Infant Exposure and the Rhetoric of Cannibalism, Incest, and Martyrdom in the Early Church

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In the late summer of the waning years of the second century, Tertullian wrote a majestic and, at times, snide *Apology* for Christianity.[1] Nestled among the many rhetorically sophisticated arguments is a defense against the charges of cannibalism and incest. In asking that the accusations rise above the status of mere rumors he states, "it ought … to be wrung out of us (whenever that false charge is made) how many murdered babies each of us has tasted, how many acts of incest he had done in the dark, what cooks there—yes, and what dogs. Oh! The glory of that magistrate who had brought to light some Christian who had eaten up to date a hundred babies!" (*Apol.* 2.5).[2] In an extended discussion later in the treatise he enquires about the logistics of planning such elaborate and deceitful rituals without the knowledge of the initiates (*Apol* 8); sarcastically noting, for example, that it would be impossible to admit catechumens who did not have mothers and sisters with whom to commit incest.[3] While Tertullian interrogates many of the practicalities assumed by the accusations– who is cooking the children? How are the infants so compliant in their own ritual murder? – he never interrogates the issue that, to modern ears, might seem to be a clear problem: where are Christians getting these children?

For ancient audiences this was not a difficult question to answer. Infant exposure was a reality in the ancient world and, if ancient literature is to be believed, there was a ready supply of unwanted children to be found on quiet hillsides, dunghills, or even the sewers. An ancient reader could easily imagine where the Christians had acquired a steady supply of infants for ritual consumption. This paper proposes that the practices of infant exposure can inform our understanding not only of early Christian apologies that deal with cannibalism and incest, but also the presentation of early Christian martyrs and the logic of post-mortem punishment in later apocalyptic literature. Through an examination of the related discourses

of incest, cannibalism, and infant exposure in selected apologies, martyrdom accounts, and apocalyptic texts we will see that the social concerns that enveloped exposure shed light on the larger quite disparate Christian conversation surrounding cannibalism and incest.

Most scholarship on infant exposure in the writings of the apologists has approached this subject from the broader question of Christian objections to the broader modern category of 'baby-killing' (abortion, infanticide, and infant exposure) and changing attitudes to children in general.[4] This paper asks not 'why do Christians object to infant exposure?' but rather, 'what does infant exposure have to do with cannibalism and incest'? It will argue that by linking aberrant practices like incest to socially acceptable practices like infant exposure Christians were able both to rebut the accusations made against them and to claim the moral high ground. As we will see, the recategorization of exposure as murder in turn affects discussions about the punishment of sinners in apocalyptic tours of hell. The rhetorical effects of this new classification scheme are felt even in modern scholarship. In the controversial academic conversation about whether or not ancient Romans cared for their children, some modern classicists have worried that infant exposure serves as evidence that they did not because they assume that exposure is a form of murder.[5]

Before proceeding to an examination of the rhetorical function of infant exposure in early Christian writers we must first review the charges of cannibalism and incest lodged against early Christians, the way that these accusations are accounted for, and how Christians responded to the charges.

Accusations against Christians

From the early second century onwards, Christians were accused of consuming human flesh and engaging in incestuous unions during their meetings.[6] There is ample evidence to suggest that rumblings of illicit sexual activity and man-eating surfaced in Asia

Minor, Rome, Gaul, and Egypt during the second century CE. The geographical span of these accusations is not evidence that they are accurate but rather an example of "labelling" by which the rejection of outsiders is affirmed by linking them to "barbaric" practices.[7] Tacitus accuses Christians only indirectly of *flagitiae* (*Ann* 15.44) and Pliny, too, alludes to certain "crimes" that Christians were accused of engaging in during meals but concludes that they "take food of an ordinary, harmless kind" (*Ep.* 10.96). The idea that meals could be a context in which immorality flourished was well established among Roman moralists. Ritualistic meals, especially those organized and attended by the social elites, always occupied a precarious space between socially important displays of power and morally corrosive displays of luxury, such that attendance at banquets was always a potential occasion for personal moral corruption. We need only look to the rumors about Caligula and his sisters for evidence that debauchery and luxury could lead to incest during banquets.[8]

Most of our evidence for the accusations against Christians comes from the writing of the apologists that sought to rebut them.[9] The earliest explicit reference to Christians eating flesh and engaging in sexual immorality appears in the writings of Justin Martyr (1 *Apol.* 26; 2 *Apol.* 12).[10] In Justin we hear for the first time that a lamp is upset, promiscuity ensues, and human flesh is consumed (1 *Apol.* 26; *Dial.* 10).[11] Only his discussion in 2 *Apol*. 12 pointedly refers to the drinking of blood as well as the consumption of human flesh.[12] Justin's probable student, Tatian, offers a similarly straightforward version of the accusation. His rebuttal refers to Greek mythology in which Pelops is served to the Gods to test their omniscience and Kronos eats his young.[13] Writing around 177 CE, Athenagoras expands the mythological vocabulary of conversation with reference to "Thyestian feasts [and] Oedipal couplings" as well as the broader charge of "atheism" (*Leg.* 3).[14] The same mythological references appear in the roughly contemporaneous *Letter of the Churches of Lyon and Vienne* (Eusebius, *Church History* 5.1-3), in which the martyrs are also accused by their non-Christian

household slaves of "Thyestean banquets and Oedipodean intercourse" (5.1.14). Only a few years later, Theophilus of Antioch writes that many people believed "that the wives of all of us are held in common and made promiscuous use of; and that we even commit incest with our sisters." [15] Christians are also, he writes, accused of eating "human flesh." (*Ad Autol.* 3.4).

Lucian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen also bear witness to the geographically wide circulation of these rumors.[16] Origen, like Justin, refers to the accusations about extinguished lights and sexual promiscuity although, interestingly, he does not attribute these accusations to Celsus himself.[17] The *Epistle to Diognetus* only opaquely gestures to the charges when it writes that Christians "share meals but not their partners" (*Diogn.* 5.7).

The accusations are most fully developed in the rebuttals of Tertullian and Minucius Felix.[18] According to Minucius, Christians tricked initiates into murdering an infant who had been concealed in flour: [19]

> An infant cased in dough, to deceive the unsuspecting, is placed before the person to be initiated. The novice is thereupon induced to inflict what seem to be harmless blows upon the dough, and unintentionally the infant is killed by his unsuspecting blows; the blood—oh horrible—they lap up greedily; the limbs they tear to pieces eagerly; and over the victim they make league and covenant, and by complicity in guilt pledge themselves to mutual silence…[20]

Minucius' description of incest takes its point of departure from the 'overturned lampstand' described by Justin Martyr. In his version, following a banquet that featured much "feasting and drinking" the group began to burn with "incestuous passions." The Christians would provoke a dog tied to the lampstand so that the light would be extinguished. Then "in the shameless dark with unspeakable lust they copulate in random unions, all being equally guilty of incest, some by deed, but everyone by complicity" (*Oct.* 9.6).[23] Tertullian's version

follows the same structure, the unnatural banquet of "sacramental baby-killing" and cannibalism provokes sexual desire and incest (*Apol*. 7.1).

Cannibalism and Incest in the Greco-Roman World

For some it has been tempting to imagine that the basis for the accusations against Christians are misunderstandings about the language utilized in early Christian rituals. The terms "brother" and "sister," references to the kiss of the peace, and the "flesh and blood" symbolism of the eucharist and scriptural passages like John 6:50-58 could further the idea that Christians were engaging in incest and cannibalism.[24] While such explanations make sense in a Christian context they cannot explain the frequency with which the same accusations were levied against other groups in antiquity.[25]

Rhetorically speaking, accusations of cannibalism were a feature of invective that charged one's opponents of tyranny and factionalism.[26] Though cannibalism was known to occur as a matter of necessity in moments of extreme need, such as during a siege, as a general practice it was a taboo associated with 'barbarians' and outsiders.[27] The association of cannibalism with marginal religious groups pre-dates Christianity and served to provide a justification for the group's liminal status and social ostracization.[28]

In his work on cannibalism in Greco-Roman literature and culture, Andrew McGowan identified a series of 'types' of cannibals, many of which are cited in early Christian apologetic texts.[29] The mythological cannibals like Thyestes and Kronos;[30] the philosophical cannibals who argued for the occasional permissibility of cannibalism; the "exotic cannibals" like the Scythians;[31] and the "political cannibals" – those within the community who transgressed social norms.[32] In the same way, charges of incest swirled around legendary figures like Oedpius; sullied the reputations of kings and emperors;[33] and exoticized foreign peoples.[34] Some of this mythology slipped into Christian romance novels.

Both the *Martyrdom of Matthew* and the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* adopt the same rhetorical formulae and depict the liminal spaces of the empire as the domain of cannibals.[35] And many of the mythological cannibals make cameos in the writings of the apologists.

