.
[541] Von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube*, 210.

"will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39). Through Christ *iustitita salutifera* is possible. Romans 1-3 once again shows Paul's deep roots in the Jewish apocalyptic tradition,[542] and his conviction that a vision of a wrathful God is instrumental in bringing idolatrous pagans to Christ. To get a more precise assessment of Paul's use of apocalyptic discourse to shape the religious emotional regime he is attempting to cultivate in Corinth and elsewhere, we need a clearer analysis his of apocalyptic discourse in 1 Corinthians.

As with any attempt to define a literary genre, efforts to define apocalyptic literature, much less to identify traces of apocalyptic discourse in texts not commonly labeled as such, like the letters of Paul, have met with difficulties. Nonetheless, a working definition that has achieved a reasonable level of scholarly acceptance can help us isolate the apocalyptic discourse underlying and manifest in 1 Corinthians. A key scholarly challenge has been to recognize the thematic similarities of apocalyptic literature with prophetic literature from the Hebrew Bible while still distinguishing apocalyptic literature as its own genre.[543] In 1979, Adele Yarboro Collins published the results of attempts at definition by the Apocalypse Group of the Society of Biblical Literature's Genre Project.

> 'Apocalypse' is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.[544]

Half a decade later, Collins proposed an addendum to this definition in order to mark the function of apocalyptic literature as well, and added that it "intended to interpret present,

---

[542] Von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube*, 209.
[543] Collins, Adele Yarboro. "Introduction: Early Christian Apocalypticism" from *Semeia* 36 *Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting* (Decatur GA: Scholars Press 1986), 5.
[544] Collins, Adele Yarboro. "The Early Christian Apocalypses." *Semeia* 14. Decatur GA: Scholars Press 1979), 9.

earthly circumstances in light of the supernatural world and of the future, and to influence both the understanding and the behavior of the audience by means of divine authority."[545] Given this expanded definition, we can recognize that although 1st Corinthians is not a narrative about Paul's divine revelation, he appeals to its authority, his vision of Christ, (1 Corinthians 9:1) with the intended purpose of influencing the behavior of his audience and achieving eschatological salvation for the community (1 Cor. 10:33).

The dualistic aspect of apocalyptic discourse helps expose the significance of applying such discourse to images of the gods. Analyzing Paul's apocalyptic discourse in relation to images of the gods presents us with objects that provoke an identity crisis, objects that force those who might heed Paul's message to forsake the social relations coalescing around or dependent upon pagan ritual. Dualistic in spatial, temporal, and social terms, apocalyptic discourse divides earth from heaven, this world from the world to come, and us from them.[546] In both 1st Corinthians and elsewhere, with respect to each of these dualisms, Paul's apocalyptic discourse is deceptively complex. We will recognize the social and temporal dualisms in Paul's language first, and his extremely problematic spatial dualism last. Regarding social dualism, Paul employs nuanced language about who is "us" and who is "them." On one level, "us" is for Paul the Christian community, or the inheritors of Israel's promise, and "them" refers to pagans. As Meeks has pointed out, however, Paul does not always envision a constant state of conflict between Christians and pagans; rather he hopes that he might save more of them, that "they" become "us." In the other New Testament record of Paul's correspondence with churches in Corinth, Paul even imagines God reconciling to himself a world that was at

[545] Collins, Adele Yarboro, "Introduction" 1986, 7.
[546] Meeks, Wayne. "Apocalyptic Discourse and Strategies of Goodness," *Journal of Religion*, Jul. 2000, Vol. 80, No. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2000), 463.

war with him.[547] In this optimistic vein Paul closes his discussion of eating food that has been sacrificed to idols when he advises, "Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved" (1 Cor. 10:33). Such qualified optimism in Paul's social dualism is nonetheless hindered by the temporal dualism of Paul's apocalyptic discourse. Apocalyptic narratives depend on a linear notion of time that absolutizes Paul's earlier, relative position regarding idolatry, dependent upon its impact on another community member. Just as the alpha privative in Greek absolutizes any adjective it precedes, Paul's vision of the God's imminent and inevitable judgment upon idolaters at the *parousia* absolutizes his prohibition of idolatry, and denies any negotiation with it. There can be no condoning "just a little idolatry" if God plans to obliterate all sinners on judgment day (Rom. 2:16).

