CONCEPTS OF DEITY IN ARNOBIUS OF SILOCA IN THE
CONTEXT OF THE CONTEMPORARY PAGAN-CHRISTIAN DEBATE.

BY

The Revd. Michael Bland Simmons, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M.

A Thesis Submitted For The Degree Of
Doctor Of Philosophy
The University Of Edinburgh
1985
The thesis is in two parts. Part I analyses the chronological (Ch. I) and biographical (Ch. II) problems related to the date of the Adversus nationes and the information which Jerome provides about Amobius' life, respectively. The writer analyses Jerome's dating of the text appearing in Chron. (327) and suggests this is erroneous. It is not due to mistaking 327 with Amobius' date of death or the vicennalia of Constantine with those of Dioecletian. Oral tradition might have supplied him with the date. His corrected date 'sub principi Diocletiano' may derive from Jerome's reading of Lactantius' letters written during his pagan youth. As to internal evidence, 1.26 appears to allude to events before the persecution; 4.36 is interpreted as a clear reference to the First Edict: various passages appear to allude to several of Dioecletian's edicts (an adultery, incest) or policies (reduction of the provinces). Adv. nat. 2.71 does not follow the Varronian chronology because Am. and Varro differ on the percentage of Saturn (cf. Ling. lat. 5.57 and Terr., Ac nat. 2.12). The 'nomasque ...pes' of 6.11.24 refer to edicts 2 or 3 of the persecution; and the grand attack upon sacrifice, compared with (e.g.) Crispina's trial on 5 Dec. 304 at Theveste, makes sense if it was written before the persecution in Africa had ended before the end of 305. Hence the suggested date of the work: late 302 before the end of 305.

Ch. II evaluates the biographical information given by Jerome about Amobius. Onomastic analysis of the name 'Amobius' suggests that he may have been of Latin descent; he does appear to have been a rhetor, several technical rhetorical devices being used in the work; information is given about Sicca, where he is said to have taught rhetoric; texts which may betray an African background are studied which do appear to support Jerome; interesting archaeological evidence is explored which suggests that the cult of Peter existed at Sicca in Byzantine times, and the writer observes that Peter is the only Christian predecessor named in Am.; this information is analysed; Jerome's remark that Amobius came to Christ through dreams is analysed: on available evidence from N. Afr. this may have really been due to visions; the story of the hesitant bishop is analysed and accepted, as also texts which strongly suggest that Amobius was actually existentially involved in Christian worship while writing the work.

Part II analyses the concepts of deity held by Amobius and those of his opponents which he attacks. Ch. III studies under three general headings (God and man, his work, and the cosmos; God and Christ; God and the gods) the salient features of Amobius' conception of God. The writer studies all important texts related to the problem, and concludes that Amobius does not espouse an Epicurean view of God: there is evidence which clearly establishes the Platonic influence upon his understanding of God, e.g., an apophatic understanding, creation ideas derived from Tim 41; etc.: 'God and Christ' reveals significant Chaldaean theological parallels, and the final section shows that Am. believed in 'gods' according to Tim., but definitely not those of the myths.

Ch. IV analyses the concept of divine providence found in Adv. nat. 3.24 and passages in Book I, which depict God as the great Lord of the land and of the harvest, who makes the sun shine, who sends the rain, and who makes the seeds fruitful. Various divine epithets used by Amobius suggest that he is aware of the conflict between the Christian Church and the cult of Saturn. The Saturnian epithet frugifer appears to have been used in this manner. There is also Gnostic influence upon Amobius' conception of divine providence, specifically derived from De bono patiuntia.

Ch. V is a study of Porphyry's rejection of the deity of Christ found in the Hecatean Oracle and commentary upon it (Civ. Del. 19.23) and the way in which Eusebius, Augustine, and Amobius respond to it. Porphyry argued that Christ was not divine, but only a good and wise mortal. Amobius turns the argument against Porphyry by arguing that the pagan deities are mortal, subject to passions, and therefore perishable. He uses the Stoic concept of passions which harm the soul (De fin. 3.x.35) to argue that (so the writer argues) Porphyry's gods in Phil. or which were subject to such passions (PE 3ff.; Civ. Del. 8-10) are mortal. Amobius responds to Porphyry's Hecatean Oracle and commentary by developing six recapitulations of his argument that the deities are mortal in Books 1, and 3-7. Ch. VI continues the argument that there is an Amobius-Porphyry connection beyond Book 2, which builds upon the arguments of Kroll, Bidez, Courcelle, O'Meara, Hadot, Fortin, and Wilken by demonstrating that Amobius betrays evidence that he responds to the OC. Phil. or., and De reg. an. of Porphyry. He uses the Stoic λόγος προφητείας, and Pythagorean concept of justice and piety towards animals, derived from De Abst., to attack sacrificial concepts found in Phil. or., thus using, like Eusebius and Augustine, Porphyry against Porphyry. The ch. ends by noting possible parallels between Adv. nat. 7 and Porphyry's Abst. and Phil. or.

An apologue (Ch. VII) suggests that Phil. or. was disseminated before the persecution, perhaps with the support of Diocletian's government.
IN MEMORIAM.

LEVI HENIFORD SIMMONS.

FEBRUARY 6, 1918—

DECEMBER 26, 1983.

εὐχαριστοῦσιν τοὺς θεούς καὶ μὴ ἔχειν ἡμῶν ἡμῶν.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I should first like to thank Her Majesty’s Government for offering me the great oppor-
tunity to come to study at New College, the University of Edinburgh, in the form of an Over-
seas Research Studentship for the periods 1983-3, 1983-4, and 1984-5, granted to me by the
Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom. I
am equally thankful to A Foundation For Theological Education, Marshall, Texas, for a three-
year grant which was extended to enable me to finish my research in Scotland. The latter’s
selecting me as a candidate for the title 'John Wesley Fellow' has never ceased to give me
a great deal of personal satisfaction.

There have been many who have helped me in so many ways during the past three years. I
should like to acknowledge those directly related to my studies. Years ago I had the privil-
ege to study a good number of Semitic languages with a man who, to this day, continues to
inspire my intellectual and academic pursuits although my own interests are no longer direct-
ly related to this area of specialisation. Dr. Orval Winternute, Professor of Old Testament
at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, receives this special tribute for his kindness
then and now, and especially for challenging me to excel, whether it might me in Ethiopic,
Syriac, or many another language (many of which I resisted the temptation to study). The
Revd. Dr. Rowan A. Greer III, Professor of Anglican Studies at Yale Divinity School, Yale
University, is another former professor whom I remember with a great deal of respect and
affection and would like to thank again for giving me a love for both classical studies
and patristic theology. These two men will always have a special place in my memory, and
I shall continue to learn because I learned much from them.

Mr. David Wright, Senior Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History, New College, the University
of Edinburgh, my main supervisor, has greatly helped me throughout my research programme by
advising on bibliography, reading and commenting on the drafts of chapters, and always being
both available and ready to help in any way possible. I extend to him now my warm thanks
for making my academic experiences here personally rewarding. Dean James Mackey, Professor
of Systematic Theology and Dean of New College, has also been very helpful throughout these
three years. I consider myself very fortunate to have had these two scholars as my super-
visors.

Professor W.H.C. Frend was very kind and helpful during my several visits with him at
the University of Glasgow. He gave me a good number of photographs taken when he was doing
archaeological research in North Africa, as well as quite a few articles related to various
aspects of my research, and I thank him very much for all his valuable help and advice. I
can say the same regarding Professor Marcel Leglay, who now teaches at the Université de Paris-
Sorbonne (Paris IV), who on a number of occasions gave invaluable advice from which I benefit-
ted immensely. I thank Professor LeGlay, as well as the following, for giving me the permission to copy illustrations found in his works related to the Saturn cult to use in Chapter IV of the present thesis: forSaturne Africain Monuments, Librairie Ernest Flammarion, Paris, and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, also of Paris (vol. II); and for Saturne Africain Histoire, the Editions E. de Boccard, Paris. Professor Biagio Amata was very kind to me, my wife, and our daughters, during our visit in Rome in September 1985. I especially appreciate the fact that he gave me several Amebian works which he had just recently written. And it was quite enjoyable dining in Rome and being able to talk to another human being about Amobius of Sicca.

To Mr. John V. Howard, Librarian of New College, and Iain Hope, Norma Henderson, and Joyce Barrie I owe my thanks for helping me on many occasions. In particular, Iain Hope was very helpful in the ordering of, and keeping me informed about, Inter-Library Loans.

Many thanks are extended to Croom Helm Ltd., Beckenham, Kent, for allowing me to copy and use in this thesis the maps of Roman North Africa which appear on p. 388 infra, and are derived from Richard J.A. Talbert, Editor, The Atlas of Classical History. London, 1985, 150.

I am most grateful to Dr. Oliver Nicholson, Administrator of Hawthorneden Castle, Lasswade, Scotland, for allowing me to make copies of this thesis on the castle's xerox machine at a very reduced price. And it was very kind of Mr. A. Barr of Alpha Office Equipment, Edinburgh, to let me hire an Olivetti ET 110 electronic typewriter, also at a discount.

I turn now to a few personal acknowledgments. Mr. Augustus Crum Schanbeau of Bayou La Batre, Alabama deserves to be given special recognition. His friendship at one serious stage of this three-year period helped me in many ways, and I shall always be indebted to his kindness. The Revd. Dr. and Mrs. Carlisle Miller of Montgomery, Alabama have been a great inspiration to me and my family, and we thank them for their kindness shown to us throughout the years.

Finally, to my wife Maria Antonietta, and my daughters, Tania Luisa and Alexandra Maria, I say thank you for not only understanding the sacrifices which you have had to make the past three years, but also for encouraging me to continue my rather time-consuming investigations. My mother, Mrs. Kathryn B. Simmons, has helped us in many ways also, and we give her special gratitude for the kindness she has shown to us.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my best friend and my father, Mr. Levi Hen-iford Simmons.

Michael Bland Simmons
Marchmont Street
Edinburgh
5:25 A.M.
ABBREVIATIONS.