By the fourth and fifth centuries Montanists were regularly being accused of cannibalism by orthodox heresiologists, but as early as the second century Irenaeus was accusing the Carpocratians of "every kind of impious and godless deed" and also of slandering Christians in general. [36] Eusebius would develop this line of explanation further, writing that "it was therefore in this way that it happened that an impious and very wicked suspicion concerning us became widely spread among the unbelievers of that time, that we enjoyed unlawful intercourse with mothers and sisters and ate unholy food."[37] Later Christian writers like Cyril of Alexandria would take the argument further, insisting not only that heretics participated in cannibalism and incest, but also that it was the heretics that were responsible for the rumors about the 'true' Christians.[38]

Christian Self-Defense

In this way, therefore, accusations of cannibalism and incest were hardly unique to Christianity. They were a means by which groups could be rhetorically dehumanized and cast out of the civilized world. In responding to the complaints against them, many of the apologists appeal to Greco-Roman mythology, history, and ethnography as evidence that if charges of cannibalism and incest are to be sought out and prosecuted, there are more egregious examples close at hand. Tatian refers to Pelops and Kronos (*Orat.* 25) Theophilus lists a pantheon of cannibals that mentions Thyestes and Tereus (*Autol.* 15), but also looks to philosophers (Zeno, Diogenes, and Cleanthes), stories of the residents of India, and the Persian general Harpagus.[39] To these, Tertullian and Minucius Felix add the practice of infant sacrifice in their own region, observing that it took place as recently as the reign of Tiberius;

the legends of Gallic human sacrifice; examples from Egypt and Pontus; and some Roman examples involving the Catillinarian conspiracy, worship of Jupiter Latiaris, medical cures for epilepsy, and funerary practice (*Oct.* 30).[40] Doubtless the inclusion of these latter Roman examples would have given their audiences some cause for concern.

In keeping with the nature of their task, many of the apologists supply us with explanations as to why it is that Christians could not have participated in such rituals. It is here that, quite unpredictably, infant exposure makes its appearance. The cornerstone of the apologetic argument is the moral superiority of Christians, who do not practice infant exposure. In contrast to the Romans who regularly engaged in the abandonment of infants, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Minucius Felix all claim that Christians neither kill children while they are in the womb, nor practice infant exposure.[41] The socially accepted (or at least tacitly endorsed) practice of infant exposure was here grouped with other forms of killing. Justin argues that Christians would not even be present at the public execution of criminals – which he calls human sacrifices – or expose their children, much less participate in ritual cannibalism (*2 Apol* 12.5).

Utilizing the same logic, the apologists agree that it is not possible for those who practice sexual temperance and continence to engage in incest with their siblings and parents.[42] Instead, their putative critics are directed to the plethora of mythological stories of incestuous deities as well as the legends of incestuous foreigners as immoral counterparts to the behaviour of Christians. The righteous indignation felt by early Christians about the hypocrisy of their critics is at times almost palpable. Athenagoras writes, with no small amount of exasperation, that "adulterers and pederasts reproach those who are (spiritual) eunuchs and those who have but one partner, while they live like fish, since these people too swallow up whoever runs into them, the stronger driving into the weaker" (*Leg.* 34.3).

Though it is rarely treated as a resource for apologetic reasoning, the *Letter of the Churches in Lyon and Vienne to the Church in Smyrna* (Eusebius, *Church History* 5.1.1-5.3.4, hereafter referred to as *Lyon*) makes a similar narratological argument about the relative morals of Christians and their accusers.[43] In an early scene, the Christian martyr Biblis temporarily apostasizes while undergoing examination. Satan, the true author of her suffering, intends to induce more blasphemy through the implementation of additional tortures. "As if rousing herself from slumber," the metaphorically awoken Biblis protests the statements of others about the supposed Christian proclivity for cannibalism. "How could those eat children who do not think it lawful to taste the blood even of irrational animals (ἀλόγων ζώων αἷμα)" (5.1.26).[44] The reference to blood here may direct us to a particular culinary test: Tertullian mentions that blood sausages were used to test the resolve of Christians.[45] Her statement, delivered under duress, is directly related to and contrasts with the words of the non-Christian household slaves who had accused their Christian masters of cannibalism and incest earlier in the letter (5.1.14).

Biblis' profession of innocence sets up a sharp contrast with later events in the narrative. Following an intense contest, the martyrs Alexander and Attalus are executed in the amphitheatre. As Attalus is burned alive on an iron seat a "sacrificial aroma rose from his body" (ἀπὸ τοῦ σωματίου κνίσσα ἀνεφέρετο), The scent of sacrifice illustrates the barbarism of those participating in the deaths of the martyrs – whether as audience members or executioners – but it also gestures back to earlier conversation about cannibalism. Attalus explicitly identifies the quasi-sacrificial scene as cannibalism, saying: "Look what you are doing is cannibalism (Ἰδοὺ τοῦτό ἐστιν ἀνθρώπους ἐσθίειν)! We Christians are not cannibals nor do we perform any other sinful act" (5.1.52).[46] The contrast implicitly pits the innocent/Christian/martyrs against the cannibal/pagan/persecutors and condemns the latter

not only for the crime of cannibalism, but also that of hypocrisy.[47] In doing so the account reflects an emerging literary *topos* in which persecutors are equated with cannibals.

The underlying argument focuses not only on a denial of the charges that is grounded in Christian moral superiority, but also in a critique of the moral status of Roman society. It is not the Christians, but rather the Romans themselves who engaged in the barbaric practices of cannibalism and incest. What is striking is the manner in which many Christian writers incorporate the comparatively unremarkable practices of infant exposure into the list of pagan crimes. In order to appreciate the force of the rhetorical effect of this move it is first necessary to reach behind early Christian constructions of exposure and explore briefly the construction and prevalence of exposure in the Roman world.

Infant Exposure

Infant exposure was commonplace in the ancient world among both the ancient Greeks and Romans.[48] While child exposure had its opponents – for example, among Stoic and Jewish writers, the majority of Greeks and Romans seem to have acknowledged and accepted the general practice.[49] Those who were critical of exposure often appealed to the health and wellbeing of the state; moral principles; and the state's interest in increasing the size of families. While many Christian authors deliberately and strategically conflate abortion, infanticide, and infant exposure, and rhetorically bind these practices to the socially abhorrent practice of human sacrifice, this classification scheme would not have been familiar to most ancient Greeks and Romans.[50] One imagines that an ancient Roman reader, however, would have recoiled at the suggestion that exposure and human sacrifice were ethically synonymous.[51] Not least because, as we will see, the death of exposed infants was by no means a certainty.

Legally speaking, the Twelve Tables permitted a father to expose daughters or any male child deemed disabled or weak.[52] Infants, therefore, might easily have been exposed at the instructions of the *paterfamilias*, but children born without the legal protection of a father (those born after death or divorce as well as those born outside of marriage) were likely the most vulnerable.[53] Menander's *Epitrepontes* recounts how a man named Charisios spurns his wife, Pamphile, when she gives birth to a child a mere five months into their marriage. The child is exposed (line 245). Over the course of the play we learn that Pamphile was raped at the Tauropolia festival and that, by chance, Charisios was her rapist (though neither recalled one another's identity). The three are reunited as a family. The story is typical of New Comedy, which presents children born as the result of rape as likely candidates for exposure but there is a general silence about the existence of children born as a consequence of seduction.[54] According to Suetonius the future emperor Claudius had a daughter exposed because he believed she was not his own (*Claud.* 27). Somewhat ironically, Claudius is on the receiving end of insults about his own lineage in the *Acta Isiodori et Lamponis*: here the petty demagogue Isiodorus calls him the "cast-off (i.e. exposed) son of the Jew Salome!"[55] But beyond imperial examples, Roman sources almost never mention the exposure of a child conceived as a consequence of adultery.[56] There were good reasons to pass over the issue and we might compare the statements of Methodius that infants conceived in adultery and "appointed to death" would later testify against their parents on judgment day.[57] The exposure of children born to widows or divorcées appears to have been quite common and was the subject of laws that gave men (or their families) the right to claim the child.[58]

Classical scholarship used to assume that any perceptibly disabled infant would have been exposed or killed shortly after birth.[59] To an extent this is true but while visibly disabled infants were more likely to be exposed, recent work in this area has demonstrated that some children with impairments were raised.[60] Aristotle recommended in his *Politics* that a law

should be passed prohibiting the rearing of disabled children, which might suggest that some impaired children were reared.[61] Poverty, as well, was a common motivation for exposure as were moments of famine and food shortages.[62] Slaves might also be forced to expose infants, especially if they were seen as a drain on the household or would interfere with their duties, as was the case with infants. But exposure was not only the domain of the socially disadvantaged and oppressed as wealthy families, too, exposed their children. Daughters were especially vulnerable, there is some evidence that wealthy families indiscriminately exposed infants born later in life in order to protect the inheritance of the older ones.[63] Infant exposure and the ethical and practical concerns that it raised, therefore, were not only pertinent to the financially disadvantaged. Late antique Christian authors would reserve their strongest condemnation for the wealthy who exposed their children.[64]

Death from exhaustion, starvation, and the elements was a frequent result of exposure. Simultaneously, however, there was a clear expectation that infants may have been picked up by others, almost always for sale into the slave trade. The author of the *Shepherd of Hermas* identifies himself as a foundling raised to be a slave (1.1). Brunt's classic study of slavery in ancient Italy hypothesizes that "a high proportion [of slaves] may have been foundlings, and have been sold, though illegally, by their parents."[65] If only metaphorically, Roman elites worried about the manner in which the slave system cannibalized high society.[66] The knowledge that well-born Romans had been shuffled into slavery via infant exposure was the source of some anxiety to legislators like Pliny the Younger who worried about the legal status of freeborn children sold into slavery.[67] The ubiquity of abandonment, which almost always took place at locations well known to slave traders, meant that infant exposure played a role in local economies and was a strategy employed in household management. Thus, while Christian objections to infant exposure have antecedents in the writings of Philo and Musonius Rufus, and certain peoples are known to have rejected the practice entirely; few

would have straightforwardly identified infant exposure as either murder or as a threat to the moral integrity of the Roman Empire. On the contrary, for Aristotle and Seneca, the exposure of certain kinds of children was in the best interests of society.