With respect to the spatial dualism of Paul's language, an implication of the "us vs. them" aspect of apocalyptic discourse is not just the way such discourse can mark people but the way it is used to mark places and objects as "ours" and "theirs." Indeed, marking place and objects as forbidden or abominable, destined for God's judgment, is arguably one of the purposes of some of the oldest apocalyptic literature. The sixth century B.C.E. book Ezekiel, while not considered apocalyptic on the whole, certainly serves as a source for later apocalyptic writings, as in Ezekiel 6:4-5, which foretells the slaughter of idolatrous Israelites as well as the idols and places where they worship them.[548] 1 Enoch,[549] written between the 4th and 1st century BCE, a collection of texts whose apocalyptic vision had such profound influence on

[547] Meeks, "Strategies of Goodness," 468. "To reconcile the enemy rather than to destroy him is thus an alternative finale in the eschatological scenario, though one that is all too rare in apocalyptic discourse."
[548] Ez. 6:4-5. "Your altars shall become desolate, and your incense stands shall be broken; and I will throw down your slain in front of your idols. I will lay the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols; and I will scatter your bones around your altars."
[549] *1st Enoch. A New Translation*. trans. George W.E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), vii.

Hellenistic Judaism, highlights a more general connection between artistic production and divine judgment when the invention of metallurgy, weapons, jewelry and even make-up is attributed to the fallen angel Asael.[550] These objects were literally invented by a devil, and are destined for destruction just as he is. Of course the annihilation of idols and their worshippers figures prominently, as one would expect, in Revelation, where eating food sacrificed to idols is condemned without even an attempt at the interpretive creativity with which Paul tried to ban it in 1st Corinthians. The author of Revelation accuses a female Christian prophet of tolerating the practice, and promises the death of her children unless she repents. Like every other idolater, she is doomed to the lake of fire if she does not heed his warning.[551] In Revelation, the full effects of the absolutizing effect of the apocalyptic ban on idolatry are apparent.

After recognizing the ubiquity of images of the gods in the domestic, commercial, and social spaces of the first century C.E., we can see Paul's apocalyptic discourse meets formidable obstacles in its assertion of spatial dualism. On the one hand, Paul's spatially dualistic language seems simple--earth is separated from heaven, where God's justice has no resistance. On the other hand, Paul's apocalyptic discourse marks as expressions of this dualism places and objects knit into the fabric of a unified, quotidian social experience. Although Paul himself can claim to tolerate certain behavior around images of the gods because they are nothing, the discursive apocalyptic tradition Paul relies on to shape his audience's emotions about idols has no room for such a claim.

---

[550] 1st Enoch 8:1-2. "Asael taught men to make swords of iron and weapons and shields and breastplates and every instrument of war. He showed them the metals of the earth and how they should work gold to fashion it suitably, and concerning silver, to fashion it for bracelets and ornaments for women. And he showed them concerning antimony and eye paint and all manner of precious stones and dyes."

[551] Rev. 21:8. "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters and all liars, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

Returning to Barton and von Gemünden's notion of emotional conversion, we see in 1st Cor 8-10 that Paul employs his apocalyptic discourse as part of a process Hans Mol calls "emotional stripping and welding."[552] Despite the joy and gratitude Paul obviously experiences in Christ, and his self-styled goal to "please everyone in everything," (1 Cor 10:33) his apocalyptic language is designed to remove attachments to one emotional regime, governed by paganism, and create attachments to another, the growing, shifting landscape of the Jesus movement. Riis and Woodhead note how crucial such shaping of emotions is in religion.

> [R]eligion provides both inspiration *and* orientation--both an engine and a direction of travel. Religious emotions have an important part to play in setting value direction, not least by training emotions of love and devotion to become attached to their 'proper' objects and detached from 'improper' ones.[553]

For Paul, baptism was to mark the break with the old regime, and the cultivation of Christian ritual and teaching amounts to a "restructuring of the management of the emotions," achievable only through the saving work of Christ.[554] The stripping of emotions, to be aided and perhaps accelerated through the threat of Paul's eschatological vision, depends in Paul's language on the destruction of any attachment to any object at all redolent of pagan ritual--the wax image of a grandfather, a favorite jar representing Zeus Ktesios, a votive pot given to Artemis signifying the entrance to womanhood, a simple garland won through victory in a race in the gymnasium.