The abbreviations of modern sources appear below. A list of the ancient sources, including abbreviations, is found in the bibliography. Complete listings of some (e.g., Altaner-Stuiber) can also be found there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAR</td>
<td>Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Analecta Bollandiana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AChr</td>
<td>Antike und Christentum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACUSSD</td>
<td>Acta Classica Universitatis Scientarium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACW</td>
<td>Ancient Christian Writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR</td>
<td>Arkiv Für Religionswissenschaft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIFR</td>
<td>Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJA</td>
<td>American Journal of Archeology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJT</td>
<td>American Journal of Theology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altaner-Stuiber</td>
<td>Patrology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnGreg</td>
<td>Analecta Gregoriana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AntAfr</td>
<td>Antiquités Africaines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAGB</td>
<td>Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIEH</td>
<td>Boletín del Instituto de Estudios Helénicos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPERL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Patrum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum Selecta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSJ</td>
<td>Bibliotheca di Scienze Religiosae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budé</td>
<td>L'Association Guillaume Budé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAH</td>
<td>Cambridge Ancient History.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CahES</td>
<td>Cahiers des Études Anciennes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CahTun</td>
<td>Cahiers de Tunisie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAHB</td>
<td>Corsi di Cultura sull'Arte Ravennate e Bizantina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Civiltà Classica e Cristiana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CChr</td>
<td>Corpus Christianorum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHA</td>
<td>Cambridge History of Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CollLat</td>
<td>Collection Latomus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTh</td>
<td>Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy. H. Levy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNRS</td>
<td>Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPER</td>
<td>Cultes païens de l'Empire Romain. J. Toutain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQ</td>
<td>Classical Quarterly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Classical Review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRI</td>
<td>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSLP</td>
<td>Corpus Scriptorum Latinorum Paravianum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUAPS</td>
<td>The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUASC</td>
<td>The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DACL Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie.
DAGR Dictionnaire des antiquités Grecques et Romaines.
DCB A Dictionary of Christian Biography.
DHGE Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique.
Didask. Didaskaleion.
DLFAC Dictionnaire Latin-Français des auteurs chrétiens, Blaise.
DPAC Dizionario Patristico e di antichità cristiane.
DR The Downside Review.
DTC Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.
EA Études Augustiniennes.
EncBrit Encyclopaedia Britannica.
Encital Enciclopedia Italiana.
EphLit Ephemerides Liturgicae.
EQ The Evangelical Quarterly.
FC The Fathers of the Church.
FIRA Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani. S. Riccobono et all.
FLA Publications de la Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de L'Alger.
GRBS Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies.
H Hermes.
Hel Helikon.
Hesp Hesperia.
Hist History.
HJ The Hibbert Journal.
HTR Harvard Theological Review.
IAMLat Inscriptions antiques du Maroc. II: Inscriptions Latines.
IIAfr Inscriptions Latines d'Afrique. Tripolitaine, Tunisie, Maroc.
IIAlg I Inscriptions Latines de l'Algérie. I. Geiss.
IIAlg II Inscriptions Latines de l'Algérie. II. Pflaum.
ILT Inscriptions Latines de la Tunisie.
IRT The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania.
JESH Journal of Ecclesiastical History.
JLW Jahrbuch für Liturgiowissenschaft.
JHP Journal of the History of Philosophy.
JRLM Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester.
JRS Journal of Roman Studies.
JS Journal des Savants.
JTS Journal of Theological Studies.
Kar Karthago.
Lat Latomus.
LCL Loeb Classical Library.
Lib Libya.
LPSL Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool.
LS Lewis-Short, A Latin Dictionary.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>LTK</td>
<td>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCr</td>
<td>G.E. McCracken, Arnobius of Sicca. The Case Against the Pagans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEFRA</td>
<td>Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEFRA</td>
<td>Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MelCarth</td>
<td>Mélanges de Carthage. Offerts à Charles Saumagne, Louis Poissant, Maurice Pinard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGH</td>
<td>Monumenta Germaniae Historiae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MusAfr</td>
<td>Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE</td>
<td>The New Catholic Encyclopedia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHL</td>
<td>The Nag Hammadi Library.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCA</td>
<td>Orientalia Christiana Analecta.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODD</td>
<td>Oxford Classical Dictionary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT</td>
<td>Oxford Classical Texts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OL</td>
<td>L'Onomastique Latine. Duval-Pflaum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Codex Parisinus no. 1661 of the Adversus nationes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peg</td>
<td>Pegaso. Rassegna di lettere e arti.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhAnt</td>
<td>Philosophia Antiqua. A Series of Monographs on Ancient Philosophy.</td>
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<td>Philol</td>
<td>Philosophus.</td>
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<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>Phoenix.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLRE</td>
<td>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUT</td>
<td>Publications de l'université de Tunis. Faculté de lettres.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quasten</td>
<td>Patrologia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAC</td>
<td>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Revue Biblique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REA</td>
<td>Revue des études anciennes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>Roman Civilization. Sourcebook. Lewis-Reinhold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REA Aug</td>
<td>Revue des études augustiniennes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RecConstr</td>
<td>Recueil des notices et mémoires de la société archéologique de Constantino.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REG</td>
<td>Revue des Études Grecques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>Revue des Études Latines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGG</td>
<td>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCOM</td>
<td>Revue de l'histoire et civilisation du Maghreb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHE</td>
<td>Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHR</td>
<td>Revue d'Histoire des Religions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIC</td>
<td>Roman Imperial Coinage, Mattingly-Sydenham.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Rheinisches Museum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPTK</td>
<td>Realencyklopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSA</td>
<td>Rivista di Storia Antica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTSR</td>
<td>Revue Tunisienne du centre d'études et de recherches des sciences sociales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDU</td>
<td>Revue de l'université d'Ottawa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saecc</td>
<td>Saeculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAM I &amp; II</td>
<td>Saturne Africain Monuments, Vols I &amp; II. M. Leglay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Société d'antropologie de Paris.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Sources chrétiennes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Studies in Church History.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Studi Filosofici.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGLG</td>
<td>Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SII</td>
<td>Studi pubblicati dall'Instituto italiano per la storia antica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNAF</td>
<td>Bulletin de la société nationale des antiquaires de France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO</td>
<td>Symbolae Osloensis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSFCHL</td>
<td>Societas scientiarum Fennica. Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Studi e Testi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StudPatr</td>
<td>Studia Patristica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theol Hist</td>
<td>Théologie historique.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theoph</td>
<td>Theophaneia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLL</td>
<td>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td>Theological Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TU</td>
<td>Texte und Untersuchungen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Vigiliae Christianae.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vic</td>
<td>Vichiana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS</td>
<td>Wiener Studien.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YSR</td>
<td>Yale Studies in Religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZFK</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZMK</td>
<td>Zetemata. Monographien zur Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZNTW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPE</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die Papyrologie und Epigraphie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZSSR</td>
<td>Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte.</td>
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</tbody>
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IN MEMORIAM
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
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CONCEPTS OF DEITY IN ARNOBIUS OF SICCA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTEMPORARY PAGAN-CHRISTIAN DEBATE.

PART I

ARNOBİUS AND THE ADVERSUS NATIONES: AN HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS.
I

THE DATE OF THE ADVERSUS NATIONES.

External Evidence: Jerome, Oral Tradition(s), And Lactantius.

Beginning with Conrad Orelli's Arnobii Afri Disputationum Adversus Gentes Libri VII (2 vols., Leipzig) in 1816 and continuing to the present time, modern scholars have not reached a consensus concerning the specific date in which Arnobius of Sicca Veneria wrote his Adversus Nationes in seven books. Suggested dates of the work have ranged from A.D. 295 to 320.¹ The conclusions of a vast majority of these scholars have not revealed any more specific date than a possible general period for the work, viz. either before, during or after the Diocletianic persecution. Drawing both from the external evidence of Jerome and the internal evidence which the Adv. nat. provides, it is the purpose of this chapter to ascertain whether a more specific date for Arnobius' work can be attained.

The external evidence outside the Adv. nat. is meagre. With the exception of the brief mention of the "Opuscula Arnobii, apocrypha" found in the sixth century Decretum Gelasianum,² the only ancient writer who provides information about Arnobius, from the time in which the latter lived to Trithemius (1462-1516),³ is Jerome (342-420).⁴ In the

¹ See p.24, n.84 and p.57, n.210 infra for representative lists of scholarly opinion on the date of the text.

² The Latin text is found in PL, 59.157-164. For a critical edition of the text with commentary see E. von Döbschütz, Das Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis. Leipzig, 1912 (TU 38). The Notitia librorum apocryphorum qui non recipiuntur (Part V) lists the Adv. nat. as apocryphal. The Decretum has survived in various MSS. under the names of Damasus (366-84), Gelasius (492-6), and Hormisdas (512-23). Döbschütz, p.348, argues that it is not a papal work but a private compilation written in Italy c. the early sixth century. Cf. E. Schwartz, "Zum Decretum Gelasianum", ZNTW, 29, 1930, 161-8: the first three parts come from Damasus (p.168). For the Romanization of local church law and the attempt of the canonists of the 5th and 6th centuries to equip their compilations with the labels of fictitious antiquity see C.H. Turner, "Arles and Rome: The First Developments of Canon Law in Gaul", JTS, 17, 1916, 236-47.

³ Abbot of Sponheim, who mentions Arn. in his De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis. Basel, 1494, 53.

⁴ Six times: 4 psa. are biographical (De vir. ill. 79, 80; Chron. ad an. 327; Ep. 70); 2 concern his writing style (Epp. 58 and 62).
Chronicon, the earliest of the five writings in which Arnobius is named, Jerome gives a rather lengthy biographical sketch:

Arnobius in Africa rhetor clarus habetur, qui cum in civitate Siccae ad declamandum juvenes erudiret, et adhuc ethnicus ad credulitatem somniis compelletur, neque ab episcoopo impetararet fidem, quam semper impugnaverat: elucubravit adversus pristinam religionem lucentissimos libros, et tamen velut quibusdam obsidibus pietatis foedus impetravit. (PL, 27.675f.)

This information is placed ad annum A.D. 327, the year of the Vicennalia of Constantine. Jerome explicitly informs his reader that it is the beginning of his own chronological data, Eusebius having written everything up to this date. However, in the De vir. ill., written c. 392-3, in chapters seventy-nine (Arnobius) and eighty (Lactantius) Arnobius is now placed in the reign of Diocletian (20 November 284-1 May 305). Added to this problem of conflicting dates is the fact that Lactantius, who Jerome maintains was a student of Arnobius (De vir. ill. 80), never mentions his teacher in any of his extant works. Hence the problems of dating Arnobius and the Adv. nat. via Jerome are twofold and interrelated: the explanation of the conflicting dates in the Chron. and the De vir. ill., and the identification of the sources which were available to Jerome.

Some scholars have attempted to explain the conflict of dates in the two works of Jerome as being due to mistaking the Vicennalia of

5 It was written c. A.D. 380 according to J.N.D. Kelly, Jerome. His Life, Writings And Controversies. London, 1975, 33.  
6 Chron. ad an. 327: "Huc usque historiam scribit Eusebius Pamphilii martyris contubernalis. Cui nos ista subiecimus."  
7 Kelly, op. cit., p.174.  
8 Although the decisive battle with Carinus did not happen until later at Marcus in Moesia, on which see Aurelius Victor, Caes. 39.11, his execution of Aper, the father-in-law of Numerian, guaranteed Diocletian's full acceptance as emperor and the support of the army in the East. Cf. Eutropius, Brev. con. 20.1. On the date of the proclamation of Diocletian as emperor see now Timothy D. Barnes, The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine. London, 1982, 49, n.20: P. Beatty Panopolis 2.162 confirms the date given by Lact., Mort. pers. 17.1. Jerome's other date is found in De vir. ill. 79: "Arnobius sub Diocletiano principe Siccae apud Africam florentissimam rhetoramic docuit, scriptis adversus gentes, quae vulgo exstant, volumina." Also note ibid. 80: "Firmianus, qui et Lactantius, Arnobii discipulus, sub Diocletiano princepe...".  
9 Yet M. Perrin, "Lactance lecteur d'Arnobe dans l'Epitome des Institutions?", REAug, 1984, XXX 1-2, 36-41, suggests that Lact. may have read Arn. before completing the Epitome due to parallel pss. I find his argument very weak (p.38) concerning the use by both of
constantine for those of Diocletian. The theory is that Jerome had intended to place Arnobius ad annum A.D. 303, under the Vicennalia of Diocletian, but because of an editorial error placed him instead under A.D. 327, the Vicennalia of Constantine. The argument would appear to have much to commend it. First, in the introduction to the Chronicon Jerome states that Eusebius had not included a sufficient amount of information about Roman personalities and events to suit his Latin readers. He therefore found it necessary to add this information and inserted it in the section of Eusebius' Chronicle covering the period between the fall of Troy and Constantine's Vicennalia.