The economic costs of child-rearing loom large in ancient discussions about reclaiming exposed and abandoned children who had been raised by others as one's biological relatives.[68] Much of the legal material pertaining to this question deals with whether or not those who wished to reclaim the child would be liable for the cost of rearing (*alimentia*). In his correspondence with Pliny, Trajan decides that the family should not have to repay the costs of child-rearing but there is considerable conversation about whether this regulation (which by Pliny's own admission, was novel) pertained to the entire empire or just Bithnyia.[69] Both Quintillian and Pliny assume that "'He who has acknowledged an expositus as his own child should receive him after the costs of rearing have been repaid."[70] Several third-century rescripts suggest that fathers or slave-owners can assert *potestas* over those they exposed but that they must compensate the rescuer for the costs or rearing. To a petition from 224, the emperor Alexander Severus replies that "unless you have reclaimed [the exposed child] from a thief… you will restore anything expended in rearing him or, perhaps, for the purpose of his learning a trade."[71]

Here and elsewhere, the expense of raising children is clearly in view. Those costs, in the case of the expositi, would primarily have been the provision of a wet-nurse. Wet-nurse contracts from Egypt reveal that it was common to hire a wet nurse for exposed children but larger households may have used slave-women who had recently given birth.[72] At least one papyrus, documenting the sale of a child in the late fourth-century in the Dakhleh Oasis records that the female slave was a foundling nourished with milk by the owner's wife.[73] Nevertheless, hiring a wet-nurse was considerably cheaper than buying an adult slave especially as, "after a few years the child could offset the cost by running errands and doing

light chores, or be sold at a profit. Infant exposure is recognized as a source of the slave supply under the Empire, though it is impossible to know the proportion of *expositi* among the slave population."[74]

The financial potential of abandoned children persisted despite growing Christian opposition to the practice of exposure. Constantine's law of 331 explicitly gave rescuers the right to raise an *expositus* as either a slave or as the rescuer's own (and, thus, free) child.[75] To be sure these new measures were intended to encourage rescue of the children and to discourage exposition but the rearing of children for the slave trade was not prohibited. In this context Christian Churches acted as intermediaries, especially in the reclamation of infants that had previously abandoned.[76] The possibility of reclamation might have provided an incentive to parents to expose an infant that they were unable to rear in the knowledge that sometime later they might reclaim them.[77]

Re-reading Responses to the Charges against the Christians

The practicalities of infant exposure can help explain some of the logic of early Christian apologetics. A number of second century apologists, as already mentioned, state that Christians could not possibly be guilty of infanticide and cannibalism when they do not even permit infant exposure or abortion.[78] Christians, we are told, are opposed to these practices.[79] The logic of the argument, as is widely recognized, is that those who will not even allow more socially acceptable practices that might harm infants could not kill or eat them.[80] Yet for ancient readers, perhaps there was an additional connection; exposed infants were the most likely source for Christian rituals involving infanticide and cannibalism. After all, exposed infants were not only the backbone of the slave trade, they also served as candidates for dissection at the hands of trainee doctors. Galen tells us that those who wished

to learn more about human anatomy dissected the bodies of exposed children.[81] And magical texts suggest that newborn children or fetuses were sometimes used for ritual purposes.[82] That exposed infants were used in morally ambiguous medical and magical ritual performances only lends credibility to the unspoken assumption that the children purportedly used by Christians in these rituals were victims of exposure.[83] For the apologists, defending themselves of these charges, this added an additional layer of irony to the accusations: how could people who refused even to expose infants be accused of then acquiring them for use in cannibalistic rituals?

The connection between infant exposure and Christian apologetics may run deeper still. Even as Christian apologists labored to dispel rumors of immorality, they found that anxieties about cannibalism had begun to consume other areas of theological inquiry. As early as the third century, Tertullian and Athenagoras had engaged the hypothetical moral quandary that cannibalism posed to the mechanics of the resurrection. How would one parse the identity of a resurrected person who in life had been eaten by a lion and was subsequently ingested by human beings? Athenagoras is forced to argue that animals cannot convert human flesh into animal flesh as normal nutriment: only the food that can properly be called "food" "according to nature." That which was "contrary to nature" would be expelled by the body, like fruit pips or corn kernels.[84] Despite his best efforts, the concept was so outrageously repulsive that it disturbed many in his circle.[85] Tertullian makes recourse to 1 Enoch 61.5 and the story of Jonag in order to explain that the animals who had consumed human bodies would be forced to vomit them up again intact.[86] The chain consumption issue also appears in a whole host of early geographically disparate Christian writers: it is discussed by North Africans Tertullian and Augustine, is mentioned by the Roman writer Tatian, and referred to by the Alexandrian Origen.[87]

In general, scholarship on this subject has focused on the manner in which cannibalism might threaten the identity and integrity of the resurrected body.[88] And, to be sure, it is this metaphysical issue that Athenagoras addresses when he explains the mechanics of digestion to his audience and reassures them that animals cannot simply digest any kind of matter, but only the food that can properly be called "food" "according to nature."[89] But the eschatological consequences of cannibalism seep into his defense of Christianity as well: he writes that those who anticipate the resurrection could not possibly allow their bodies to become tombs for those who would also rise on Judgment Day (*Leg.* 36).

Simultaneously, there was a practical socio-economic reality underlying the potential risk of cannibalism. There were a variety of social activities in which a person might end up being consumed, or partially consumed, by a wild animal. The bodies of those who died as criminals were often fed to dogs; those who hunted animals for sport or for use in the games were engaged in risky work; war presented a number of logistical problems that might prevent the prompt burial of a corpse; and the same fate could befall anyone whose corpse laid undiscovered before burial. Criminals, including Christians, condemned *ad bestias* might easily have lost portions of their bodies to the animals they faced. Donald Kyle has speculated that the tokens distributed at games may well have assigned spectators a portion of the animals that died in the arena.[90] Though the process by which arena meat was processed is somewhat uncertain, Christian authors insist that the Romans ate the wild beasts of the games. Tertullian writes, "[what of] those who dine on the flesh of wild animals from the arena, keen on the meat of boar or stag?...The bellies of the very bears are sought, full of raw and undigested human flesh" (*Apol.* 9.11).[91] Several centuries later Arnobius explicitly charges those who attended beast shows in the arena as delighting in blood and dismemberment, grinding their teeth, and consuming portions of the beasts that had consumed humans (*Ad. Nat.* 2.39-43).[92]

Alongside those who died in the arena, those individuals most likely to be eaten by wild beasts and subsequently ingested by human beings, however, were those who were exposed in the wild as infants. Many exposed infants would have ended up not as slaves, but as food for wild animals. *Pseudo-Phocylides* assumes this to be the case when he writes "Do not let a woman destroy the unborn babe in her belly, nor after its birth throw it before the dogs and the vultures as a prey" (184–85).[93] The mythological rearing of Romulus and Remus and the raising of children by birds, leopards, horses, dog, and bears is a literary feature that directs us to a much harsher reality.[94] Many texts, including those by early Christian writers, mention that wild beasts ate the children that were exposed.[95] Tertullian somewhat sarcastically remarks that it was better for Kronos to eat his children than that the wolves be allowed to reach them (*Ad. Nat.* 2.12.14).

The added irony, then, for those writers who gave thought to the mechanics of chain consumption, was that if anyone was consuming human flesh by proxy it was not, as the author of *Lyon* would say, those who only ate kosher foods. The consumption of wild animals was a rare experience.[96] In some cases eating the meat of more exotic animals was a sign of social status. Galen writes that the panther, which the Tosefta identified as a predator of exposed infants, was "openly shared … [and] even praised by some doctors" for its nutritious qualities.[97] And, in discussing why people do not eat the spleen of animals he notes that those "who eat lions, lionesses, panthers, leopards, bears and wolves" do so "for pleasure" and not out of any necessity.[98] As Garnsey remarks, Galen may have been averse to eating them "but then he belonged to a social and economic group which could choose to put them on the menu."[99] For anyone who had participated in the competitive world of upscale banqueting, there was the threat that they might have unwittingly made themselves cannibals. The most elevated of social exchanges might, ironically, have transgressed one of the greatest taboos.