If J.Z. Smith and Jen Cianca are correct in arguing that many early Christians (and indeed not a few late antique ones) did not forsake images of the gods as Paul prescribed, and if instead they creatively found ways to stay in relationship with these objects, this process deserves a place in accounts of early Christian experience. At the very least, next to the stacks

---

[552] Riis and Woodhead, *Sociology of Religious Emotion,* 85, apud Hans Mol, *Identity and the Sacred: A Sketch for a New Social Scientific Theory of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell 1976).
[553] Riis and Woodhead, *Religious Emotion*, 89-90.
[554] von Gemünden, *Affekt und Glaube*, 226.

of books detailing the unity of the early Pauline communities with respect to idolatry, studies that assume pagans enjoy a relatively clean break with their idolatrous past, there need to be at least a few books assuming rather the opposite--a violent rupture with familiar objects, places, and people. Whether someone first attended a Christian meeting by choice, or whether attendance was compulsory, as it may have been for slaves, or daughters, or wives, guidelines for participation in this new community and abiding by its prohibition of idolatry were surely confusing, much more even than 1 Corinthians 8-10 illustrates. Although the voices of those formerly pagan Christians who were told to abandon their association with images may never be recovered, we can still acknowledge the potency of apocalyptic discourse in framing these new Christians' experiences with their past. If the evidence of the late antique period, or even the medieval period is any guide, the turn to aniconic worship was always slow, halting, contested, and incomplete. Surely the considerable power of images of gods, and the emotional attachments people had with them, contributes to this incremental change.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we first tried to assess the significance of the continuity and discontinuity between indigenous pagan discourse for images of the gods, and Paul's Hellenistic Jewish discourse, laced with apocalyptic condemnation, for these same images. The available archaeological evidence indicates that images of gods and ancestors confronted new, formerly pagan Christians in every sphere of daily life. Comparanda that model encounters between Christians and pagans show both groups creatively interpreting a Christian refusal to eat food sacrificed to other gods so that they can maintain social ties. Even our limited archaeological evidence of pre-Constantinian worship spaces at Dura Europos in Syria and

Lullingstone in Great Britain suggests that, if some Christians did avoid at every turn what Paul called idolatry, other Christians interacted with pagan images along a spectrum ranging from benign acceptance to continued, active worship.

In the second half of the chapter we argued that Paul's apocalyptic discourse regarding idolatry needs to be incorporated into accounts of early Christian experience, especially maps of emotion. Paul's visceral language illustrates his determination to bring about the emotional conversion of his formerly pagan audience with respect to images of the gods. He wants to disintegrate any emotional attachment to images in his audience by inducing fear of God's judgment even as he urges his audience to maintain their current social ties where possible. The absolutizing nature of apocalyptic discourse undermines any qualifications Paul attempts to include when he encourages relative harmony with pagans. In sketches of early Christian experience, Paul's apocalyptic discourse about the horrors of idolatry need to be mapped alongside sociological models that credit the emotional power of objects, objects his audience had been interacting with all their lives, objects they could not necessarily forsake without damaging familial and communal relationships. The last few decades of the 20th century witnessed scholarship of early Christianity insisting on how some aspects of Christian identity, such as gender and class, were contested from the beginning. Luke's Edenic portrait in Acts 4:32 of the believers as a group "of one heart and soul," more mythic origin than historical reality, dissolves under analyses of Paul's letters that recognize community arguments about social and gender disparities. The knowledge we have of how ancient pagans used images of gods and ancestors to maintain social bonds, to nourish favored memories, and to recall loved ones, should have an equally disruptive effect on scholarly portraits of Paul's communities that assume their passive compliance with the prohibition to engage with images. The inflammatory

nature of apocalyptic discourse against idols is as much a part of Paul's map of early Christian gentile experience as his commands to forgive and to love one another.

General Conclusion

Why, and when, people began to fashion images of the figures they worship remains an unanswered question, but even brief forays into religious traditions around the world show just how strong the impulse is to create some material manifestation of pious devotion. After thousands of years, Hindus still worship with sacred images, as do Buddhists in Mahayana traditions, or Christians in the Greek orthodox Church. The fiercely aniconic tradition of Islam nonetheless celebrates the beauty of Allah's message through depictions in mosques of Arabic script, Allah's own language, while aniconic Orthodox Judaism requires its *tefillin*. Ancient Greeks and Romans filled not only their temples, but every other sphere of their lives with material manifestations of their piety, images of their gods, and the care with which they tended them reflects their emotions about them, judgments of their value, as Nussbaum would say. This project began with the claim that the role of images in ancient Greek and Roman religion, especially images outside of temples, has been far undervalued, especially when contrasted with the attention given to animal sacrifice. If images have been undervalued in studies of ancient paganism, they have also been undervalued in studies of early Christianity, which fail to account for the transformation involved when pagans converting to Christianity abandoned images, and which ignore the impact of Paul's apocalyptic threats to exclude rituals involving images from Christians' lives.