He then notes that all information from Constantine to the sixth consulship of Valentinian and Valens (A.D. 378) "totum meum est." As McCracken has noted, the date of Arnobius where it appears in the Chron. (A.D. 327) would appear to be impossible because there is no mention in the Adv. nat. of the Edict of Toleration of 30 April A.D. 311, issued by the eastern Augustus, Galerius. For the moment, 311 may be taken as a terminus ante quem for the date of the Adv. nat. The possibility that the insertion of Arnobius under A.D. 327 was due to an editorial error becomes more apparent upon the consideration of further information supplied in the introduction to the Chron. Jerome not only did not interpolate the additions to the text of Eusebius himself, but also they were dictated quite hurriedly to a secretary. The whole process undoubtedly was an onerous task: Eusebius' chronological tables were transcribed as faithfully as possible by alternating in red and black ink so that the "reg-

fons rerum. A possible common source is not even considered. I suggest infra (ch.3) that Chaldaean theology probably provided this epithet for Arn. Perrin's other parallels are a little more convincing. His argument should now be carefully considered in light of T. D. Barnes, Constantine and Eusebius. London, 1981, 291, n.96: Lact. probably completed the Div. Inst. in Africa in 308/9.

11 Not noted by Oehler and Bryce-Campbell. The text of the Chron. is found in R. Helm, Eusebius Werke. 7: Die Chronik des Hieronymus. GCS 47, Berlin, 1956, 4-10.
12 Ibid., p.6: "A Troia usque ad uicesimum Constantini annum nunc addita, nunc admixta sunt plurima,...".
13 Ibid., p.7. 14McCrl, p.8. 15Helm, op. cit., p.2: "...ob-secro, ut, quidquid hoc tumultuarii operis est, amicorum, non iudicium animo relegatis, praeertim cum et notario, ut scitis, veloci-issime dictauerim....".
norum tramites" could be separated from each other. Mosshammer suggests that Jerome dictated the Latin version of the work hastily to his secretary, who had first transcribed the numerals of the chronological framework. He must have required the secretary to prepare for dictation of the text by first copying the columns of numbers converted from the Greek alphabet system to Roman numerals. "Thus the scribe had to preserve with great care the format and relative spacing of the original tables." One may add at this juncture two important facts: the painful eye malady which Jerome was experiencing during this period, and his quite careless working habits. One can easily assume that such a tedious task produced under the circumstances of hasty dictation; transcribing in red and black ink using two languages and three chronologies; interpolating names, events and dates; and converting from one alphabet to another, certainly created the conditions for such a scribal error as the misplacement of Arnobius under the Vicennalia of Constantine rather than under those of Diocletian.

There is also the possibility that A.D. 327 signifies something other than the date in which Arnobius wrote (or completed) the Adv. nat. Some scholars have maintained that it denotes the date of Arnobius' death. This is not indicated by Jerome, who is usually careful about giving the date of an individual's death, if he knows it, sometimes separate from the details listed in a previous section of

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16 Helm, op. cit., pp.5f.; see also A. Mosshammer, The Chronicle of Eusebius and the Greek Chronographic Tradition. London, 1979, 37. For the separation of the "regnorum tramites" in red and black ink see Helm, op. cit., p.5.

17 Mosshammer, op. cit., pp.52, 68. Already at Constantinople (c. 381), in Ep. 18A.16 (CSEL 54: Hilberg), Jerome complained that he was unable to correct the material which he had dictated because of the pain in his eyes: he could only use his ears and his tongue for his work. Cf. Ep. 21.42 (c. 383-4) which mentions painful eye trouble ("dolentibus oculis") that required the dictation to a scribe of the letter to Pope Damasus. See also Kelly, op. cit., pp.79, 84; and 87: "...he always worked in a hurry and could be extremely careless...".

18 Mosshammer, op. cit., p.209, gives a probable transcriptional error, viz. dating the Messenian rebellion and the acme of Tyrtaeus by one Olympiad later than Eusebius. The three chronological systems were: Olympiads, years since Abraham, and reigns of the emperors.

the Chron. As McCracken and Bardenhewer have posited, this is a too easy solution to a difficult problem. It must be emphasised that the date of Arnobius' death, as in the case of his birth (indeed, even his place of birth) will perhaps forever remain a mystery. It would, therefore, seem highly probable that the scribal error theory regarding Arnobius' date found in the Chron. of Jerome is supportable, based upon information provided in the introduction of the work.

Yet the attempt to discover the sources about Arnobius which were available to Jerome, however, may provide a better solution to the problem of dating (at least) the general period in which the Adv. nat. was written, and a more plausible elucidation for the conflicting dates in Jerome. Eusebius unfortunately cannot help to solve the problem: "For the years before 300, the genuine evidence outside Eusebius was almost as exiguous then as it is now." And as we have observed, the first historian of the Church does not mention Arnobius in any of his works (p. 3 supra). Since this is the case, and Jerome is the only ancient writer who provides any information about Arnobius, the attempt to identify his source(s) related to the African rhetor (Ch. 2 infra) is problematical, since also Lactantius regretfully does not mention his former professor in any extant work. However, in De vir. ill. 80, Jerome names various works and letters of Lactantius which are now lost. The Banquet was written when Lactantius was young: "Habemus ejus Symposium, quod adolescentulus scripsit." This suggests an African context, and a reference in the work to his teacher (provided that, of course, he was his teacher at this time, which is likely), who Jerome states taught the "juvenes" (p. 3 supra) at Sicca Veneria, might have been a source for his chronicle. Another work, The Itinerary (Ὀδοιπορίκου) was written during Lactantius' trip from Africa to Nicomedia. There is also mentioned a certain Grammaticus. The lost letters enumerated in the same passage were known to Pope Damasus, who lamented that they dealt

21 E.g., ad an. A.D. 358: St. Paulinus, Bishop of Trier (date of death); St. Hilarius: biographical information ad an. 356 and 359; date of death given ad an. 367.

22 McCr, p. 8; O. Bardenhewer, Patrology. Trans., T.J. Shahan. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1908, 2, 518.

mainly with profane subjects. It is impossible, based on existing data, to discover the date of the trip which Lactantius made from his homeland to Nicomedia. Some have suggested that he was already professor of Latin Literature in Bithynia on the Propontis by c. A.D. 295. We do not even know why and how Lactantius was selected to fill this position. But Nicholson's suggestion is logical: Max- imian's triumphal entry in Carthage during the spring of 298, after he had quelled the Quinquegentani, was celebrated partly by speeches of welcome in his honour. Perhaps Lactantius was one of the rhetors (along with Arnobius?) who gave a speech. The theory is at least indirectly supported by two known facts: Eumenius' appointment (Pan. lat. V(9): Galletier; IX(IV): Mynors) as professor of Latin Literature, backed by the imperial government, at the rebuilt college at Autun in Gaul for 600,000 sesterces annually; Lactantius' appointment thus might have been part of imperial policy whose goal was the revival of Latin Literature. Also, the Mort. pers. lacks the story of Galerius' humiliation (Eutrop., Brev. con. 9.24) which would have suited Lactantius' purposes very well. It would be reasonable to suggest that the trip took place very late in the third century. To the present writer's knowledge, no one argues that Arnobius was a Christian by 290, and few would give 295. If he was converted c. 297, as some have suggested, and if the above date is accurate for Lactantius' trip, then the latter's silence about his professor is indeed difficult to explain. If Lactantius had known about Arnobius' conversion, it is very probable that he would have mentioned him in one of his extant works. Since Lactantius does not mention him in any of his extant works, it is suggested that he probably never heard of his former professor's

24 Letters named in De vir. ill. 80 are: four books of epistles to Probus; two to Severus; and two to Demetrianus. According to J. Moreau, De la mort des persecuteurs. SC 39, Paris, 1954, 15, the dates of the lost letters are uncertain.


27 If he had read the Adv nat., he might have made known his theological disagreement on divine passibility, providence, etc.
conversion to Christianity. Since the De vir. ill. was written c. 392-3, one can assume that any statement about Arnobius that Jerome found in the lost works (or epistles) of Lactantius must undoubtedly relate to Arnobius' pre-Christian period. And it is significant in light of this interpretation that Jerome's Ep. 35.2 to Pope Damasus (CSEL 54: Hilberg), dated 384 according to Kelly (op. cit., p.83, n.19), provides evidence that after the Chron. was written but before the De vir. ill. was begun, Jerome had access to Lactantius' letters.

Now the problem is as follows: what exactly was the information which Jerome might have received about Arnobius from the lost works or epistles of Lactantius? In respect of the Chron., three clauses can be derived from Lactantius:

Arnobius rhetor in Africa clarus habitur. Qui cum Siccae ad declamandum iuvenes erudiret...quam semper inpugnauerat...
(Helm, p.231; PL, 27.675f.: ad an. A.D. 327).

Concerning the last clause, it is reasonable to assume that if Arnobius was the hostile opponent of the Church as noted, Lactantius might very well have mentioned this in that profane corpus of writings to which Damasus referred in his letter to Jerome (p.7, n.24 supra). The remaining information concerns Arnobius' Christian experience which cannot have come from Lactantius. It is, however, possible that all the information about Arnobius found in the Chron. derives from another source, probably oral tradition. Indeed, it is worth questioning whether Jerome by this time (c. 380, the date of the Chron.) had even read the Adv. nat. at all, since he describes the books as "luculentissimos", a statement which does not cohere with his more balanced assessment of the work given in later statements in his letters. Yet the apologetical purpose of the Chron. cannot be ignored. One can go further. In the Chron. Jerome does...

28 If this occurred at all, I suggest a late date in agreement with Barnes' suggestion that Lactantius may have completed the Div. inst. in Africa c. 308/9; cf. also Perrin's study supra pp.3f., p.9.

29 Cf. McCr, p.12: "...he may even have derived his knowledge of Arnobius from oral tradition." McCr does not mention the lost works/letters of Lactantius as possible sources for Jerome; nor LeB.

30 The same can also be said about De vir. ill., in which Jerome does not make a statement about the contents of the Adv. nat. But in ch. 79 Adversus gentes is given for the name of the work, commonly available ("quae vulgo existant"). MS. evidence (McCr, p.241, n.25) gives the title used herein. If Jerome had read the work by the time
Holy Scripture

pressive list of writers, he

viris illustribus,
p.227:

Brutus

may

he states,

were,

Hebdomades vel

he states, which he

which he

be

Arnobius in De vir. ill. 79 that can have come from the lost writings of Lactantius mentioned in De vir. ill. 80, is the date, viz. "sub Diocletiano principe". This appears very likely because Jerome has already stated that Arnobius taught rhetoric at Sicca Veneria in Africa, and the mention of the Adversus gentes cannot have come from Lactantius because information from the latter will have concerned only the pagan Arnobius. It is therefore most probable that Jerome

he had written the De vir. ill. (c.392-3), the reason for which he abstains from making a negative comment about it, as he does in later letters, can be found in the Preface. There he responds to the request of Dexter for a systematic account of ecclesiastical writers which will do for Christian Literature what Tranquillus' works (De illustribus grammaticis; De claris rhetoribus; fl. c. A.D. 100) had done for pagan letters. Hermippus (fl. 3rd. cent. B.C.: Peripatetic biographer), Antigonus (fl. c. 240 B.C.: wrote on lives of the philosophers), Satyrus (fl. 3rd. cent. B.C.: wrote lives of famous men), and Aristoxenus the Musician (b. 375-60 B.C.: wrote a Βιοι Ἀνδρῶν) were, he states, his Greek predecessors. And Varro (116-27 B.C.: Hebdomades vel de imaginibus and other works implied), Santra (Ciceronian age: De antiquitate verborum), Nepos (c.99-c.24 B.C.: De viris illustribus, etc.), Hyginus (Augustan period: De vita rebusque illustrium vivorum), Tranquillus, and Cicero (106-43 B.C.: the Brutus may be meant) were his Latin predecessors. With such an impressive list of writers, he might have felt justified to keep silent about Arnobius' deficiencies. But his stated desire to set before Dexter all those who have handed down any memorable writing on Holy Scripture suggests that he had not read Arn. in much detail, if at all: Arn. betrays very little knowledge of the N.T. and none of the O.T. Thus M. Strachey, The Fathers Without Theology. London, 1957, p.227: Jerome is not referring to the Adv. nat. On Jerome's apologetic aim see Barnes (1971), p.4; also his "Appendix A", pp.235-41. He is partly incorrect to suggest that De vir. ill. 80 supplied facts about Arn. in ibid. 79 since Jerome names the work which cannot have come from Lact. The later and more sober statements of Jerome about the work appear in Ep. 58.10 (PL, 22.585: c.A.D. 395), Ad Paulinum; and in Ep. 62.2 (PL, 22.606: c.397-8), Ad Tranquillinum.