Simultaneously, however, those who had received tokens at the games, consumed sausage, or been reduced to eating dogs in times of financial hardship faced the same scrutiny.[100]

In a more direct way, infant exposure informs ancient Roman anxieties about incest. In his *Apology*, Tertullian warns his audience that the abandonment of infants was a threat to the moral integrity of the group. The risk was sexual impurity as parents might unwittingly commit incest with abandoned children in the future: "when you expose your infants to the mercy of others… do you forget, what an opportunity for incest is furnished, how wide a scope is opened for its accidental commission?"[101] Justin made the same argument, writing that "almost all [exposed children] (not only the girls, but also the males are brought up to prostitution… And anyone who uses such persons, besides the godless and infamous intercourse, may possibly be having intercourse with his own child, or relative, or brother" (*1 Apol.* 27.3).[102] Minucius Felix jokes that respectable Romans abandon their children with such regularity that when they have recourse to prostitutes they unwittingly "weave a tale about incest."[103] In making these arguments Christian writers tug at the Roman *horreur d'inceste*. [104] Their propositions were hardly hypothetical, given that most infants were exposed close to home. The fear was cemented in cultural consciousness by Oedpius, whose tragic story began with his parents' failed attempt to commit infanticide via exposure. The same risk seems implicit in Juvenal's statement about the "secret comedy" brought about by the exposure of children (6.602-9).[105] Just as the practice of exposing infants could threaten elites with the risk of unknowingly becoming cannibals, so too did it threaten them with the possible charge of incest. The relationship adds another thin layer to the apologetic rhetorical mille-feuille: it is not the Christians who are guilty of incest but rather those who expose their children and frequent brothels.

Punishing those Guilty of Exposure

The relationship between infant exposure and cannibalism grows ever more explicit in apocalyptic texts that equate infant exposure and the betrayal of the martyrs with cannibalism. Even as the original accusations began to gather dust and Christian heresiologists expanded the scope of the charges of cannibalism to include heretics and schismatics some of the apocalypses started to group the punishments of persecutors, child-killers, and cannibals.

One version of the Greek *Apocalypse of Mary* describes a cluster of individuals "standing up to their neck" in fire as those who "ate the flesh of men."[106] When asked for greater specifics about their identity the Virgin is told that "These are they whosoever brought down their own children out of their wombs and cast them out as food for dogs, and whosoever gave up their brothers in the presence of kings and governors, these ate the flesh of man and for this cause they are thus chastised."[107] The association of cannibalism and martyrdom was, as already noted, part of the defense of Christianity implicit in the narrative of *Lyon*, but it is interesting to see infant exposure added to grouping.[108] The alignment here is in part a rhetorical topos: the three sins are grouped together on the basis of severity. At the same time, however, there may be a shared logic underpinning their combination; both the bodies of the martyrs and (as is explicitly noted here) the bodies of exposed infants were sometimes consumed by animals. While dogs were not a common foodstuff, it was possible for them to enter the food chain and, thus, become a part of the human diet. Participation in the persecution of Christians and abandonment of infants, therefore, could easily be construed not only as murder, but also as facilitating cannibalism.[109]

A precursor to this idea can be identified in the late 160s CE Egyptian text the *Apocalypse of Peter*, in which infant exposure informs the measure-for-measure punishment for abortion and infanticide.[110] The women whose children had been aborted are described as seated in a place of excrement and filth where a lake of putrid matter had filled and covered

them up to their necks.[111] Scatological punishments are commonplace in this genre, but the location may also gesture to sites of exposure in the ancient world. Juvenal writes speaks of "foul pools" (*lacus spurcos*), where women wishing to acquire a baby to pass off as their husband's would go to acquire one (Sat. 6.602–3). In Egypt, a probable location for the composition of *Apoc. Pet*, dunghills were a place where infants were abandoned.[112] A similar line of argument is proposed by Patrick Gray who suggests in passing that the wild beasts that gnaw on the breasts of women who expose their infants in *Apoc. Pet.* are a reference to animals that may have consumed the children when they were abandoned.[113]

Alternatively, the breast-feeding wild animals could fall in line with an argument made by Clement of Alexandria that exposing children before they are weaned is especially cruel. Clement appeals to "humane law" and farming practices in which kids were not separated from their mothers until they no longer needed milk (*Str.* 2.18.92-9). The cruelty of exposing an unweaned infant compares to a passage in the *Paedagogus* in which Clement condemns wealthy women who "expose children that are born at home" only to raise birds and other animals (*Paed*. 3.4.30.2-3). Just as some philosophers criticized the wealthy for exposing infants as a matter of convenience, Clement's critique takes aim at the luxurious decadence of the wealthy who choose pets over children. The wild beasts that suckle at the breasts of bad mothers in *Apoc. Pet*. might do double duty; the image both gestures to the fate of exposed children and condemns the parenting choices of their mothers.[114]

Conclusion

In responding to the charges of incest and cannibalism, a number of early Christian writers appealed to the idea that Christians could not be guilty of such crimes when they would not engage in more socially acceptable practices like adultery and infant exposure. The recourse to infant exposure was not accidental; it both addressed unspoken assumptions about

the origins of children used in these supposed rituals, and also formed the basis for a sharp critique of Roman morality. Infant exposure threatened everyone with the taboo crimes of cannibalism and incest. Christians were not immune to these concerns: in discussions of the resurrection of the body the reassembly of those who had become cannibals by proxy was a sincere but not unsolvable problem.

This is not to say that the Christian rejection of infant exposure was not grounded in profound ethical concerns– of course they were – but rather to suggest that in grouping exposure with infanticide and human sacrifice the apologists were also doing something extraordinary. They were uniting, in various configurations, the morally ambiguous yet socially entrenched practice of exposure with barbarizing taboos like incest and cannibalism. As a defense against obscene accusations, their rejection of infant exposure gave Christians the moral high ground: they could not be guilty of the charges because they refused to engage in the practice that might readily facilitate them. The alignment of cannibalism with infant exposure and the enjoyment of the spectacle of martyrdom further served to explain the punishment of those guilty of persecution and child-killing. The fate shared by the martyrs who fought in the arena and the infants exposed to the elements helped to draw the two sets of practices together in the early Christian imagination. Participants in either set of practices now became cannibals and those who facilitated their deaths were judged guilty of murder and persecution. As the category of cannibalism widened and calcified those guilty of persecution, exposure, and abortion could all expect to meet the same fate.

The reorientation of exposure as a crime comparable to infanticide and persecution did not eliminate exposure, but rather focussed attention on those who raised foundlings. The Latin Vision of Ezra not only condemns those who killed their children but also those who "did not give their breasts to orphans," radically reshaping the moral obligations of women even to parentless children.[115] Constantine's legislation shifts legal rights from biological

parents to those who rescued them.[116] Even those who intended to raise rescued children as slaves are now fulfilling a morally and legally important role.[117] Once removed from the context of apologetics, the reconfiguration of infant exposure has ramifications, that can only be grazed here, for ancient Christian constructions of motherhood, the moral status of nursing, and the broader status of children in late antiquity.[118] This is not to say that apologetic discourse should be credited with this shift, but rather that the rhetorical redescription of infant exposure, which emerges in the context of somewhat slanderous and frivolous accusations about Christian meetings, has substantive consequences for the broader ways in which Christians come to define the limits and responsibilities of parents.

[1] Timothy D. Barnes argues that Tertullian composed the *Apology* in the late summer or early fall of 197 CE in order "to make common cause with the cultured and educated classes of Carthage against the ignorant urban mob," in "Pagan Perceptions of Christianity," *Early Christianity: Origins and Evolution to AD* 600, ed. Ian Hazlett (London: SPCK, 1991), 231-41 [236]. Mark S. Burrows, by contrast, argues that Tertullian anticipated a Roman audience for his text (Mark S. Burrows, "Christianity in the Roman Forum: Tertullian and the Apologetic Use of History," *VC* 42 [1988]: 209-35). On possible revisions to the text see Simon Price, "Latin Christian Apologetics: Minucius Felix, Tertullian and Cyprian," *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, ed. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman and Simon Price (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 107-108. For a more recent discussion of the ambitions and audiences of these texts see Laura Nasrallah, Christian Responses to Art and Architecture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2, 6, 21-60, who positions early Christian apologies in the midst of a broader conversation about *paideia* in the Roman empire.

[2] Translations follow that of Tertullian, *Apology,* trans. T. R. Glover, LCL (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1931).

[3] On Tertullian's sarcasm in this passage see, for example, L. Roig Lanzillotta, "The Early Christians and Human Sacrifice," in ed. Jan N. Bremmer, *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 80-102 [90].

[4] See Michael J. Gorman, *Abortion and the Early Church* (Downer's Grove, Il.: Varsity Press, 1982); John Boswell's ground-breaking *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe* (Chicago, Il: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 118-122; Erkki Koskenniemi, *The Exposure of Infants among Jews*

and Christians in Antiquity (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 2009). It should be noted that eliding of the ancient categories of different kinds of harm to infants owes a great deal to the rhetorical work of the apologists themselves, who unite infant exposure to infanticide, abortion, and—in some cases—human sacrifice in ways that were novel and constructive. Grouping these categories together reflects an early Christian construction. This observation is important because, as we shall see, infant exposure was not inevitably fatal. Judith Evans Grubbs puts this quite succinctly when she writes, "*Expositio* should not be used as a synonym for infanticide: the people who exposed their newborns chose what they thought was a means of ridding themselves of an unwanted child without ending its life outright," in "Hidden in Plain Sight: *Expositi* in the Community," ed. Véronique Dasen and Thomas Späth, *Children, Memory, and Family Identity in Roman Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 293-310 [305].