In the first chapter, we learned why images in ancient Greek and Roman religion have not received the scholarly attention they merit. At the inception of the new "science of religion" in the 19th century, the field to which Religious Studies traces its origin, scholars influenced by Protestantism's insistence on the inferiority of iconic religious traditions compared with aniconic ones filtered their conclusions through the polemical category of idolatry. In a century

obsessed with cultural progress, "idolatry" offered a convenient metric for placing religious traditions in a hierarchy with Protestant Christianity at the top, even for those atheist scholars who did not consider Protestant Christianity the *telos* of all human religious development. In my own view, their subordination of worship with images to worship without them did not, however, completely cripple these scholars' attempts to understand what is happening when someone prays before a statue. Recall Max Müller's spirited defense of a Hindu from Benares, or Tylor's claim that statues were aids to the imagination, a high compliment from his perspective, or Rouse's indefatigable efforts to catalogue every single species of Greek votive offering, an acknowledgment of their value in spite of his weak theories. Jane Ellen Harrison took the radical step, now standard methodology, of claiming ancient Greek religion cannot be understood without attention to its material manifestation, whereas Robertson Smith's argument that the location of a god's image revealed more about its significance than its artistic merit inspired this project's investigation into the affective relationship between worshippers and images of their gods. Smith's insight that for ancient tribes in the Levant, images of the gods were family, figures to care for, ornament, quarrel with, defend, and, in extreme circumstances, destroy, sheds light on similar affective relationships with images of gods in ancient Greek and Roman religion. Dependence on the category of "idolatry," an entirely negative lens, eclipses the significance of images of gods in their indigenous contexts.

To correct the way the use of "idolatry" blurs scholarly vision regarding images of the gods, chapter two argued that we need to use indigenous categories to understand the importance of images of the gods in ancient Greek and Roman religion. Textual evidence from Homer to Pausanias evinces two strong candidates for these categories--the identification of the image with the god, and the social system of honor. Images of gods had a dual nature; they

were fully material object, and fully divine, and behavior around them reflected this fact. Like the social elite in both ancient Greek and Roman society, the images of gods participated in the social system of honor exchange that embraced everyone, from slave to emperor. Images of gods demand honor just as the gods themselves do, and a host of stories reflect the conviction that properly honoring an image results in divine approval, while dishonoring an image courts divine displeasure. It is through the social system of honor, a system used as a medium to express emotions, that worshippers' affective relationships with images of the gods manifest themselves, as was evident in two ancient Greek novels and Pausanias.

Chapter three demonstrated how Paul of Tarsus reveals a surprising congruence with the pagan view of images of the gods, despite seeing them through his own indigenous category of idolatry. Paul fully recognized these images as participants in honor exchange because he uses the same vocabulary of honor to express his devotion to the god of Israel. Paul also confirms that these images were identified with divine beings, although he denies these beings the title "gods." In this way, Paul's reflection that "idols are nothing" is more rhetorical flourish than philosophical conviction, as is clear when he uses the episode of the golden calf from Exodus 32 to threaten his formerly pagan audience from returning to worship idols. Paul's frenetic denunciation of idolatry in 1 Corinthians, combined with his recommendation to "be at peace with everyone," is offered as a careful compromise to respecting the Torah and allowing Corinthian Christians to maintain their pagan social relations. But the fragile synthesis Paul establishes between obedience to Torah and encouraging new Christians to interact with their pagan friends and family only makes sense in the imminence of God's judgment. Linking apocalyptic language with idolatry sounds a bell that continues to ring in the Christian imagination long after the expectation of Christ's imminent arrival has abated.

In chapter four, we first reviewed two separate claims that many converts from paganism to Christianity probably did maintain some pagan rituals, or at the very least practiced their devotion to Christ in environments entangled with material reminders of their former pagan commitments. The excision of "idolatry" from Christian life that was demanded by Paul would not have been possible in the built Roman world where images of gods stood in every private and public space, honoring ancestors, marking achievements, serving as foci for strengthening familial and communal relationships. Some Christians probably creatively negotiated their way around Paul's prohibition, as Smith's model of indigenous tribes in Indonesia suggested, or even continued certain pagan practices, especially at home, as Cianca argued and as late antique textual evidence proves. Some probably tried to abide by Paul's directive, like the concerned faction at Corinth, the so-called "Weak," who are concerned about their fellow Christians eating food that has been sacrificed to idols.