31Thus superceding the "scribal error" theory.
discovered the accurate date of Arnobius in one or more of the lost works of Lactantius mentioned in De vir. ill. 80, and the source upon which he based his information in the Chron. was mistaken. This source has been identified in no more precise terms than "oral tradition", but it is possible that some (if not all) of the information which Jerome received about Arnobius' Christian experiences came from a North African (possibly ecclesiastical) source. We have referred to Ep. 35.2 (CSEL 54: Hilberg). It was written in A.D. 384, which was four years after the completion of the Chron. (380) and c. eight years before the De vir. ill. was begun (c.392-3). Damasus is explicit regarding his opinion about these writings:

fateor quippe tibi, eos, quos mihi iam pridem Lactantii dederas libros, ideo non libenter lego, quia et plurimae epistolae eius usque ad mille versum spatia tendentur et raro de nostro dogmate disputant...

There was simply very little in them relating to the Christian religion. It is not known how long Jerome had had possession of them. But it would be reasonable to suggest that (as we have argued) (1) the lost writings of Lactantius probably did not supply Jerome any information concerning the Christian experiences of Arnobius; and (2) Jerome got possession of them after he had completed the Chron., and Lactantius provided him the accurate date of Arnobius. This indeed does not suggest that Jerome was actually conscious of the erroneous date given in the Chron. when he discovered the accurate one before he wrote the De vir. ill. Finally, the Christian information might have been supplied by oral tradition initially, which might have led Jerome to ascertain its accuracy by writing to a North African ecclesiastical personage. The problem here is that his earliest N. African correspondence, to Aurelius and contained in the letters of Augustine discovered by Divjak (CSEL 87: Ep. 27, pp. lxvi-lxvii),32 dated c. 392-3, acknowledges that Tertullian, Cyprian, and Lactantius came from Aurelius' province ("in vestra provincia"). Arnobius' name is absent. Yet Aurelius initiated the correspondence, and this suggests that Jerome's N. African epistles antedate 392. How far back they go is uncertain. Hence the "facts" of Arnobius' life found in the Chron. probably derived from oral tradition, with the possibility that a North African ecclesiastical source contrib-

uted some of the information being likely. The only correction to this information supplied by Lactantius was the date: "sub diocletiano principe". Hence the date of Arnobius and the writing of the Adversus nationes which can be derived from external sources alone is to be placed during the reign of Diocletian (20 November A.D. 284-1 May 305).

Internal Evidence From The Adversus Nationes.

In turning to the evidence for dating the Adv. nat. found in the work itself, it is of utmost importance, when necessary, to combine a literary exegesis of the passages in question with an investigation of the historical events of the period to which they appear to be referring. One may begin with two passages which provide general information about historical events. First, the Adv. nat. begins with a refutation of the pagan accusation that since the Christian race began, the world has gone to ruin, and the gods have now withdrawn their providential blessings from mankind (1.1). The gods are now angry and have sent pestilences, wars, famines, and other harmful things to punish men for neglecting them (1.3). In 1.4 Arnobius refutes the accusation that invasions of the Germans and Scythians are due to the gods' anger. Courcelle thus argues that Book 1 was written c. A.D. 296-7. In the passage Arnobius refers to the frequent wars ("bellorum frequentium") which have occurred in the Empire. He could be referring to the campaigns of C. Gothicus (268-70), Aurelian (270-75), Probus (276-82), Maximian (286-7), and Diocletian himself was proclaimed Germanicus Maximus in 285, 287 (twice), 288, 293, and 300/1. Arnobius' general remark does not allow any precise date. Another problem with dating .

33 An approach to the date problem which to my knowledge has never been formulated. My argument is that Arn. was influenced by the events of his time. I disagree with McCr, p.3: "...though living at a critical moment in history, (he) nevertheless seems to have been relatively unaffected by his times." Cf. L. Berkowitz, Index Arnobianus. Hildesheim, 1967, vii.


35 See "Table 5" in Barnes (1982), p.255.
Book 1 in A.D. 296-7 is that Arnobius alludes to Diocletian's First Edict of 23 February 303, in Adv. nat. 4.36.22-3. Hence Courcelle's date for Book 1 at least implies the double composition theory first put forth by Monceaux and later, Moricca. These scholars have held that Books 1-2 are to be dated c. A.D. 297, and Books 3-7 not until 303 or thereafter. This view cannot be supported due to the planned digression in the form of the second book (on the salvation of the soul) to which Arnobius refers at the beginning of Book 3. Recently Le Bonniec has suggested a quite different date and sequence of the books: "...en effet le livre 1 est peut-être postérieur à 300; mais le livre 2 est sûrement soit de 297, soit un peu antérieur à cette date." He earlier states that Book 2 certainly would have been published alone because it constitutes "une démonstration autonome et l'auteur lui-même le present comme une sort de corps étranger dans l'économie générale de son œuvre..." This is very weak. First, it ignores the internal evidence which McCr noticed concerning 2.1 and 3.2. Second, it completely overlooks (as McCr also) the external evidence which the Latin rhetorical tradition reveals from the late Republic/early Empire. Cicero speaks of the importance of a planned digressio (De orat. III.liii.201: LCL: Rackham), and the same word is used in Adv. nat. 3.2.2. The passage is quoted and commented upon in Quintilian, Inst. orat. 9.1.28 (LCL: Butler). The device appears to have been quite important according to Quintilian: digressio introduced to a speech adds beauty to it (4.2.19); it was an admirable device for the embellishments of oratorical style (9.1.35f.; cf. 9.2.55; 10.1.33); ἡασκῆρος was the Greek technical term for this rhetorical device whose importance is stressed in 4.3.14. We note Jerome's statement in the Chron. that Arnobius was a rhetor. The conclusion is: neither. Adv. nat. 1.4 nor any passage in Book 1 provides proof/irrefutable evidence that the Book was written c. A.D. 296-7. It (1.4) is simply evidence of a groundless accusation made by hostile pagans who thought

37 LeB, p.32. 38 Ibid., pp.27f. I would maintain that the 7 books form an organic whole and represent a finished product.
39 McCr, p.10; cf. LeB, p.27.
that the many calamities which befell the Roman Empire in the last years of the third century were due to the Christians.

The other passage is 1.5. Arnobius refers to Timaeus 23E, and asks whether the Christians were also responsible for the outbreak of war in Atlantis ten thousand years ago. In the Tim. Solon is told by Egyptian priests that the invasion of the inhabitants from Atlantis took place nine thousand years before his time. Since Solon lived c. 638-558 B.C., Arnobius is inexact wherever he is placed in Diocletian's reign, the passage's aim is purely apologetical, and it cannot provide any specific information for the date of the Adv. nat.

Two passages concern the length of time in which the Christian religion has existed. In 1.13 Arnobius states: "trecenti sunt anni ferme minus vel plus aliquid, ex quo coepimus esse Christiani et terrarum in orbe censeri." There is evidence from other Christian writers that the beginning of the Christian religion was computed to the birth of Christ. 40 This is probably the case with Arnobius, since by computing the date to the beginning of Christ's ministry, to the crucifixion, or as Augustine does to Pentecost 41 would all give a date beyond A.D. 311, which is our tentative terminus ante quem (p. 4 supra). However, the "minus vel plus aliquid" betrays Arnobius' inexactness on the subject, and one does not know the chronological system, if any, which he used. Also, in Adv. nat. 2.71.9 a pagan opponent asserts: "Ante trecentos annos religio, inquit, vestra non fuit." Although the manuscript (P) gives "quadringentos", Marchesi's suggestion of "trecentos" makes better sense. 42 One again finds the same kind of chronological inexactness, but now it is the pagan opponent who speaks. This general statement cannot provide any more specific date than the reign of Diocletian (284-305).

It is also in 2.71 that the most controversial passage related to the date of the text is found. Arnobius states that the city of Rome is now c. 1,050 years old, or not much less: "Aetatis urbs Roma cuius esse in annalibus indicatur? Annos ducit quinquaginta et mille

40 Tertullian, Ap. 7.3 (McCr, p.244, n.58, giving also Lact., Mort. pers. 2); Eusebius, HE, 1.5.1.
41 Civ. Dei 18.54. 42 This specific passage may represent Arnobius' own chronological computations rather than those of a real pagan opponent, although in many instances the reverse is true. The figure 300 in 2.71 coheres with that given in 1.13.
aut non multum ab his minus." Now the millennium of Rome was celebrated
under the emperor Philip the Arab in the year A.D. 247. The year was
calculated according to the Varronian chronology which dated the founda-
tion of Rome in 753 B.C. If Arnobius used Varro's system in 2.71,
that would place the writing of the work up to this passage sometime
before 21 April A.D. 297, according to the meaning of "aut non multa'
ab his minus." Bryce-Campbell, McCracken, and Mulvey argue that
it is certain that Arnobius used the Varronian chronology. The assumed
strength of this position is the fact that Varro's system is followed in
5.8.30-6. Le Bonniec will have us believe that this passage offers
"proof" that Varro's chronology is followed in 2.71. Nicholson ex-
presses doubts based on the usage in Roman N. Africa of consular dates
and years of the emperors. The best method of approaching the prob-
lem is to analyse the texts! In 5.8 an attempt is made to prove the
recent birth in history of the Great Mother. The aim of the passage
is apologetic and the method of attack is one of literary retortion:
Arnobius turns his opponents' arguments back upon themselves by dem-
onstrating the contradictions of their position. He is responding to
the well-worn criticism that Christianity is new and therefore lacks
the authority of antiquity. Varro, he affirms, states that from the
deluge to the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa (43 B.C.) there are
not quite two thousand years. Since Deucalion and Pyrrha, the sur-
vivors of the flood, threw down the stones from which the Great Mother
was born, she is therefore not even two thousand years old, just a
baby (5.8.41: "infans"), and her religion is therefore quite new.

In turning to 2.71.11-34, no one has noticed that the general
outline of a distinct chronology, possibly deriving from the annal-
istic tradition of the early Republic, covers a vast majority of 2.
71. The same apologetic argument is given here as is found in 5.8:
the gods are new to human history. Note that in 5.8 and 2.71 the
same numerical limits are placed upon the divinities: 2,000 years.

43 Bryce-Campbell, op. cit., p.407. 44 McCr, p.10; cf. p.9 for
other foundation dates: 728 B.C. (L. Cincius Alimentus); 747 B.C. (Q.
Fabius Pictor); 750 B.C. (Polybius); 752 B.C. (M. Porcius Cato).
46 LeB, p.32. 47 O.P. Nicholson, "The Date of Arnobius' Adversus
48 H.H. Scullard, From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome 133
Religious paganism of the Empire cannot claim authority on the grounds of antiquity. Here Arnobius had to attack his opponents on their own territory by using their own weapons against them because he was apparently ignorant of the Old Testament. He was therefore unable to use the Christian Heilsgeschichte argument, based upon the prophets of the Old Testament, which the earlier apologists used in their counter-attack upon this pagan accusation. Varro's name is absent. The reference to "annalibus" (2.71.32) suggests the use of a chronology from the early annalistic tradition and separate from the kind of antiquarian history that Varro wrote.\(^49\) Frier has shown that a distinction was made between descriptive narrative, historia, and a year-by-year account of past events, annalis.\(^50\) Macrobius' use of annales is associated with the chronicle written by the pontifices maximi of Rome and entitled Annales Maximi.\(^51\) Arnobius appears to have had knowledge of the early annals of Rome which were written in Greek: in 1.3.43 he informs his adversaries that the maladies occurring in the world for which they blame the Christians are recorded in the annals of various languages.\(^52\) This may suggest familiarity with Q. Fabius Pictor's Graeci annales. The story of the dancer who made Jupiter angry in 7.39 is described as being found in the writings of the annalists, and we know from Cicero that Fabius' annals contained the story.\(^53\) In the passage under analysis (2.71.11-34), Arnobius begins with Saturn, who was the Father of Jupiter. There are three generations from Jupiter and Picus down to Latinus. Faunus, Latinus, and Picus lived 120 years each. According to the chronology no one can live beyond this number of years. Then come Aeneas and Ascanius, the founder of Alba Longa. Alba's kingdom existed c.420 years. The annalistic age of Rome is then given, 1,050 years or not much less. Then Arnobius deduces from:


\(^{50}\) Ibid.