[5] In discussions of the cultural status of children in the ancient world, infant exposure has proved a tricky issue for modern commentators. In arguing that Roman parents did, in fact, care about their children, Keith Hopkins writes that he still has "nagging doubts" about the question because "Even rich and educated Romans killed or exposed new-born babies," in *Death and Renewal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 225. Robert Garland feels similarly, arguing that infant exposure is evidence in support of the idea that the ancient Romans did not care about their children in Robert Garland, *The Greek Way of Death* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 80.

In trying to resolve the tension between the practice of infant exposure and his argument that Romans did care about their infants, Mark Golden's excellent work on this subject appeals to studies of attitudes to parenting among women who have terminated pregnancies. He argues, based on an early 1980s study in Hawaii that "many of those women choose to abort when they do largely in order to provide a better environment for other

children they have or will have" (Mark Golden, "Did the Ancients Care When Their Children Died?," *Greece & Rome* 35:2 (1988) 152-163 [158]). Golden assumes, as do so many others, that ancient audiences saw exposure as infanticide but this, as we will see, is unclear. If modern data is to be incorporated by way of analogy we can and, perhaps, should add comparanda from those who gave up their children for adoption (see discussion below about the reclamation of exposed infants). Those who exposed their infants in the ancient world were not certain that their children would die even if they would have been unable to pretend that their children would be 'better off' in their new situation.

[6] On the question of accusations against Christians see discussions in Albert Henrichs, "Pagan Ritual and the Alleged Crime of the Early Christians: A Reconsideration," *Kyriakon*, *Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, ed. P. Granfield and J. Jungmann (Münster: Verlag Aschendorff, 1970), 1. 18–35; Stephen Benko, "Pagan Criticism of Christianity during the First Two Centuries A. D.," *ANRW* (1980), 23.2.1055–1118; Robert Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 17–21; Andrew McGowan, "Eating People: Accusations of Cannibalism Against Christians in the Second Century," *JECS* 2 (1994): 413– 42; James B. Rives, "Accusations of Human Sacrifice Among Pagans and Christians," *JRS* 85 (1995): 65– 85; J. Albert Harrill, "Cannibalistic Language in the Fourth Gospel and Greco- Roman Polemics of Factionalism (John 6:52–66)," *JBL* 127:1 (2008): 133– 58; Bart Wagemakers, "Incest, Infanticide, and Cannibalism: Anti-Christian Imputations in the Roman Empire," *Greece and Rome* 57 (2010): 337– 54; Lanzilotta, ""The Early Christians and Human Sacrifice," 80-102; Jan N. Bremmer, "Early Christian Human Sacrifice, Between Fact and Fiction," *Sacrifices humains: discours et réalité,* ed. F. Prescendi and A. Nagy (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 165-76.

[7] The concept is developed in McGowan, "Eating People," 413-17. He credits his use of the term to Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, "Conflict in Luke-Acts: Labelling and

Deviance Theory," *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (ed. Jerome H. Neyrey; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991), 97-122.

[8] Suetonius, *Cal*. 24.1. There are reasons to think of such statements as polemical, but they form part of the cultural fabric that swathed eating practices (See Aloys Winterling, *Caligula: Eine Biographie* [München: Beck, 2003]). We might compare the sequence of events to the feasting and drinking that preceded the orgiastic behaviour of Christians in Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 9. A shocking play on this concept is found in Tertullian, *Jejun.* 17: "With you, love simmers in cooking pots; faith heats up in kitchens, hope lies upon serving dishes; but of greater account is love, because that is how your young men sleep with their sisters." Here he exhorts Christians to increase their abstinence as a means of attaining ritual purity. By equating the Pauline virtues of love, faith, and hope with common features of ancient dining—saucepans, kitchens, and waiters, respectively, Tertullian attempts to underscore the moral degeneracy of his audience who, in his own estimation, value hedonism above virtue. The final equation of love with incest only amplifies the association of culinary debauchery with sexual debasement.

[9] In a recent essay Stéphane Solier argues that writers like Tertullian, Minucius Felix, and Justin Martyr were dependent upon Latin satire in their formulation of the accusations. See "Les agapes technophages, une élaboration littéraire « païenne » dans la première littérature chrétienne latine?," *Mythes Sacrificiels et ragoûts d'enfants: Mythographies et sociétés*, ed. Sandrine Dubel and Alain Montandon (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2012), 385-422.

[10] The relationship between the *First* and *Second Apology* is complicated and difficult to parse and made all the more difficult by the fragmentary condition of *Parisinus graecus* 450, the sole independent manuscript. I am assuming for the purposes of this paper that the text we call the *Second Apology* stems from Justin himself even if, as Paul Parvis has persuasively

suggested, it is a collection of fragments amassed by Justin's students. See Paul Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: the Posthumous Creation of the Second Apology," *Justin Martyr and his Worlds,* ed. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress, 2007), 22-37.

[11] See B. L Visotzky, "Overturning the Lamp," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 38 (1987), 74. Justin only mentions the meal in *Dial.* 10.

[12] Justin Martyr, 1 *Apol.* 26.2; 2 *Apol*. 12.

[13] Tatian, *Orat*. 25. For the account of Pelops see Pindar, *Ol.*1.24-26. Older sources suggest that Demeter herself partook of the meal. See discussion in R. Drew Griffith, "Cannibal Demeter (Pind. Ol. 1.52) and the Thesmophoria Pigs," *The Classical Journal* 11:2 (2015): 129-39 [135], which connects sacrifice, cannibalism, and the process of child birth.

[14] Oedpiodean intercourse here refers to the famous story in which Oedpius, having murdered his father Laïos, married his mother Iocaste. The Thyestes myth refers to the meal at which Thyestes was unwittingly served his three sons as part of a meal by his cuckolded brother Atreus. Atheism is not the subject of this present study, but for more on this subject see Tim Whitmarsh, "'Away with the Atheists!' Christianity and Militant Atheism in the Early Empire," in *Christianity in the Second Century* (eds. James Carleton-Paget and Judith Lieu; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 281-293.

[15] Theophilus of Antioch, *Autol.* 3.4-5.15 (trans. *ANF*).

[16] Lucian, *Con.* 46; Clement of Alexandria, *Str.* 3.2.10-16.

[17] Origen, *Contra Cels.* 6.27. Several scholars have evaluated Celsus positively as a result. Wilken suggests "[that] it may be that serious critics had more important things to say against Christianity," Christians as the Romans saw them, 22 n.11; and Wagermakers describes him "as a bridge between, on the one hand, the old aversion, based on rumours of immorality and

scandalous behaviour and, on the other, a well-considered philosophical controversy" ("Incest, Infanticide, and Cannibalism," 347).

[18] The relationship between them and their literary dependence on one another has been the subject of intense debate, especially in the early twentieth century. Jerome places Tertullian earlier *(De Viris Ill.* 53 and *Ep.* 70.5. and this view has been supported by J. van Wageningen, "Minucius Felix et Tertullianus," *Mnemosyne* 51:2 (1923): 223-28. For the opposing view see G. Hinnisdaels, "Minucius Felix est-il antérieur à Tertullien," *Musé belge* 28 (1924): 29-34 and idem, *L'Octavius de Minucius Felix et l'Apologétique de Tertullien*. (Brussels: M. Hayez, 1924). A summary of scholarship on this question can be found in J. Beaujeu, *Minucius Felix: Octavius* (Paris: Collection des Universités de France, 1964), liv-lxvii; T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian: An Historical and literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 192; and Michael E. Hardwick, *Josephus as a historical source in patristic literature through Eusebius* (Georgia: Scholar's Press, 1989), 22; Christoph Schubert, *Minucius Felix "Octavius": Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Freiburg: Herder, 2014), 22. It is not especially important for our purposes to form a firm opinion either way.

[19] The question of intentionality and knowledge of the crime was, mythologically speaking, irrelevant. It did not matter, as McGowan has written, whether or not the one who commits incest or cannibalism intends to do so, only that they have. McGowan, "Eating People," 431 n.51.