Finally, we introduced a sociological model of religious emotion, the religious emotional regime, to highlight the significance of emotion in religious communities, and to clarify the balance Paul attempts to strike between cultivating grateful joy in Christ's redemptive act and apocalyptic fear of associating with images. The emotional conversion Paul struggles to bring about in his formerly pagan audience depends as much on nourishing fear of their past as it does on excitement about joining, through Christ, Israel's covenant with God. Despite the absence of first century pagan voices who experienced the transformation from pagan to Christian worldview within Paul's Corinthian community, the boundaries Paul sets for membership in his community need to be understood as sites of contestation, not clear lines into which every member of his churches fit neatly. New Christians had to make choices about how to honor their families, their friends, and those in their broader society who had no interest

in honoring Christ. These choices, whatever they were, must have left collateral damage in their Christian or pagan circles--loss of their past, loss of opportunity to celebrate life transitions, loss of friends. Images of gods served as affective signposts marking pathways through life's vagaries and through complex pagan societies. If we want to understand the first pagans who joined Paul's particular branch of the Jesus movement, we need to account for the impact of Paul's chilling message that following these signposts marks you as God's enemy. The crosses carved into the foreheads of ancient images of Greek and Roman gods, visible in museums and at archaeological sites all over Greece, have their antecedents in the hearts of the first Christians.

Bibliography

Adams, Edward. *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* London: T&T Clark International 2013.

Allison, Penelope. *The Archaeology of Household Activities.* London and New York: Routledge 1999.

Apuleius. *Apologia. Florida. De deo Socratis.* Edited by C.P. Jones. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2017.

Bakker, Jan. *Living and Working with the Gods*. Amsterdam: Gieben 1994.

Balch, David. *Roman Domestic Art and Early House Churches*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2008.

"Rich Pompeiian Houses, Shops for Rent, and the Huge Apartment Building in Herculaneum as Typical Spaces for Pauline House Churches." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27 (2004): 27-46.

Barrett, C.K. *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New York and Evanston: Harper and Row 1968.

Barton, Carlin. *Roman Honor*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 2001.

Barton, Carlin and Boyarin, Daniel. *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities*. New York: Fordham University Press 2016.

Barton, Stephen. "Eschatology and the Emotions in Early Christianity." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130 (2011): 571-591.

E. Bercovitch, "The Altar of Sin: Social Multiplicity and Christian Conversion among a New Guinea People," in *Religion and Cultural Studies*. Edited by S. Mizruchi. Princeton: Princeton University Press 2001.

Black, Fiona C. and Koosed, Jennifer L. *Reading with Feeling: Affect Theory and the Bible*. Atlanta: SBL Press 2019.

Bodel, John and Olyan, Saul M., eds. *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity: Contextual and Comparative Perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell 2008.

Bornkamm, Günther. *Early Christian Experience*. Translated by Paul L. Hammer. New York: Harper &Row 1969.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977.

Bowie, Ewen. "Inspiration and Aspiration: Date, Genre, and Readership" from *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece*. Susan Alcock, John Cherry, and Jaś Elsner, eds. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001.

Boyarin, Daniel. *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1994.

Boyce, G.K. "Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 14: (1937).

Brøns, Cecilie. *Gods and Garments: Textiles in Greek Sanctuaries in the 7th to the 1st Centuries BC*. Oxford: Oxbow Books 2017.

Brookins, Timothy, and Longenecker, Bruce, *1 Corinthians 1-9:A Handbook on the Greek Text* .Waco: Baylor University Press 2016.

1 Corinthians 1-10: A Handbook on the Greek Text. Waco: Baylor University Press 2016.

Burkert, Walter. *Ancient Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*. Translated by John Raffan. Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1985.

Chaniotis, Angelos, "Megatheism: The Search for Almighty God and the Competition of Cults," pp. 112-140, in *One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*, ed. Stephen Mitchell and Peter van Nuffelen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010.

Chariton. *Callirhoe*. Edited and translated by G.P. Goold. LCL. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1995.

Charlesworth, James H, ed. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. New York: Doubleday 1983.

Cianca, Jenn. *Sacred Ritual, Profane Space: The Roman House as Early Christian Meeting Place*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 2018.

Cohen, Shaye. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press 2014.

Collins, Adele Yarboro. "Introduction: Early Christian Apocalypticism" from *Semeia* 36 *Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting*. Decatur GA: Scholars Press 1986.

"The Early Christian Apocalypses." *Semeia* 14. Decatur GA: Scholars Press 1979.

Collins, John J. *Between Jerusalem and Athens: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*. Grand Rapids: Eerdman's 2000.

Concannon, Cavan. *"When You Were Gentiles*:" *Spectres of Ethnicity in Roman Corinth and Paul's Corinthian Correspondence.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2014.

Conzelmann, Hans. *1 Corinthians*. Translated by James W. Leitch. Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1975.

Corbett, P.E. "Greek Temples and Greek Worshippers." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 1970.

Crook, Zeba. "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128 (2009): 591-611.

Cyprian, *Quod idola dii non sint.* Patrologia Latina. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 217 vols. Paris 1844-1864.

Delaney, C. "Seeds of Honor, Fields of Shame," in *Honor Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean*, D.D. Gilmore, ed. *AAA* Special Publication 22. Washington: American Anthropological Association 1987, 35-48.