\(^{51}\) Ibid. Frier gives evidence from such authors as Virgil, Servius, and Isidore of Seville to show that the distinction noted above continued to late antiquity.

\(^{52}\) Adv. nat. 1.3.43f.: "Annalium scripta percurrite linguarum diversitatis scripta...". This strongly implies personal familiarity.

\(^{53}\) See McCr, p.615, n.130, for other possibilities. Cf. Adv. nat. 7.44.7f.: "Non imus infitas in annalium scriptis contineri haec omnia quae sunt a vobis in oppositione prolata." This is identical to 7.39.8-10, rejected as spurious by most eds., but see Marchesi, l.c.
this chronology that from the time of Jupiter to the present there are nearly two thousand years. Hence the Roman gods are recent introductions to history.

The difficulty in attempting to identify the source of the passage is that Varro's work on the antiquities of the Roman people is lost. Also, there seems to have been no consensus about the genealogies of the regal and pre-regal periods in the early annalists and the historians. For example, according to Arnobius, Latinus was the father-in-law of Aeneas. In the writer Timaeus, Aeneas is the father-in-law of Latinus. Q. Fabius Pictor did not follow Timaeus on some points, but the surviving fragments of Fabius do not cover this subject. Cato's version of Latinus and Aeneas is the same as that found in the passage. We shall note another parallel below. Virgil follows Cato, Livy does not. Appian (De reg. 1.1 ap. Photius) combines the two, viz. Latinus Faunus. The Chronographer of A.D. 354 gives a similar list, but Saturn is absent. As Mommsen suggested, since he was a Christian the divine kings of paganism were unacceptable. His calculations for the existence of Alba's kingdom differ from those of Arnobius: he gives more than 500 years. Both Jerome's addition to Eusebius' Chronicle ad annum 1178 a. Chr. and the Bedae chronica concur in respect of sequence of persons and years ruled:

Ante Aeneam Ianus Saturnus Picus Faunus Latinus in Italia regnarunt ann. circiter CL. (Helm, p.62b; PL, 27.271f.)

In the place of "Ianus" Arnobius puts "Iuppiter", and his emphasis is upon the years lived (120 each) by Faunus, Latinus, and Picus.

Turning to Saturn, recent scholarship has not reached a consensus about the date of Saturn's reign in Italy. Because of the mythological character of the literature which covers this personage, the attempt to ascertain a possible period for this god-king figure is prob-

Frier, op. cit., p.322, lists the fragments.

"Item origo gentis Romanorum, ex quo primum in Italia regnare coeperunt...Picus Saturni filius regnavit agro Laurentino usque ad eum locum ubi nunc Roma est, ann. XXXVIII...Faunus Pici filius eisdem locis regnavit annis XLIII...Latinus eisdem locis regnavit... (lacuna).


The Bedae chronica is found in Mommsen's MGH, vol. III: Chronica Minora Saec. IV.VI.VII. Berlin, 1898.
lematical and dependent upon more reliable historical events which some authors describe as being contemporaneous with Saturn. Thus Tertullian (Ap. 19.2. CChr: Dekkers) maintains that Thallus recorded that Belus, the Assyrian king, and Saturn were contemporaries. This agrees with, and might be derived from, Theophilus, Ad Autol. 3.27. The chronology which either used is unknown, but Belus preceded the fall of Troy by 322 years. This would place Saturn somewhere in the sixteenth century B.C. Hammond gives c. 1200 B.C. for the most probable date of the fall of Troy. If Arnobius followed the same chronological computation (i.e., by making Saturn and Belus contemporaries), his reasoning "anni ad haec tempora prope millia duo sunt aut pleni" (2.71.36f.) from Jupiter to the time of writing the Adv. nat. would be, e.g., 1,824 Fabian or 1,819 Varronian. But the Belus/Saturn connection is not found in Arnobius (Cf. Div. inst. 1.23.5).

The use of the Fabian chronology cannot be rejected in toto because 6.7.9 strongly suggests familiarity with the Graeci annales. McCracken tries to make a strong case of the use of Varro in the Adv. nat. (15 direct citations) to support the theory that Varro's chronology is used in 2.71. However, in referring to the early regal period, Arn. himself puts Piso, Aelius, and Granius in contradistinction to Varro, who he emphasises was mistaken (if the others are accepted) "qui rebus in (sub)stantia constituitis inanissimas subdit et res cassas" (3.39.9f.). The "inanissimas" are to be taken as replacing "rebus in (sub)stantia constitutis", which can only directly relate to the personages named at the beginning of the passage. Hercules, Romulus, and Aeneas - the latter appears in Arn. 2.71.29 - are figures from the historical period which the genealogy of 2.71 covers. What is the relationship between Varro, "inanissimas", and these mythological persons? Augustine states that Eusebius and Jerome did not follow Varro's chronology for the early regal and pre-regal periods. They followed, he says, earlier historians and not Varro. Varro stated that some men believed falsely that they are

58 So Leglay (SAH, p.455): "Si le règne de Saturnus fut, comme le text semble le dire, contemporain de celui de Belus, la ruine de Troie étant fixée vers 1183...le règne de Saturne correspondrait bien au XVI\textsuperscript{o} siècle av. J.-C."
60 Civ. Dei 18.8.
descended from gods, a statement which does not cohere well with
Arnobius' genealogy, but makes sense when compared with the remark
about men being made gods in 3.39. Also, in the section of the Civ.
Dei covering the period of Picus, Faunus, and Latinus (18.15f.) the
name of Varro is absent, and Aug. seems to be following another anc-
ient source. Censorinus further elucidates the problem of the rejec-
tion of Varro for the pre-regal period: according to the great Latin
polymath, from man's beginnings to the first deluge (of Ogyges) one
cannot comprehend the exact number of years because this period is
too obscure (δὴ ηλικία). Eusebius gives 1757 a. Chr. (Helm, p.31b)
for the latter, 579 yrs. before Janus et al. (Jerome's addition:
Helm, p.62b) whose date begins in 1178 a. Chr. Varro's dating of Ogy-
ges cannot have been far from this, if indeed it was different.
Censorinus further states that Varro's second period, from the deluge
to the first Olympiad (776 B.C.), was called "mythical" (μυθικόν). It
would appear from this that Varro's second period, the "mythical",
corresponds chronologically to the period which most of Adv. nat.
2.71 covers. One would be justified to doubt whether Varro both
dealt with the same persons and used the kind of chronological ex-
actness that one finds in Arn. Jocelyn has doubted that he even
named Aeneas at all. And in the Ant. rer. div. (Bk. XVI) Varro
used the Stoic method of allegorization of the pagan gods Liber
(male sexual principle), Hercules, and Aesculapius (et al.), the
same gods named in Adv. nat. 3.39.2f. The "inanissimas" which Varro
substituted for "established reality" (McCr 3.39) probably refers
to this kind of allegorization of the Graeco-Roman gods. He devotes
fourteen chapters (Adv. nat. 5.32-45) zealously to refute it.

If this is correct, one must prove that the Varronian chronology
is used in Adv. nat. 2.71, independent of any reference to its use
elsewhere in the work. A recent study of Graeco-Roman chronologies

51 Die nat. 21.1f. (Jahn). 62 Ibid. 63 Ibid.
64 H.D. Jocelyn, "Varro's 'Antiquitates Rerum Diuinariun' and Rel-
igious Affairs in the Late Roman Republic", JRLM, 65, no. I, 1982,
148-205, esp. p.170: "The way that Augustine refers to Varro leaves
it a little uncertain whether the latter even mentioned Aeneas." Cf.
Civ. Dei 18.15f.
reveals the danger inherent in the kind of assumption made by those scholars named above (p.14, nn.43-6), viz. that Varro's chronology must be the one used in Adv. nat. 2.71 because it is used in 5.8. The reason is that the year 752 B.C. (Varro=753) was also frequently given for the date of Rome's foundation. The evidence is derived from the practice of chronographers of the early Empire deduced from later sources. Eusebius is invaluable: the Chron. places the foundation in a. Abr. 1264=01.6,4=752 B.C. The Armenian text concurs. It is acknowledged that "nonnulli Romanorum scriptores Romam conditam ferunt" for the preceding year (753 B.C.). Samuel's conclusion is that the year 752 B.C. was used at least as frequently as the Varronian epoch. Roman scholarship appears never to have reached an agreement on the precise date. And for the present investigation Samuel's conclusion is very important: "This so-called Varronian era can only be used for an ancient author if the base date 753 can be established for that author." Can it then be established for Arnobius (2.71)?

The reference to the kingdom of Alba Longa's existing for 420 yrs. cannot solve the problem as to which chronology Arn. used. Dionysius of Halicarnassus gives 487 years. 70 Livy has 400,71 while Virgil asserts that it endured 300 years. 72 Justinus' Epitome of Pompeius Trogus' history agrees with Livy. L. Annaeus Florus (Epit. bell. omn. ann. 1.3.8f. LCL: Forster) follows Livy's description of events under Tullus Hostilius, but does not note the length of Alba's kingdom. Arn. himself later changes the 420 to 400 years exactly (7.26.17f.). This may suggest the use of two separate chronologies which gave different lengths of existence for Alba. Added to this problem is the fact that Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Livy, and Virgil do not give the name(s) of the source(s) which provided them with Alba's date. 73

65 A.E. Samuel, Greek and Roman Chronology: Calendars and Years in Classical Antiquity. Munich, 1972, 252. 66 Ibid. 67 Ibid. 68 E.g., Censorinus (Die nat. 21.4ff.); Plutarch (Rom. 12); Macrobius (Sat. 1.13.20); V. Paterculus (Hist. rom. 1.8); Tacitus (Ann. 11.10); Eutropius (Brev. con. 1.2); Eusebius (Chron.a. Abr. 1264); Orosius (Hist. adv. pag. 5.3). 69 Op. cit., p.251. 70 Ant. rom. 3.31.4. 71 1.28. 72 Aen. I.270-4. 73 Theophilos of Antioch does not provide specific dates for the pre-regal period in Roman history. See Ad. Autol. 3.27 in R.M. Grant, Theophilos of Antioch. Ad Autolycon. OECT, Oxford, 1970, 141. On Alba Longa see: D.H. Müller, "Alba Longa", PW, I, cols. 1301-1302. On Justinus' Latin text, I use the ed. of F. Ruehl, Leipzig, 1866.
There is other information which supplies more than strong circumstantial evidence based on the argumentum ex silentio that Varro’s chronology was not used in Adv. nat. 2.71. First, the statement that Faunus, Latinus, and Picus each lived 120 yrs. should be compared with a passage in Lactantius (Div. inst. 2.14). There the Erythraean Sibyl is quoted to demonstrate that the serpent deceived man, who then took up death beyond what had been fated. The life of man was now temporary, though long, for it lasted 1,000 yrs. Lactantius states that although Varro was not unaware of this information, he nevertheless explained why the ancients lived according to the Egyptian computation of one year being equal to one month. Lactantius claims that this is false and adds that "certain authors" believe that "some were accustomed to attain to the age of 120 years." He now puts Varro in contradistinction to this theory: "But because Varro did not know why or when the life of man was shortened, he himself shortened it, although he knew that a man could live 1,400 months." The question is: who are the "certain authors" to whom Lactantius refers? The surviving fragments of Fabius and Cincius do not cover this particular subject. In the De senectute of Cicero, however, Marcus Porcius Cato, who dated Rome’s foundation in 752 B.C., gives the "utmost limit of life" as 120 years. Although this evidence cancels out the use of the Varronian chronology in 2.71, the possibility that Arn. followed either Fabius or Cincius, both of whom Cato used as sources for his historical writing, cannot be rejected. The former was held in high esteem by Plutarch, who mentions (in Rom.) Varro in passing. And

74 R.M. Ogilvie, The Library of Lactantius. Oxford, 1978, 51, includes Varro in the group. This would mean that Varro himself believed that men lived 120 yrs. He argues that Varro was not used directly by Lact., but he then notes on the same p. that Varro discussed the expectation of life in the Libri fatales as 84 yrs., and elsewhere as not more than 100. The source is Die nat. 14.6: 84: the Etruscans; and 17.4: no more than 100: the Alexandrian embalmers.