[20] Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 9.5. Translations of Minucius follow Minucius Felix, *Octavius* trans. Gerald H. Rendall, LCL (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1931). The accusation of ritualized infanticide here is paralleled in a late-second century Egyptian papyrus that preserves a portion of Lollianus's ancient Greek romance novel *Phoenicica*. The fragment describes the ritualistic murder (or even sacrifice) of a young boy by a group of robbers pledging allegiance to their leader. The boy's heart is removed from his body, cooked, and

divided into halves. It was then dressed in barley and oil and distributed to the initiates, who proceed to swear an oath, ingest the heart, imbibe the child's blood, and have sex with one another. As part of their oath they swore that they would not "betray [one another] … even if they be arrested or if they would be tortured or if their eyes would be dug out."The fragment of Lollianus (PColon inv. 3328) is preserved on the back of an early third century document roll (POxy 1368). The text was edited and translated in Albert Henrichs, *Die Phoinikika des Lollianos: Fragmente eienes neuen griechischen Romans* (Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 14; Rudolf Habelt Verlag GMBH: Bonn, 1972). A discussion of the Cologne fragment can also be found in Henrichs, "Pagan Ritual," i.30. In the critical edition Henrichs argues that the story of the boy's murder was based on the initiation ceremonies that formed part of the Dionysius-Zagreus mystery cult. It is unclear, however, whether the story is meant to be read mythologically (on this see B 1 verso 8-10). More broadly, see discussion in Henrichs, "Pagan Ritual," i.29-35 and R. L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven, Conn; Yale University Press, 1984). The recipe for human sacrifice in this scene parallels ancient sacrifices more broadly in which barley is sprinkled on the sacrificial victim, at the same time the mode of preparation parallels the often-idealized simple cuisine of epic soldiers. See, e.g., Homer, *Od.* 3.430–63. On the use of the human heart in ancient magical texts see *PGM* 3.424-30. It should be noted that, unlike meat, barley and oil are common enough elements in ancient cuisine and formed two points of the so called "Mediterranean triad." See discussion in Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 13-15. On the idealization of simply grilled meat as a kind of character and gender building austerity measure see, for example, Appian, *Bella Civilia*, 85.

[23] Trans G. W. Clarke, *The Octavius of Marcus Minucius Felix* (Ancient Christian Writers 39; New York: Paulist, 1974).

[24] J.-P. Waltzing, "Le Crime rituel reproché aux chrétienes du IIe siècle," *Musée Belge* 29 (1925): 209-38 [215]; Robert M. Grant, "Charges of 'Immorality' against various Religious Groups in Antiquity," in *Essays on Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions* (eds. R. Van den Broek and M.J. Vermaseren; Leiden: Brill, 1981), 160-70. See also Tertullian *Apol,* 39.8 which might support some of Grant's hypothesis.

[25] See the work of F. J. Dölger, "*Sacramentum Infanticidii*," *Antike und Christentum* 4 (1934): 188-228; Albert Heinrichs, "Pagan Ritual and the Alleged Crimes of the Early Christians: A Reconsideration," *Kyriakon: Festchrift J. Quasten* (Munich: Aschendorff, 1970), 1.18-35

[26] Cicero, *Philip.* 2.71.

[27] To give one example, Appian notes that during Scipio Aemilianus' siege the Numantines were driven to cannibalism for sustenance (Appian, *Hisp.* 15.96). Theophrastus writes that human beings had originally been vegetarian and cannibalism emerged out of need (*Fr.* 13). Cannibalism and, sometimes, incest were especially associated with foreign cultures and peoples. Strabo describes the occupants of Ireland in the following way, "The inhabitants are more savage than the Britons, since they are man-eaters as well as grass-eaters, and since, further, they count it an honorable thing, when their fathers die, to devour them, and publicly to have intercourse, not only with the other women, but also with their mothers and sisters…. As for the matter of man-eating, that is said to be a custom of the Scythians also…" (*Geog.* 4.5.4).

[28] See Sallust *Cat*. 22; Livy 39.8, 10; Diod. Sic. 22.5.1; Epiphanius *Pan.* 26.4–5.

[29] McGowan, "Eating People," 423-434.

[30] For Thyestes see discussion above and Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans: Interpretationen Altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten,

Bd. 32. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 104. For Kronos see Burkert, *Homo Necans* 112, 123. For other examples see McGowan, "Eating People," 422-24.

[31] Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.64 (Scythians), Issedones (4.26), Callatiae (3.38), Massagetae (1.216), Padaei (3.99). See also the exotic foreign cannibals of the Odyssey (Polyphemus in *Od.* 9.114-5).

[32] See the discussion of Bacchants in Livy 39.8-19; the blood drinking of L. Sergius Catilina in Sallust *Cat.* 22 and accusations of human sacrifice in Plutarch, *Cicero* 10.4 and Cassius Dio 37.30.

[33] On the Persian king Cambyses' incestuous relationship with his sisters see Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.31-6; on Artaxerxes II's marriage to two of his daughters see Plutarch *Life of Artaxerxes* 23.2-5. For the Roman emperor Caligula see Suetonius, *Caligula*, 24.1.

[34] Philo condemns "the Persian custom of men marrying their mothers and the supposed Egyptian practice of marrying sisters (*On the Special Laws* 1-4, 3.13, 23-24).

[35] *Martyrdom of Matthew* 12 and *Acts of Andrew and Matthias*. For the textual history of the latter as it pertains to the references to cannibalism see discussion in Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta, "Cannibals. Myrmidonians, Sinopeans or Jews? The Five Versions of The Acts of Andrew and Matthias (in the City of the Cannibals) and their Sources," *Wonders Never Cease: The Purpose of Narrating Miracle Stories in the New Testament and Its Religious Environment*, ed. M. Labahn and B. J. Peerbolte (London and New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 221-43.

[36] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 16.8; Epiphanius, *Haer*. 48.14.5-6; Philastrius, *Haer* 49; Augustine, *Haer.* 26; Isiodore of Pelusium, *Ep.* 1.242. On the emergence of this accusation see James B. Rives, "The Blood Libel against the Montanists," *VC* 50:2 (1996): 117-124, who suggests that the libel might have had its origins earlier in the second century work of

Phrygian Apollinaris of Hierapolis. Though it is equally plausible that the stereotype was formed later.

[37] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 4.7.11. Stephen Benko has argued that it is possible that some groups, in particular the Phibionites, did engage in these practices. See, "The Libertine Gnostic Sect of the Phibionites according to Epiphanius," *VC* 21 (1967): 103-19 with criticisms in Mark Edwards, "Some Early Christian Immoralities," *Ancient Society* 23 (1992): 71-82 [72]. It is likely that the accusations, which move from one named target to the next (Epiphanus uses multiple names to describe this group: Stratiotics, Borborians, Koddians, Zaccheabs, Barbelites, and Gnostikoi [*Pan.* 26.3.5-7]), are no more than rumor. For a an excellent discussion of the problems with using Epiphanius here see David Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 45-46.

[38] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 16.8. "It was for this reason that until recently in the persecution we were suspected of doing this thing, because those Montanists were falsely called by the same name as Christians." As F. J. Dölger observed, the association is false: Christians were accused of incest and cannibalism decades before the rise of the New Prophecy movement. See Dölger, "*Sacramentum Infanticidii*: Die Schlachtung eines Kindes und der Genuß seines Fleisches und Blutes als vermeintlicher Einweihungsakt im ältesten Christentum," *Antike und Christentum* 4 (1934): 188-228 [219].

[39] Herodotus, *Histories* 1.108-119; 4.26.

[40] The non-Roman examples are based on Cicero, *Rep.* 3.9.15. The burying of the Gauls and Greeks in the cattle market after the defeat at Cannae is recorded in Livy, 22.55-57. Cassius Dio refers to the discovery of jars of human flesh in a temple of Bellona (42.26.2).

[41] Athenagoras, too, discusses the charge of cannibalism in close proximity to his own attack on pagans for infant exposure. McGowan, "Eating People," 419.

[42] Justin Martyr, *1 Apol.* 29.1; Athenagoras, *Leg.* 32.5.

[43] Though it has not been cited as an example of Christian refutation of the charges of cannibalism and heresy, the letter is regularly cited as evidence of the widespread nature of the charges. For some scholars the genre of the account lends credibility to the idea that "Thystean banquets and Oedpiodean intercourse" are historical charges. See, for example, McGowan: "Because the same referents are used in the *Letter* McGowan has tentatively suggested that "we would be justified in treating it not as a literary flourish by one of the Christian writers but as a pagan characterization and therefore a more direct example of the accusations" in "Eating People," 419. Wagemakers concurs that original charges are preserved, writing, "the nature of the original allegations has fortunately been preserved," in "Incest, Infanticide, and Cannibalism," 337. For the view that it is a Christian term see Henrichs, "Pagan Ritual," 18-35. Because of its omission from this conversation, it is treated in great detail here.

[44] The contrast with the blood of animals has sometimes been taken as a reference to actual Gallic Christian dietary practice. See W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), 18 with discussion in Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999), 142 n.44. We might also compare this statement to Hegesippus's description of the diet of James (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 2.23.4), which is discussed as an example of pagan dietary thought in Andrew McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Meals* (OECS; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 150. It is interesting to note, however, that the same essential argument that 'those who do not do x to irrational animals could surely not do x to humans' is found in Clement of Alexandria's arguments against infant exposure in *Str.* 2.18.92-93.

[45] Tertullian, *Apol* 9.13

[46] See discussion in Candida R. Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 85-86 who writes: "The "sacrifice" of the martyrs here is not a sacrifice to God but a perverse twist on the culinary functions of ancient sacrifice," 86.

[47] Given the context of death and post-mortem judgment it is interesting to note that punishment for hypocrisy formed part of an early layer of tradition in Christian tours of hell. See Jan N. Bremmer, "Christian Hell: from the *Apocalypse of Peter* to the *Apocalypse of Paul*," *Numen* 56 (2009): 298-325 [307-14].