DeLillo, Don. *Underworld.* New York: Scribner 1997.

Dietrich, Bernard. "From Knossos to Homer" in *What is a God? Studies in the Nature of Greek Divinity*. Swansea: Duckworth 1997.

Dodds. E.R. *The Greeks and the Irrational.* Berkeley: California University Press 1951.

Donohue, Alice. *Xoana and the Origins of Greek Sculpture*. Atlanta: Scholars Press 1988.

"Greek Images of the Gods: Considerations in Terminology and Methodology," *Hephaistos* 15 (1997).

Dunn, James D. G. *Jesus and the Spirit*. London: SCM Press Ltd 1975.

Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.* Translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: The Free Press 1995. Originally published as *Le Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: Le système totémique en Australie*. Paris : F. Alcan 1912.

Edwards, Jonathan. *Religious Affections.* Edited by John E. Smith. New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1959. Originally published as *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*. Boston: Kneeland and Green 1745.

Elsner, Jaś. *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 2007.

Art and the Roman Viewer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995.

Faraone, Christopher. *Talismans and Trojan Horses: Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual*. New York: Oxford University Press 1992.

Finney, Mark T. *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in its Greco-Roman Social Setting.* London: T&T Clark 2012.

Fisher, N.R.E. *Hybris: A Study of the Values of Honor and Shame in Ancient Greece*. Warminster: Aris and Phillips 1992.

Forbes, Chris. "Pauline Demonology and/or Cosmology? Principalities, Powers, and the Elements of the World in their Hellenistic Context." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 85 (2002): 51-73.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books 1977.

Friesen, Steven and Schowalter, Daniel, eds. *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2005.

Friesen, Steven, Schowalter, Daniel, and Walters, James, eds. *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society*. Leiden and Boston: Brill 2010.

Fredriksen, Paula. "Philo, Herod, Paul, and the Many Gods of Ancient 'Monotheism.'" Unpublished paper cited with permission of the author. Forthcoming.

Furnish, V.P. *Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press 1999.

Goldenberg, Robert. *The Nations That Know Thee Not: Jewish Attitudes Towards Other Religions.* New York: New York University Press 1998.

Gooch, Peter. *Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8-10 in its Context*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1993.

Gordon, Richard. "The Real and the Imaginary: Production and Religion in the Graeco-Roman World." *Art History* 2 (1979): 5-34.

Griffith-Dickson, G. *Human and Divine: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religious Experience*. London: Duckworth 2000.

Griffith, Terry. "'ΕΙΔΟΛΩΝ' as 'Idol' in Non-Jewish and Non-Christian Greek. *The Journal of Theological Studies* 53 (2012): 95-101.

Gutch, Clement. "Review: Rouse's *Greek Votive Offerings.*" *Classical Review* 17 (1903): 372-374.

Hadot, Pierre. *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault.* Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell 1995.

Habicht, C. *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece.* Sather Classical Lectures 50. Berkeley 1985.

Harper Collins Study Bible. New Revised Standard Version. Wayne A. Meeks, General Editor. New York: Harper Collins 1989.

Harrison, Jane. *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1912.

Héring, Jean. *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*. Translated by A.W. Heathcote and P.J. Allcock. London: Epworth 1962.

Hesiod. *Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum, Fragmenta Selecta*. Edited by Friedrich Solmsen. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1970.

Hesiod. *Theogony. Works and Days. Shield.* Translated by Apostolos Athanassakis. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 2003.

Homer. *The Iliad*. Edited by David B. Monro and Thomas W. Allen. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1920.

Homer. *The Iliad*. Translated by Richmond Lattimore. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1951.

Ibn Paquda, Bahya Ben Joseph. *The Book of Direction to the Duties of the Heart.* Translated by Menahem Mensoor. London: Routledge and K. Paul 1973.

James, Sarah. *Corinth. Volume VII.7. Hellenistic Pottery: The Fine Wares.* American School of Classical Studies at Athens: Princeton 2018.

James, William. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Penguin Books 1958.

Jashemski, W.M.F. *The Gardens of Pompeii: Herculaneum and the Villas Destroyed by Vesuvius.* New Rochelle: Caratzas Bros. 1979.

Jewett, Robert. "Tenement Churches and Communal Meals in the Early Church: The Implications of a Form-Critical Analysis of 2 Thessalonians 3:10." *Biblical Research* 38 (1993): 23-43.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press 2009.

Religious Experience in Earliest Christianity: A Missing Dimension in New Testament Studies. Minneapolis: Fortress 1998.

Johnston, Sarah Iles. "Animating Statues: A Case Study in Ritual." *Arethusa* 41 (2008): 445-477.