75 De sen. 19.69 (LCL: Falconer): "Quamquam, o di boni, quid est in hominis natura diu? Da enim supremum tempus; expectemus Tartessiorum regis aetatem...qui octoginta regnaverat annos, centum viginti vixerat...". Cf. Die nat. 17.4: "alii ad centum viginti annos produci posse ...". He seems not to include Varro in the "alii".

76 In Rom. 12.3f. (LCL: Perrin), Varro is mentioned in relation to Tarutius, whom Varro had asked to compute the exact day and hour of Romulus’ birth. Plutarch himself (Rom. 3.1) follows the story about Romulus which had received the widest credence in his day, namely that written by Diocles of Peparethus, whom Fabius followed in most points: τοῦ δὲ πίστιν ἑχων τὸ λόγον μάλιστα καὶ πλείονος τὰ μὲν κυριότατα
the use of Fabius rather than Varro by Plutarch for the pre-regal period corroborates Censorinus' remarks about Varro's description of the early periods of human history as incalculable in the exact number of years. Since the chronology given in Adv. nat. 2.71 begins with the god Jupiter and continues to the present, totaling c. 2,000 years, it would appear from what we have noted to be quite difficult to prove that Varro is being followed. Yet although the Graeci annales was probably available in Africa during Arnobius' time, and we shall observe in the next chapter that he knew Greek — it is equally difficult to prove that Fabius or any other of the early annalists were used.

But there remains one convincing piece of evidence that reveals further proof that Varro's chronology is not used in 2.71. First, we note the general statement of Tertullian (De idol. 10) about professors of literature who publicly make known the gods' genealogies: this coheres with Jerome's assertion that Arn. was a rhetor, and it fits well 2.71. The interesting fact about Arnobius' genealogy is that he deviates from listing the mother of Saturn normally found in Latin writers:

Quis Iovem cum fratibus genuit? Genialibus Opis adiunctus Saturnus, ut vos fertis, Caelo atque Hecata procreatus. (2.71.14ff.)

We should expect to find Terra (Gaia) instead of Hecate, and the

Note that the writer of the Origo gentis romanae used Q. Fabius Pictor as one of his sources. (S. Aurelius Victor, the African governor of Pannonia Secunda (PLRE, 1.960) in 361 and a historian, did not write the Origo.) It is dated c. 360 by A. Momigliano, "Some Observations on the Origo Gentis Romanae", JRS, 48, 1955, 56-73, esp. p.59. Momigliano argues that Fabius and other older sources were used, and the attempts to prove that the ancient writers mentioned are forgeries, are not convincing (p.71). This indicates that Fabius' work was available and used during the second half of the fourth century, though F. Pichlmayr, Sexti Avrelii Victoris Liber De Caesaribus. Leipzig, 1966, ix, suggests that the work can be dated from the 4th to the 6th centuries A.D.

Of incidental interest we may observe that T. Pompeius ap. Justinus and Arn. are similar in places, but the former (43.1) gives Latinius as Faunus' grandson, while Arn. (2.71.16ff.) lists him as his son. The tradition Tertullian follows is also similar: Ad nat. 2.9 lists Picus as Faunus' father. Ap. 10.6 and Just. 43.1 also begin with Saturn.
pearance of the latter caused Kroll to confess his inability to identify the underlying source, although his guess was the Chaldaean Oracles. According to Tertullian (Ad nat. 2.12. Cf. Lact., Epit. div. inst. 14) Varro maintained that Saturn's parents were Coelus and Terra. Confirmation of this can be found in Varro himself (De ling. lat. 5.57). Thus it is concluded that Arn. did not use Varro in 2.71; the reference to 120 yrs. parallels Cato; and the remark about the recorded calamities in the annals of various languages, compared with 6.7.9, where there is a direct reference to a specific passage in Fabius covering the regal period (Tarquinius Superbus), point to the use of a chronology derived from the early annals of Rome. Strong circumstantial evidence based on other internal information found in the text suggests that the Fabian chronology may have been used. For the moment we conclude that the work was not begun in 297.

Before we leave 2.71, however, a final observation must be made. It may very possibly be that the chronology used in 2.71 was selected (as in the case also of 5.8 where it is certain that Varro is followed) for purely apologetical purposes and cannot, therefore, serve as a guide for dating the text. And it may equally be possible that polemics more than chronological considerations have determined the choice of the pre-regal genealogy in 2.71. The best explanation is found in the Contra Christianos of Porphyry. Augustine's epistle to Deogratias responds to a pagan's questions about a number of Christian beliefs. One of these is identified as being among "the more weighty arguments of Porphyry against the Christians" (Ep. 102. 8) which criticised the Christian doctrine that Christ is the only way of humankind's salvation because he had so recently arrived in human history. Courcelle has already convincingly shown that Porphyry and Arnobius reveal striking parallels: there is a similarity between Aug., Ep.108.8 and Arn. 2.63.1-4; 64.1-3; 65.18f.; 66.8-10; 71.9; 74.


79 Other parallels between Porphyry and Arnobius are given in chs. 3, 5, and 6 infra. I have found vastly more convincing Courcelle's proposed identification of the main opponents of Adv. nat. 2 than those of Festugière and Mazza (see ch.5 infra).

80 CSEL 34.2, p.551; NPNF 1, p.416; Harnack CC fr. no.81.
These deal with the fate of souls before Christ came (2.63); Christ the one way of man's salvation (2.64-5); the newness of Christianity (2.66); the accusation that Christ has only recently appeared (2.71, 74, 75). We may add to these the accusation in 2.67.1-4, that Christians have abandoned ancestral religious customs which parallels a criticism of Porphyry found in Eusebius (PE 4.1; cf. 14.2). The challenge to the pagans to examine (2.67.2: "inspiciatis") the reason of such abandonment may also indicate a response to Porphyry's criticism of the Christians who assent to faith without examination (PE 1.1=Harnack CC fr. 1). Porphyry also considered it a crime punishable by death not to respect ancestral customs, and note that Arn. responds to the charge that it is a crime to abandon ancient institutions in 2.67.4ff., and the pagans who speak of persecution as punishment in 2.77.82.

Augustine's quotation from the CC reveals that Porphyry is using his chronological expertise to prove that Christianity, a very new religion, cannot claim authority as the one way of salvation compared with the ancient religious practices which ante-date even the foundation of Rome itself. He passes over the time which preceded the founding of Latium and begins with the latter as if it were the beginning of humanity. He asserts that before Alba was built, gods were worshipped in Latium. Alba also practiced religious rites and forms of worship in its temples. Porphyry then turns to Rome: for many centuries Rome was itself unacquainted with the Christian religion. So what has happened to those who lived during these periods? The gist is that the ancient religion is to be accepted as authoritative for man's salvation. Arn. begins in the very period which Porphyry undoubtedly was happy to pass over because it will have caused him not a little embarrassment. His argument is that the divinity worshipped, not length of time, gives a religion its authority. Pagans should not examine the day they began to worship but what (2.71.8: "nec colere qua die sed quid coeper-


82 For Porphyry's views: PE 4.1. Cf. Arn. 2.67.4ff.: "Nam si mutare sententiam culpa est ulla vel crimine et a veteribus institutis...migrare."; and 2.77.1-3: "...ista quam dicitis persecutionis asperitas liberatio nostra est, non persecutio, nec poenam vexatio inferet..."
is, convenit intueri."). From Jupiter to Latinus, the hero of Latium there are exactly three generations (2.71.22-4). From Picus, Faunus, and Latinus there have been 360 years (11.27f.). After Ascanius he explicitly states that Alba existed c.420 yrs. (11.30-2). The annalistic age of Rome is given (c.1,050 yrs.: 11.32-4). His conclusion is that since these calculations are irrefutable, the religion followed by the pagans and the gods themselves have recently arisen (11.34-42). To this we should add two statements in 2.68, a chapter which proves that from the pre-regal period onward all kinds of novelties have been introduced into the religious practices of the Romans. We recall that Porphyry (ap. Aug., Ep. 102.8) began with Latium and focused upon Alba and Rome. Arn. begins 2.68 by referring to the senate's decision to change sacrificial practices at Alba. Tullus' disregard for ancient (religious) custom (11.4-8) at Rome is noted. The reference to the practice of sacrificing human heads to Saturn before Hercules came to Italy points to one geographical region only: Latium (Cf. Lact., Div. inst. 1.21, who gives the name). It appears that Porphyry is the adversary who inspired Arnobius' polemical argument in 2.71. We cannot ascertain whether both used the same chronology.

A majority of scholars date the Adv. nat. during the Great Persecution (303-11) mainly because of the kinds of references (e.g. 4.36.22-3) to the persecution of Christians found in the work. None

Courcelle (1953), p.266, n.1 noticed the mention of Alba made by both. Jerome gives a similar account of Porphyry's rejection of the Christian religion which should be compared to Aug., Ep. 102.8 is Ep. 133.9 (NPNF 6)=Harnack CC fr. no. 82. M. Magnes' opponent also asks what happened to our ancestors diseased with sin (Apocr. 4.10) and ridicules the persecution of Paul and Peter (4.4). On the abandonment of marriage customs in Arn. 2.67 see H. Le Bonniec, "Le témoignage d'Arnobe sur deux rites archaïques du mariage romain", REL, 54, 1976, 110-29.

of these has done a thorough analysis of each individual passage in which a reference/allusion to the persecutions is found, to ascertain whether it can be established that all statements about the persecution of Christians are to be dated after the 23rd of February, A.D. 303, the date of the promulgation of Diocletian's First Edict. To this task the study now turns.85

In Adv. nat. 1.26.1-7 the first mention is made of persecution:

Hoccine est queso audax illud facinus et inmansa,
propter quod maximi caelites aculeos in nos intendunt irarum atque indignationum suarum, propter quod vos ipsi, cum libido incesserit saeva, exuitis nos bonis, exterminatis patriis sedibus, inrogatis suppliantia capitalia, torquetis dilaceratis exuritis et ad extremum nos feris et beluarum laniatibus obiec-
tatis?