[48] As Harris has put it, "Child-exposure appears in every Greek and Latin author of the second and third centuries who could reasonably be expected to mention it." See W. V. Harris, "Child-Exposure in the Roman Empire," *JRS* 84 (1994): 1-22 [7]. For an overview of the questions see John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers*. For an overview of the sources for infant exposure in the ancient world see E. Eyben, "Family Planning in Graeco-Roman Antiquity," *Ancient Society* 11-12 (1980-81), 5-82. For the later period see Ville Vuolanto, "Infant Abandonment and the Christianization Of Medieval Europe," in *The Dark Side of Childhood in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (eds. K. Mustakallio and Christian Laes; Oxford: Oxbow, 2011), 3-19.

[49] For Stoic opposition see Musonius Rufis and Hierocles. For Jewish opposition see Philo, *Virt.* 131-3; Josephus, *Contra Apion.* 11.202; Tacitus *Hist.* 5.5 and discussion in Adele Reinhartz, "Philo on Infanticide" *Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* 4 (1992), 42–58. A number of ancient writers remark on how certain 'barbarian' tribes raised all of their own children. On the Egyptians see Diod. Sic. 1.80.3 and Strabo, *Geog.* 8.824.

[50] Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 30.3-4. For a discussion of how Minucius links examples see discussion in James Rives, "Human Sacrifice among Pagans and Christians," 65–66. It is noteworthy that the violent deaths of young children do elicit disgust in the writings of

Herodotus and Thucydides, who describe the slaughter of children as disaster (Herodotus, *Hist.* 6.27.2 and Thucydides, *Pel.* 7.29). But the practice of exposure would not have been included in this group. See discussion in Golden, "Did the Ancients Care When Their Children Died?," 153.

[51] For the rhetorical effects of producing a "hodgepodge of *exempla*" of sacrifice that includes specifically Roman examples see Laura Nasrallah, "The Embarrassment of Blood: early Christians and others on Sacrifice, War and Rational Worship," *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice* ed. Jennifer Wright Knust and Zsusanna Varlhelyi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 142-166 [152]. Nasrallah is interested in the eliding of difference between "barbarian" and "Roman" examples and does not touch on how unusual the inclusion of infant exposure would have seemed.

[52] Gorman, *Abortion and the Early Church*, 25.

[53] W. V. Harris, "The Roman Father's Power of Life and Death," in *Studies in Roman Law in Memory of A. Arthur Schiller* (eds. R. Bagnall and W. Harris; Leiden: Brill, 1986), 81–93; Raymond Westbrook, "*Vitae Necisque Potestas*," *Historia* 48 (1999), 203–23; Brent Shaw, "Raising and Killing Children: Two Roman Myths," *Mnemosyne* 54 (2001): 31–77.

[54] Elaine Fantham, "Sex, Status, and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy," *Phoenix* 29 (1975), 44–74 [53-54]; Karen F. Pierce, "The Portrayal of Rape in New Comedy," *Rape in Antiquity: Sexual Violence in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Susan Deacy and Karen F. Pierce; London: Duckworth, 2002), 163–84 [178].

[55] *P. Cairo* 10448.11 For textual difficulties with this fragment see Victor Tcherikover, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960,) 2.81.

[56] Suetonius, *Aug*. 65.3 and *Claud.* 27. Read with discussion in Ronald Syme, "Bastards in the Roman Aristocracy," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 104 (1960), 323–7, who speculates that the situation was likely quite common.

[57] Methodius, *Symp.* 2.6.45. Methodius here appears to be interpreting *Apocalypse of Peter* 8. Koskenniemi, *Exposure of Infants*, 105.

[58] A clause of the Praetor's Edict dictated that a widow had a month to notify the deceased man's family that she was pregnant. *Dig.* 25.4.1-2 and a case in Roman Egypt *P.Gen.* 2.103 where this law was implemented. See discussion in Judith Evans Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce, and Widowhood* (London: Routledge, 2002), 261-4. An early second century senatorial decree implemented a similar procedure when a woman discovered she was pregnant after a divorce (*Dig.* 25.3.1).

[59] Seneca: "We extinguish portentous offspring (*portentosos fetus*), and we even drown children (*liberos*) if they were born weak and monstrous" (*De Ira* 1.15.2). See discussion in W. den Boer, *Private Morality in Ancient Greece and Rome: Some Historical Aspects* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 93–116.

[60] See, particularly, Christian Laes, "Raising A Disabled Child," in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*," (eds. Judith Evans Grubb and Tim Parkin; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 125-144 and Veronique Dasen "Naitre et grandir différent dans le monde grec," in *Décrypter la différence: La place des personnes handicapées au sein des communautés du passé* (V. Delattre and R. Sallem; Paris: CQFD, 2009), 49-63.

[61] Aristotle, *Pol.* 7.4.10. See discussion in L. R. F. Germain "L'exposition des enfants nouveau-nés dans la Grèce ancienne. Aspects sociologiques," in *L'Enfant. Première Partie: Antiquité –Afrique— Asie* (Brussels: Recueils de la Societé Jean Bodin pour l'histoire comparative des Institutions, 1975) 211–45 [232-4].

[62] Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Greco-Roman World* (1988), 63–8.

[63] On the disproportionate exposure of daughters see Pierre Brulé, "Infanticide et abandon d'enfants. Pratiques grecques et comparaisons anthropologiques," *Dialogues d'histoire*

ancienne 18 (1992), 53–90 [82]. For a careful rebalancing of the question based on context, geography, and the archaeological data see E. Scott, "Unpicking a Myth: The Infanticide of Female and Disabled Infants in Antiquity," in *TRAC 2000: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*, *London 2000* (eds. G. Davies, A. Gardner, and K. Lockyear; Oxford: Oxbow Publishers, 2000), 143–51, and, idem, "Killing the Female? Archaeological Narratives of Infanticide," in *Gender and the Archaeology of Death* (eds. B. Arnold and N. L. Wicker; Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2000), 3–21. These should be read alongside Roger Bagnall, "Missing Females in Roman Egypt," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 16 (1997), 121–38. On the exposure of children to protect wealth see Musonius Rufus 15 in Cora E. Lutz, "Musonius Rufus: 'The Roman Socrates,'" *Yale Classical Studies* 10 (1947), 3–147 [99–101]; cf. Polybius 36.17.5–10.

[64] For example, see, Gregory of Nyssa, *Infant*. 90-91; Ambrose, *Hex*. 5.18.58

[65] P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C. – A.D. 14* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 152.

[66] See Kyle Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World, AD 275-425* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 82.

[67] Pliny, *Ep* 10.65-6, 72. Isocrates condemns exposure in *Panath*. 122.

[68] Here the legal status of the *threptoi* and the *expositi* are very much aligned.

[69] Pliny, *Ep.* 10.66.

[70] Seneca, *Contr*. 9.3 and Quintillian, *Inst*. 7.1.14

[71] *Cod. Iust*. 8.51.1.

[72] Mariadele Manca Masciadri and Orsolina Montevecchi, *Corpora Papyrorum Graecarum 1*, vol 1 *Contratti de baliatico* (Milan, 1984), 11.

[73] Roger Bagnall, "Missing Females in Roman Egypt," 121-38.

[74] Judith Evans Grubbs, "Hidden in Plain Sight," 306. For the debate about the financial costs and profitability involved in rearing foundlings see Roger S. Bagnall, *Late Roman Egypt: Society, Religion, Economy and Administration* (Ashgate, 2003), ii-iv. Bagnall concludes, "We have no evidence what the market value of a neonate was; not high, I would judge, or exposure would have been uncommon; but it might have been as much as 100 dr," (iii).

[75] *Cod. Theod*. 5.9.1

[76] Council of Vaison, canons 9 and 10

[77] So, Grubbs, "Hidden in Plain Sight," 307-309. Grubbs highlights the way that Churches were used in this way in 19th century Milan.

[78] On Christian attitudes to infant exposure see Judith Evans Grubbs, "Church, State, and Children: Christian and Imperial Attitudes toward Infant Exposure in Late Antiquity," in *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity* (eds. Andy Cain and Noel Lenski; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 119-31; Koskenniemi, *The Exposure of Infants*, 88-145. On the shifting legal status of infant exposure in the Late Roman empire see J. C. Tate, "Christianity and the Legal Status of Abandoned Children in the Later Roman Empire," *Journal of Law and Religion* 24 (2008), 123-41.

[79] Despite the protestations of the apologists it is likely that some Christians, too, engaged in the practice of exposure. For a discussion of this see Boswell, *Kindness of Strangers*, 177.

[80] On this argument in classical rhetoric see Cicero, *Top.* 4.23: "what is valid in the greater should be valid in the lesser" and Quintillian 5.10.86 where he calls these "apposite" or "comparative arguments."

[81] Galen, *De anatomicis administrationibus* 3.5.