Kaufman, Yehezkel. *The Religion of Israel*. Translated by Moshe Greenberg. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1960.

Keane, W. "Materialism, Missionaries, and Modern Subjects in Colonial Indonesia," in P. van de Veer, ed. *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity*. New York and London: Routledge 1996.

Kerenyi, Karl. "΄ΑΓΑΛΜΑ, ΕΙΚΩΝ, ΕΙΔΟΛΟΝ." *Theologische Forschung* 31 (1964)

Klauck, Hans-Josef. *Hausgemeinde und Hauskirche im frühen Christentum.* Stuttgart: Stuttgart Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk 1981.

Kindt, Julia. "Personal Religion: A Productive Category for the Study of Ancient Greek Religion?" *Journal of Hellenic Studies 135* (2015): 35-50.

Klawans, Jonathan, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011.

Lampe, Peter *From Paul to Valentinus: The Christians of Rome in the First Two Centuries*. Minneapolis: Fortress 1999.

Levenson, Jon. *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*. San Francisco: Harper Collins 1985.

Levtow, Nathaniel. *Images of Others: Iconic Politics of Ancient Israel*.

Lietzmann, Hans. *Messe und Herrenmahl: Eine Studie zur Geschichte d. Liturgie* . Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschicte 8. Bonn: Marcus & Weber 1926.

Lieu, J.M. "Jews, Christians, and 'Pagans' in Conflict," in *Critique and Apologetics: Jews, Christians, and Pagans in Antiquity*. A-C Jacobsen, J. Ulrich, and D. Brakke (eds.) Frankfurt: Lang 2009, 43-58.

Lloyd, Alan B, ed. *What is a God? Studies in the Nature of Greek Divinity.* Swansea: Duckworth 1997.

Lucian. *Lover of Lies.* Translated by Daniel Ogden. Oxford: The Classical Press of Wales 2007.

MacMahon, Ardle. *The Taberna Structures of Roman Britain*. British Archaeological Reports, British Series 356. Oxford: John and Erica Hedges 2003.

Martin, Dale. *Inventing Superstition: From the Hippocratics to the Christians* Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2004.

The Corinthian Body. New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1995.

Maurer, Christian, "σύνοιδα, συνείδησις," found in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Kittel, Friedrich, and Bromiley, eds. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1985.

Mauss, Marcel. "*Greek Votive Offerings.*" *L'Année Sociologique* 7 (1902-1903): 296-299.

Meeks, Wayne. "Apocalyptic Discourse and Strategies of Goodness," *Journal of Religion* 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2000): 461-475.

Mitchell, Margaret. *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1991.

Morgan, David. *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1998.

Müller, Max. *Chips from a German Workshop*. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1867.

Nestle-Aland. *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 27th Edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1993.

Nevett, L.C. *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2010.

Neyrey, J.H. *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation.* Peabody: Hendrickson 1991.

Nickelsburg, George E. and VanderKam, James C., trans. *1st Enoch*. *A New Translation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2004.

Nilsson, Martin. *A History of Greek Religion*. Translated by F.J. Fielden. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1949.

Nussbaum, Martha. *Upheavals of Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Oakes, Peter. *Reading Romans in Pompeii: Paul's Letter at Ground Level.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2009.

Orr, D.G. "Roman Domestic Religion: The Evidence of the Household Shrines" *ANRW* II.16.2 (1978): 1557-91.

Parker, Robert. *Athenian Religion: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press 1996.

Polytheism and Society at Athens. New York: Oxford University Press 2005.

Pausanias. *Description of Greece.* Translated by W.H.S. Jones. *LCL*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press 1935.

Petridou, Georgia. *Divine Epiphany in Greek Literature and Culture*.
Oxford: Oxford University Press 2015.

Pierce, C.A. *Conscience in the New Testament.* London: SCM 1955.

Plato. *Timaeus*. Translated by R.G. Bury. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press 1929.

Platt, Verity. *Facing the Gods: Epiphany and Representation in Graeco-Roman Art and Culture: Art, Literature, Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2011.

Pliny the Elder. *Natural History.* Translated by H. Rackham. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1938.

Proudfoot, Wayne. *Religious Experience.* Berkeley and London: University of California Press 1987.

Rappaport, R.A. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999.

Reardon, B.P, ed. and trans. *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 1989.

Reddy, William. *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Riis, Ole and Woodhead, Linda. *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010.

Rilke, Rainer Maria. "Archaic Torso of Apollo" from *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*. Stephen Mitchell, ed., trans. New York: Vintage Books 1989.

Rouse, William Henry. *Greek Votive Offerings: An Essay in the History of Greek Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1902.