Whatever may be the period(s) of persecution described by this ps., one must note first that Arn. is not explaining a process of torture which gradually culminates in fire and beasts. He rather enumerates the tortures to show that one or more of these were used against the


85 Nicholson's is the only study (1984) exclusively devoted to the date of the Adv. nat. He concludes (p.106) that it is not datable.
Christians. Hence the most extreme degrees of torture are death by fire and by being thrown to beasts ("et ad extremum nos feris et beluarum laniatibus obiectatis?"). But the question is whether this ps. describes the tortures suffered by Christians in the Great Persecution, and if so, does it provide any evidence for a more specific date for the Adv. nat.?

The First Edict of Diocletian was promulgated in Nicomedia on 23 February A.D. 303. It ordered the destruction of all Christian churches/meeting places. All scriptures were to be burnt, and all church property was to be confiscated. Worship was prohibited. All Christians lost their legal rights in the courts. Those Christians who possessed juridical rights were to lose them. Those in the imperial service were to be reduced to slavery. The new elements which this edict contained as compared to the persecutions under Decius and Valerian were the concentration of a direct attack upon the churches of the Christians, and an attempt to destroy the scriptures upon which their religious views were based. It appears that the imperial government under the Tetrarchy had concluded that the Church for too long had been allowed to exist as an imperium in imperio. By c. April the First Edict had arrived in Africa, and the governmental officials carried out its provisions immediately.

In the ps. given above (1.26.1-7, p.25) the mention of "exuitis nos bonis" could be interpreted as referring to the First Edict of 303. For example, on 19 May 303, in the vicinity of Cirta, the capital of Numidia, the mayor of the city, Munatius Felix, confiscated the church plate, scriptures, and all moveable wealth of the church house where a number of Christians were meeting. He then goes from house to house of Christians in the city and, "proferte scripturas, quas habetis" is a frequent refrain with which he addresses them. The

86 Eusebius, HE 8.2.4; Lactantius, Mort. pers. 13; see also G.E.M. de Ste Croix, "Aspects of the 'Great' Persecution", HTR, 47, 1954, 75-113, p.75.
88 His Latin title was curator; he was also flamen perpetuus; see PCEAf 1, p.407; Gesta apud Zenophilum, CSEL 26 (Ziwa), pp.186-8. On the date: Gesta ap. Zenoph. (p.186): "Diocletiano VIII et Maximiano VII consulibus XIII kal. Iunias...."
90 Ibid., passim.
The same procedures were taken against the Christians in Africa Proconsularis. His next statement, "exterminatis patriis sedibus", can have a direct association with the First Edict, especially if "sedibus" can be interpreted as "governmental seats" (or perhaps "positions"). This would refer to the loss of dignities and basic rights which Christians possessed by being in governmental positions. For any Christian freedman who served in the imperial government was reduced to slavery if he persisted in his faith. It is more likely, however, that the statement may refer to the widespread imprisonment of clergymen whom the Second Edict proscribed.

The "inrogatis supplicia capitalia" might be taken as a general statement about the execution of Christians specified in the list which follows. Torqueo can mean "to torture," "to mangle," or even "to put to the rack," all of which meanings suit well the persecutions that Eusebius describes in the eighth Book of his Ecclesiastical History. For example, Peter, a member of the imperial household, probably within the first few weeks after the promulgation of the First Edict, was scourged so badly that his bones began to show through the mangled parts of his body. This happened in Nicomedia. It is the kind of story that will have been disseminated throughout the christianized areas quite rapidly. Indeed, Eusebius uses the story as an example of what happened to "the others". Similar experiences occurred in N. Africa. We may refer to the thirty-four martyrs who were executed at Ammaedara (Haidra); those who were tortured upon the "horse" (eculeus) or rack, on 12 February 304, before the proconsul Anullinus in Carthage; and the executions of

91 Act. purg. Fel. (CSEL 26: Ziwsa, p.198): "nam cum persecutio esset indicta christianis,...ut sacrificarent aut quascumque scripturas haberent, incendio traderent...erat tunc temporis magistratus Alfius Caecilianus...". The latter was duumvir at Abtungi (Hr. es Souar) in Africa Proconsularis during the Diocletianic Persecution. See PCEAfr I, pp.175f.

92 LS, p.1659, I.A. Cf. OLD, 1725.7ff. I am aware of the debate as to whether Edicts 2-4 were promulgated in the West. Arn. can be given the liberty to be speaking of sufferings in the East. But see pp.54-7 infra.

93 Eus., HE 8.6.3. 94 Ibid., 8.6.4. 95 I LTun 470b-d. Yvette Duval, Loca Sanctorum Africæ. Le culte des martyrs en Afrique du IVe au VIIe siècle. 2 vols., Rome, 1982, 1, p.110, no.52, fig.75.

96 Pass. SS. Dat. Sat. in P. Franchi de'Cavalieri, Note Agiografiche. The Vatican, 1935, ST 65: 5.2: Dativus (PCEAfr I, pp.267f.) on the rack; 5.4: tortured with the hooks ("ungulis"); 8.4: Victoria on the same: "membra rumpantur, divellantur viscera,..."; the same verb
the Martyrs of Milev (Mila, Algeria); Maxima, Donatilla, and Secunda at Thuburbo Maius or Minus (Hr. Kasbat or Tebourba) in July 304; and Crispina at Theveste (Tébessa) on 5 December 304. Anullinus appears to have had his savage moments, as for example, when he shouted at Hilarianus on 12 February 304 at the tribunal in Carthage: "’Amputabo’ inquit ’et comam tibi et nasum et auriculas, et sic te dimittam’." Finally, "dilaceratis" fits well the persecutions that immediately broke out in Nicomedia and continued throughout the provinces. For a little more than two weeks after the First Edict was promulgated, Galerius had the palace in Nicomedia set on fire for the second time since the beginning of the persecution. Diocletian became enraged and thought that the Christians were the culprits. Many lost their lives. Eusebius notes that whole families in heaps were butchered with the sword.

Arnobius also mentions that Christians were burned to death ("exuritis"). Again, one does not need to go far into the persecution to find evidence. Lactantius and Eusebius tell the story that after the First Edict was put up in Nicomedia, a certain prominent Christian of the city tore it down and insultingly cried out that victories of the Goths and Sarmatians were proposed in it. He was immediately taken away and, Lactantius informs us, cooked according to the directions of a particular recipe. After the first palace fire, Diocletian witnessed some of his domestics who were Christians "roasted at the fire." The aftermath of the second palace fire produced even more martyrs. According to Eusebius, whole families were "perfected" by fire. Lactantius claims that it was the priests and deacons of the palace, along with all their families irrespective of sex and age,

Found in Arn. 1.26.6 is found in 8.5; cf. 9.2: "...clarissimus martyretiam pro Christo torqueri..."; also 9.4: "at martyr inter vulnerum cruciatus gravissimos..."; 15.4: Anullinus to Saturninus (PCEAf I, p. 1038) on the eculus: "’Quid’ inquit, Saturnine, profiteris? Vide ubi positus sis. habes scripturas aliquas?"

99 PCEAf I, pp.715f., 288f., 1047, respectively; Duval, op. cit., 1, p.33, fig.24, no.15, Testour (Tichilla)=CIL 8.1392 (mensa marturum?).
101 See PCEAf I, 78-80. Ibid., 556f. 102 Ibid., 556f. 103 Pass. SS. Dat. Sat. 18.6 (de'Cavalieri ST 65).
104 HE 8.6.6. 105 Ibid. On the cooked man: Mort. pers. 13; HE 8.5.1.
106 HE 8.6.6.
who were seized and herded into the flames. And both mention the burning to death of every man, woman, and child in a certain Phrygian town. It has been suggested that this was Eumeneia because inscriptions cease there c. A.D. 300. The phrase, "belurarum laniatibus obiectatis" would fit the description of the persecution in Egypt with which Eusebius explicitly compares that of N. Africa. However, the tone of the ps. up to this point seems to refer to the immediate outbreak of persecution which occurred after the publication of the First Edict in Nicomedia. The reference to capital punishment by being thrown to beasts would therefore be explained as rumours which came to Arn. during the incipient panic that swept over the christianized regions of the Empire. Although many of our sources from N. Africa are silent as to the specific manner of the martyrs' execution, we have no prima facie evidence to support Arnobius' remark. A negative conclusion, however, based on an argument from silence would be erroneous. More will be said about this below.

Finally, more evidence to support the argument that 1.26.1-7 can be dated sometime after 23 February 303, may be found in the reference to the gods (1.26.12-24) which follows the mention of persecutions. Liebeschuetz has recently concluded that the way in which Arn. speaks of Jupiter and Apollo appears to be a veiled allusion to the oracles which preceded the persecution. Nicholson has referred to the same possibility. Arn. reveals that the Dodonian Jupiter calls the Christians wicked and impious and has invented a charge of impiety against them:

Profanos nos impios Dodonaeus aut Iuppiter nominat, et ipse dicetur deus in ordine computatibus numinum, qui aut summo servientibus regi crimen impietatis adfingit aut sibi torquetur maiestatem eius cultumque praeponi? (1.26.12-16)

Lactantius informs us that while Diocletian and Galerius were in the East (c.299) and engaged in sacrificing to the gods, certain
Christians present made the sign of the cross. The haruspices repeatedly failed to ascertain the customary signs in the entrails of the victims. Finally Tagis, the "magister haruspicium", said that this was due to certain profane men at the rites, meaning of course the Christians: "quod rebus divinis profani homines interessent." Diocletian ordered all present to sacrifice or be punished. Also, it is interesting that the enumeration of the contemporary miracles of Christ which Arn. asserts occur in his time includes the act of rendering the haruspices undesirable:

...qui (sc.Christus) iustissimis viris etiamnunc in-pollutis ac diligentibus sese non per vana insomin- sed per purae speciem simplicitatis apparat...harus-pices insconsultos reddit... (Adv. nat. 1.46.29-33; cf. Lact., Div. inst. 4.27).

And it is after he has compared the Christian God with Jupiter (1.34: see ch.4 infra) that he makes the following comment:

...ecquid ergo iniustis persequimini nos odiiis? Quid ut ominis pessimii nostri nominis inhorrescitis mentionem, si quem deum colitis, eum et nos? Aut quid in eadem causa vobis esse contenditis familiares deos, inimicos atque infestissimos nobis? (1.35.2-7)

It can be argued that in these pss. Jupiter represents Diocletian. The latter consecrated the Tetrarchy under the specific protection of Jupiter and Hercules. Thus Diocletian, the Augustus of the East, became Jovius, the son of Jupiter. Maximian, the Augustus of the West, was called Herculius, the son of Hercules.116 The new imperial theology both simplified and standardised the former multiple gods of the reign of Valerian and others. Jupiter and Hercules dominate the numismatic evidence from the period. Jupiter is frequently referred to as "conservator", "tutator", "fulgurator". Hercules is addressed, "Hercu-li pacifero invicto" and "victori".117 The "salus", "victoria", and "virtus" of the emperors are praised.118 Their "providentia" is accentuated on coins from the mint at Lugdunum: she is standing and holds cornucopae.119 Sometimes the senior Augustus is depicted standing and receiving Victory on a globe from Jupiter.120 Eumenius expressed the same idea at Autun in the spring of 298: the best youths

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117 RIC 5.2, pp.225ff. 118 Ibid., p.229. 119 Ibid., no.77, p.228.
Adolescentes will learn at the newly rebuilt college of rhetoric how to celebrate the exploits of their illustrious princes. Some coins show both Augusti together: from the mint at Cyzicus Maximian receives the globe from Diocletian. All blessings come from Jupiter and Hercules, so proclaims Mamertinus: Diocletian initiates and Hercules realises. From the mint at Antioch we find a scene in which Jupiter stands, holding the globe and sceptre, facing Hercules who holds Victory, a club, and a lion's skin. Sometimes both emperors are seated and each holds a globe: the "concordia Augustorum" is magnified.