[82] In P. Mich. 6.423–4 a late second century Egyptian petitioner claims that a *brephos* was used to "encircle" him with "envy." See discussion in Jean-Jacques Aubert, "Threatened Wombs: Aspects of Ancient Uterine Magic," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 30 (1989),

421–49 [437]; David Frankfurter, "Fetus Magic and Sorcery Fears in Roman Egypt." *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 46 (2006), 37–62; Ari Z. Bryen and Andrzej Wypustek, "'Gemellus' Evil Eyes (P.Mich. VI.423–424)," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 49 (2009), 535–55.

[83] On the moral ambiguities surrounding dissection in Greek and Roman culture see H. von Staden, "The Discovery of the Body: Human Dissection and its Cultural Contexts," *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* 65 (1992), 223-41. For the rhetorical shaping of magic as immoral and dangerous see discussion in Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Harvard: Cambridge, Ma: 1997).

[84] Athenagoras, *De Res.* 5.21-3

[85]Athenagoras, *De Res.* 3.3.

[86] Tertullian, *De Res.* 32 quoting 1 Enoch 61.5 and referring to Jonah 2.10. The same interesting in intact regurgitation is displayed in *Lyon* 2.6. Scholarly interpretation of this scene has usually understood this theologically see, for example, Moss, *Other* Christs, 92-94. It is equally possible that *Lyon* reflects an anxiety about the intactness of the consumed body.

[87] Tertullian, *De Res.* 32 and Methodius *De Res.* 1:20-24. Bernard Pouderon, "La chaîne alimentaire chez Athénagore. Confrontation de sa théorie digestive avec la science médicale de son temps," *Orpheus* N. S. 9 (1988) 219-237. See discussion in Taylor G. Petrey, *Resurrecting Parts: Early Christians on Desire, Reproduction and Sexual Difference* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 60-61, 66.

[88] For recent examples of this question see discussion in Petrey, *Resurrecting Parts*, 60-61 and Candida R. Moss, *Divine Bodies: Resurrecting Perfection in the New Testament and Early Christianity* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2019). For a discussion of the "chain consumption" issue with respects to prohibitions on meat eating see Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York:

Columbia University Press, 1995), 31-3, 41-3, 53-6. Bynum's remarkable and ground-breaking study focusses on the arena and does not mention infant exposure.

[89]Athenagoras, *De Res.* 5.1-3.

[90] Donald Kyle, *Spectacles of Death* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 192.

[91] It is worth noting that elsewhere Tertullian condemns eating the meat of ordinary sacrificial victims (Tertullian, *De spec.* 13 see also Minucius Felix, *Oct*. 12.5; 38.1). See discussion in Aline Rousselle, *Porneia: On the Desire and the Body in Antiquity*, trans. Felicia Pheasant (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 118-19 and Bynum Walker, *Resurrection*, 42.

[92] The language and imagery here is very similar to that in *M.Lyon* but also draws upon a now vibrant Christian tradition that was concerned about the negative effects of attending a whole host of public performances. See discussion in Tertullian, *De. Spec.* 7 ; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 3.11; Cyprian, *Ep.* 1.7-8; Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 4.208. See discussion in Ruth Webb, *Demons and Dancers, Performance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 197-216.

[93] Compare *Visio Pauli* 40 in which aborted infants curse their parents for giving them "for food to dogs."

[94] Livy 1.3.10ff.; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.*1.76.1ff.; Plutarch, *Rom.* 3ff. For a discussion of the literary motif see Donald B. Redford, "The Literary Motif of the Exposed Child," *Numen* 14 (1967): 211–14 [225].

[95] *Visio Pauli* 40; Tertullian, *Nat.* 1.15.3-8; *Apol.* 9.6-8; Lactantius, *Div. Inst*. 6.20. In the Tosefta aborted foetuses are thrown into a cistern and "the weasel and panther drag it away forthwith" (*t. Ahilot* 16.112-13).

[96] But see Petronius, *Sat.* 66.5-6 in which bear appears on the menu at a funeral feast for a slave.

[97] For this and a full list of acceptable and unacceptable meats see Galen, *De alim. facult.*, translated in Mark Grant, *Galen on Food and Diet* (London: Routledge, 2000), 155. Compare to *t. Ahilot* 16.112-13.

[98] Galen, *De atra bile*, trans. Grant, *Galen on Food and Diet*, 30.

[99] Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 84. Though he disapproves of the practice, Galen also writes that "some eat bear and, what is worse, even lion and leopard." And "many nations," he notes, "eat dogs." The consumption of lions, leopards, and bears was a matter of social status.

[100] Aristophanes, *Knights* 1397-9 and discussion in Alexander Scobie, "Slums, Sanitation and Mortality in the Roman World," *Klio* 68 (1986): 399-433 [419].

[101] Tertullian, *Nat.*1.16.10. See also *Apol.* 9. See discussion in the classic and field-shaping John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe* (Chicago, Il: University of Chicago Press, 1988). For the same concern in other apologists see Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 31.4; Lactantius *Div. Inst.* 6.20. Cf. Justin, *Apol.* 27, 29; Tertullian, *Apol.* 9.17; also mentioned in Pseudo-Quintilian, *Decl. Min.* 278.8.

[102] For the connection of child exposure and incest in other writers see Clement, *Paed* 3.3.21.5; Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 31.4; and discussion in Koskenniemi, *Exposure of Infants* 88-145.

[103] Boswell, *Kindness of Strangers,* 96 citing Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 31, which reads "sic incesti fabulam nectitis, etiam quum conscientiam non habetis" (PL 3.336-37).

[104] On Roman fear of incest see Philippe Moreau, *Incestus et prohibitae nuptiae. L'inceste à Rome* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2002), 29–42, 151–64.

[105] By and large, Roman concerns about abandoned children seemed to focus on the legal complications of not knowing the infant's provenance (e.g. Plautus, *Curculio* 11.490-93).

[106] Gk. *Apocalypse of Mary* 8. For a discussion and overview of the manuscript traditions of the Greek Apocalypse of Mary in Greek, Armenian, Old Slavonic, and Romanian see Richard Bauckham, "The Four Apocalypses of the Virgin Mary," *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, ed. Richard Bauckham (Leiden Brill, 1998), 335.

[107] *Apocalypse of the Holy Virgin* 8, trans M. R. James, *Texts and Studies* 2.3.

[108] See discussion above.

[109] In some apocalyptic texts cannibalism or being cannibalized becomes its own form of eschatological punishment. In the *Book of Mary's Repose* 95-96, a deacon is eaten by children in hell because he did not offer wine to them. In the Greek *Apocalypse of Mary* 23, incest and strangling infants are listed as some of the great punishments.

[110] On the location of the composition of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Egypt see Tobias Nicklas, "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The *Apocalypse of Peter* as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria," in *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and in Egypt between the 1st and the 6th century CE*, ed. L. Arcari (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 5-21, who posits that the text was written in Alexandria. For a discussion of the Apocalypse of Peter and its transmission in Egypt see Meghan R. Henning, *Educating Christian through the Rhetoric of Hell: "Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth" as Paideia in Matthew and the Early Church* (WUNT 2/282; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 9-17. On measure-for-measure punishment in general see the foundational studies of Martha Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 68-105 and David Frankfurter, *Evil Incarnate:Rumors of Demonic Conspiracy and Ritual Abuse in History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[111] *Acts of Peter* Ethiopian fragment 8.1 and Akhmim fragment 24. It is important to distinguish between abortion, infanticide and infant exposure. It is noteworthy, however, that ancient Christians like Clement read *Apoc. Pet* as referring to both victims of exposure and aborted children. The notion that aborted infants would be entrusted to a guardian angel found in *Apoc. Pet.* 8.1-10 is extended to victims of exposure in *Ecl.* 41.

[112] The association of dunghills and exposed infants led many Egyptian foundlings and their descendants to acquire family names beginning with "Korp-." For this theory see S. B. Pomeroy, "Copronyms and the Exposure of Infants in Egypt," *Studies in Roman Law in Memory of A. Arthur Schiller* (1986), 147-62.

[113] Patrick Gray, "Abortion, Infanticide, and the Social Rhetoric of the Apocalypse of Peter," *JECS* 9 (2001): 313-337 [323].

[114] For a discussion of how these punishments also carve out identity of Christian based upon ortho-praxy see Meghan R. Henning, "Lacerated Lips and Lush Landscapes: Constructing This-Worldly Theological Identities in the Otherworld," in *The Other Side: Apocryphal Perspectives on Early Christian 'Orthodoxies'* (eds. Tobias Nicklas, Candida R. Moss, Christopher Tuckett and Joseph Verheyden; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2017), 99-116.

[115] Latin Vison of Ezra 53a-54.

[116] Selling one's newborn was made possible under other Constantinian laws see *Cod. Theod.* 5.10.1 and Cod. Iust. 4. 43.2 [both 329].

[117] In 541 Justinian would go farther and command that anyone who tried to reclaim an *expositi* would be forced to endure the fate to which they had abandoned the child. See Justinian, *Novel* 153 (541) and his earlier law *Cod. Iust.* 8.51.3 (529). It is impossible to know if any of this legislation affected the rate of exposure.

[118] On the construction of nursing see John David Penniman, *Raised on Christian Milk: Food and the Formation of the Soul in Early Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).