Rutherford, Ian. "Tourism and the Sacred: Pausanias and the Traditions of Greek Pilgrimage." *Pausanias* (2001)

Sandelin, Karl-Gustav. *Attraction and Danger of Alien Religion.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2012.

Sanders, E.P. "The Testament of Abraham." in *Outside the Old Testament*, ed. M. de Jonge. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press 1985.

Scheid, John. *An Introduction to Roman Religion*. Translated by Janet Lloyd. Bloomington. Indiana University Press 2003.

Scheidel, Walter and Friesen, Steven. "Size of the Economy and Distribution of Income in the Roman Empire" *Journal of Roman Studies* 99 (2009): 61-91.

Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers.* Translated by Richard Crouter. Cambridge, England and New York 1988.

Sharf, Robert H. "Experience," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*. Edited by Mark Taylor. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1998, 94-116.

Sharpe, Heather. "Bronze Statuettes from the Athenian Agora: Evidence for Domestic Cults in Roman Greece. *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 83 (2014): 143-187.

Smith, J.Z. "Re: Corinthians," in *Relating Religion*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 2004, 340-361.

Smith, William Robertson. *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*. New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1889.

Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane. "What is Polis Religion?" in *The Greek City from Homer to Alexander*. Edited by Oswyn Murray and Simon R.F. Price. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1990.

Spaeth, Barbette. "Greek Gods or Roman? The Corinthian Archaistic Blocks and Religion in Roman Corinth," in *The American Journal of Archaeology* Vol. 121, Issue 3. Boston: American Journal of Archaeology 2017.

Spawforth, Anthony. "Roman Corinth: The Formation of a Colonial Elite" from *Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspect.* Edited by A.D. Rizakis. Athens: Research Center for Greek and Roman Antiquity 1996.

Spittler, Russell P, "The Testament of Job," in *Outside the Old Testament*. Edited by M. de Jonge. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press 1985.

Steiner, Deborah Tarn. *Images in Mind: Statues in Archaic and Classical Greek Literature and Thought*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 2002.

Stewart, Andrew. *Art, Desire and the Body in Ancient Greece*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997.

Greek Sculpture. New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1990.

Strabo. *Geography*. Translated by Horace Leonard Jones. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1917.

Tajford, Bjørn. "Indigenous Religion(s) as an Analytical Category" in *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 25 (2013): 221-243.

Theissen, Gerd. *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology*. Translated by John P. Galvin. Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1987.

The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth. Edited and translated by John Schütz. Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1982.

Theophrastus. *The Characters of Theophrastus*. R.G. Ussher, ed. London: Bristol Classical Press 2005.

Thomas, Christine M. *The Affective Context of Healing: Votive Offerings to Zeus in Roman Phrygia*. Lecture at University of California at Santa Barbara. May 18th 2015. Cited with permission of the author.

Trazskoma, Stephen, trans. *Two Novels from Ancient Greece*. Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company 2010.

Tylor, E.B. *Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization*. London: John Murray 1870.

Van Straten, Folkert T. "Did the Greeks Kneel Before Their Gods?" *Babesch: Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 49 (1974): 159-189.

Von Gemünden, Petra. *Affekt und Glaube: Studien Zur Historischen Psychologie des Frühjudentums und Urchristentums*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 2009.

Von Soden, H. "Sakrament und Ethik bei Paulus. Zur Frage der literarischen und theologischen Einheitlichkeit von 1 Kor. 8-10," 239-275 in *Urchristentum und Geschichte: Gesammelte Aufsätze und Vorträge*. Von Soden, H., and Von Campenhausen, H., eds. Tübingen: Mohr 1951.

Versnel, Henk. *Coping with the Gods: Wayward Readings in Greek Theology*. Boston: Brill 2011.

Wallace, James Buchanan. *Snatched into Paradise. 2 Cor. 12:1-10: Paul's Heavenly Journey in the Context of Early Christian Experience*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter 2011.

Westermann, Claus. *Isaiah 40-66*. Translated by D.M.G. Stalker. Old Testament Library; London: SCM Press 1969.

Wheeler-Barclay, Marjorie. *The Science of Religion in Britain, 1860-1915*. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press 2010.

Whitmarsh, Tim. *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008.

Witherington, Ben. *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1995.

Xenophon. *Ephesian Tale*. Translated by Graham Anderson. In *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, B.P. Reardon, ed. Berkeley and London: University of California Press 1989.

Xenophon. *EPHESIVS*. Edited by Antonius D. Papanikolaou. Leipzig: Teubner 1973.

Zaidman, Louise and Pantel, Pauline. *Religion in the Ancient Greek City*. Translated by Paul Cartledge. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992.