The concord which exists between the divine and human spheres is a theme found in the panegyrics. When Maximian needed fair weather to build a fleet to conquer Carausius, it did not rain. But when the ships were launched, the river which had long been unable to bear ships, now filled up because Jupiter sent rain. Mamertinus praises the Augusti for having brought salus to the Roman Empire. Before their advent harvests were poor, and many died because of famine and disease. Now the natural world itself has been blessed:


Maximian's numen illuminates all Italy. When he approaches his realm, the villagers burn incense, pour libations, sacrifice victims, sing hymns to the immortal gods. A visible and present Jupiter is invoked, not what legends have passed down. One adores a real Hercules, the emperor! Their blessings are more numerous than those of the gods. Today men understand the power of the gods when they see the emperors. They are addressed, "Sancte Iuppiter et Hercules". This was not restricted to professional rhetors. A fragment of an epic poem addresses Diocletian as Zeus and Galerius as Apollo. It derives

121 Pan. Lat. 9(IV)8.2;10.2 (Mynors). 122 RIC, no.583, p.288.
123 Pan. Lat. 10(II)11.6. For Mamertinus see PLRE I, p.539.
124 RIC, no.323, p.256. 125 Ibid., nos.290, 313, pp.250, 254.
126 Pan. Lat. 10(II)12.4. 127 Ibid., 12.6. 128 Ibid., 11(III)15.4.
129 Ibid., 10.4: "...tota Italia clarior lux diffusa...".
130 Ibid., 10.5. 131 Ibid., 8(V)4.3. 132 Ibid., 11(III)6.2.
from the period c. the autumn of 296. 135

From the above examples one can easily identify the main emphases of the new imperial theology. Diocletian is Jovius, the son of Jupiter who preserves the Roman Empire. Now a new age for Rome has dawned: the great heavenly emperor manifests his will and providence through his son, the great king of earth. Herculius is the pacifier of the empire. He realises which his "brother" (the augusti called each other frater) has initiated. One commands and the other accomplishes the command. Herculius brings peace and welfare to the world and victory over Rome's enemies. Jovius and Herculius have established salus throughout the Roman world. As Liebeschuetz maintains, at no other time than during the Tetrarchy were Christianity and the imperial religion so similar. 136 And for our purposes it is important to note that "Jupiter" or "Zeus" were often used to designate "Diocletian." One would rightly argue that Arn. is making a Jupiter/Diocletian association in 2.26.12-16, and this refers to the event which preceded the outbreak of persecution in 303 described in Mort. pers. 10. 137

Arn. then mentions Apollo:

Delius Apollo vel Clarius, Didymaeus Philesius Pythius et hic habendus divinus est, qui aut summum imperatorem nescit aut ignorant a nobis cotidianis ei precibus supplicari? (1.26.16-20)

Lactantius explains how the persecution began. Probably in 302 Diocletian and various governmental and military leaders held secret meetings during the winter. Their main problem was what should be done about the Christians. Some of the judges and military leaders of superior rank advised that they be exterminated. Diocletian decided to consult the oracle of Apollo at Didyma in the Maeander valley. Apollo responded that the God of the Christians was the enemy of the


137 It is also very interesting that Nicholson (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford, 1981) has made a generally similar observation about Lactantius (p.55): "It is often possible to find under Lactantius' denunciation of each god an allusion to the emperor he protected." Cf. pp.55-68.
divine religion: "respondit ille ut divinae religionis inimicus." \(^{138}\)

Also, Galerius' patron deity was Sol Invictus, a god associated with Apollo, and Galerius was with Diocletian when the oracle was consulted. \(^{139}\) Apollo replaces the name of Galerius in the poem (1 verso 6) written after the first Persian campaign. \(^{140}\) Arnobius mentions the Didymaean Apollo and others. The gist of the ps. is that Apollo, by whatever name he is called, does not know the Most High Ruler of the Christians! There may also be a connection between the event at Didyma and Adv. nat. 1.35.2-7, cited above (p.30), where Arn. states that the name "Christian" is a terrible omen and the gods are most inimical to the faithful.

Another possible allusion to imperial policy found in the Adv. nat. (in many pss.) must be considered. Diocletian and Maximian appear to have been acutely concerned about improving the morality of their subjects. A law dated either 15 March 291 (Hermogenianus) or 13 June 287 (Gregorianus) stipulated that those who entered into incestuous marriages "per errorem" were not subject to penalties if they annul their relationship. \(^{141}\) Other pronouncements proscribed polygamy \(^{142}\) and sexual incontinence. \(^{143}\) Adultery may well have been a main area of concentration. Legal decisions of varying specifications were sent to many parts of the empire in the years (e.g.) 287, \(^{144}\) 290, \(^{145}\) 293, \(^{146}\) 294, \(^{147}\) and 295. \(^{148}\) Valerius Concordius, praeses of Numidia in Cuicul (Djemila, Algeria) from 293 to 305, was the recipient of the latter on 1 June 295. \(^{149}\) These dealt with adultery.

Incestuous marriages alarmed and insulted Diocletian's traditional moral sensibilities. An Edict Against Incest preserved fully in the Mosaicarum et Romanarum Legum Collatio 6.4, \(^{150}\) was issued at Damascus on 1 May 295. \(^{151}\) It begins with a reference to the Roman laws that have

\(^{138}\) Lactantius, Mort. pers. 11.


\(^{140}\) Idem, Phnz 30, 1976, p.183.

\(^{141}\) Mos. et. rom. leg. coll. 6.5.1 in FIRA 2, pp.560ff.

\(^{142}\) CJ 5.5.2: 11 Dec. 285.


\(^{144}\) Ibid., 9.9.19: 5 Dec. 287 (Egypt).


\(^{146}\) Ibid., 9.9.25: 28 Aug.

\(^{147}\) Ibid., 9.9.26: 15 Dec.

\(^{148}\) Ibid., 9.9.27.

\(^{149}\) PLRE I, p.219; Barnes (1982), p.172.

\(^{150}\) FIRA 2, pp.558-60. A condensed version appears in CJ 5.4.17.

\(^{151}\) Mos. et rom. leg. coll. 6.4.8: "Dat. kal. Mai. Demasco Tusco et Anullino cons."
been established chastely and with holy awe (6.4.1: "caste sancteque sunt constituta"). The emperors confess that some have committed impious and unchaste acts (6.4.1: "nefarie incesteque comissa sunt"). And they make explicit that the gods will be favourable to those under their rule who live a pious, religious, peaceful and chaste life (6.4.1). All who have contracted unlawful marriages can receive imperial clemency (6.4.2). The rather strong language no doubt was intended to convey the gravity of the issue: those who are united in such (incestuous) illegal marriages ("inlicta conubia") showing no regard for decency and piety ("sineullo respectupudorisacpietatis") are compared to cattle and wild beasts (6.4.2) ("pecudum ac ferarum") who know no morality (6.4.2). Such persons act out of an instinct of detestable lust (6.4.2: "instinctuexecrandae libidinis"). Let those who have polluted their unions with incest now depart from such an abominable and criminal life (6.4.3: "utpost tanmenfariafacinoraitamquidemessigratulenturesseconcessam"). Children of such unions are to be considered bastards (6.4.3). In the future no one should dare to obey unbridled lust (6.4.3: "infrenatis cupiditatibus"). Henceforth all citizens of the empire will preserve the sanctity of marriage (6.4.4: "sanctitatemque in conubiis") and will know which marriages are permitted under Roman law (6.4.4: "sciantnuptiaslicitas,quaesuntRomanoiurepermissae."). Specifically defined illegal are the following marriages:

Cum quibus autem personis tam cognatorum quam ex adfiniumnumerocontrahinnonliceatmatrimonium,hoc edictonostrocomplexisumus:cumfilianepte pro-nepeitemque matre auia proaula et ex lateremamita ac matertera sororeresoriferiaetexea nepte. Itemque ex adfinibus priuigna nowerca socru nuru ceterisque quae antiquoiureprohibentur,a quibus cunctosvolumusabstinere. (Mos.etrom.leg.coll.6.4.5:FIRA,2,p.560)

There was sufficient material in this to enable a skilled rhetor who was very successful\textsuperscript{153} and whose profession required that he know civil law,\textsuperscript{154} to incorporate it into his rebuke of the gods' immoralities.

\textsuperscript{152}Cf.Eus.,PE2.4;Ael.,De nat.anim. (LCL:Scholfield)3.47: animals know they should not commit incest, humans do not (cf.4.7).

\textsuperscript{153}Jerome,Chron.adan.327;Devir.ill.79.

\textsuperscript{154}Quintilian,Inst.orat.12.3.1: "Iurisquocuecivilisnecessariahuicviroscientiaestetmoruancreligionumeiusreipublicae, quamcapesset." On the study of the written law see 12.3.7f.
And the divinity who is attacked more than any other is Jupiter.

Although, as Chadwick has ingeniously shown, this edict looks "like part of Diocletian's general justification of his eastern campaigns", we must concern ourselves with the possible polemical use of it in Arnobius. First we recall the marriage reforms (p.33 supra) and the emphasis upon adultery. The slander that destroys the "deorum principis auctoritatem" (4.22.16) is his heart hot with lust for women. One wife was not enough for him (4.22.20, 24). He is a criminal (4.22.31). In 4.23.1-9 Arn. states that although man has a propensity for lust (1.1: "libidinem"), nevertheless there are laws which stipulate capital punishment for adultery (11.2-5). Yet the "regnorum maximus" did not know the shame of an adulterer (11.5ff.)? He might have been tolerated if he had restricted his adultery to goddesses, but he committed this immoral act with human females (11.10-22) Christians certainly have not written that the "rex mundi" (4.26.15) changed himself into a satyr, a snake, or a bull to lust after women (11.19-26). And immediately follows what appears to be a parody of the kind of panegyrics noted above (pp.31f.):

Et sane adiungitis beneficia non parva, siquidem vob-is deus Hercules natus est, qui in rebus huiusmodi patris sui transiret exuperaretque virtutes. (4.26.26-9)

Jupiter preferred mistresses and concubines to his wife (4.34.1-6). Why prevent the Senate from issuing a decree against such irreverence (11.12-18)? He adds: "nec a vobis saltum meruerunt hon-orem, ut quibus expellitis a vobis eisdem ab his legibus propulsar-etis iniurias?" (1118-20). We shall analyse 4.35-6, which contains other examples, when we discuss Arnobius' allusion to the First Edict.

Arn. appears to have a special axe to grind in relation to Jupiter's incestuous affairs. He asks in 4.24.22f.: "numquid incestas nuptias cum sorore Iovem ipsum dicimus fecisse nos...?". Jupiter is charged with a crime in 5.9.6-15, and Arn. uses expressions reminiscent of those


156 McCr, p.555, n.150, refers to Dölger who cites the ps. for evid-
This diatribe against Jupiter is not so much directly opposed to Diocletian as it would appear to be against the idea, found in Mos. et rom. leg. coll. 6.4.1, that the immortal gods will undoubtedly favour all subjects in the Roman Empire who live a pious, religious, peaceful, and chaste life and worship them purely.\textsuperscript{157} Arn. is using an argument which appears to be indebted to Porphyry's De abstinencia - who was dependent upon early academics, Theophrastus, Pythagorean thought, and Plutarch's De solertia animalium (et al.) - that held that animals and human beings both possessed reason and an understanding of morality. The edict simply compares those who commit incest with cattle and beasts who have no aptitude for morality. We may compare Arn.'s "An respectus pietatis et honesti" with "sine ullo respectu pudoris ac pietatis" of the edict, and the former's charging Jupiter with committing a crime ("nec quid sceleris..." etc.) because of the incestuous affair with his mother. Compare Arn.'s "cupiditatis infandae" with the edict's (6.4.3) "infrenatis cupiditatis".

Note the beginning of 5.10: "Nisi forte dicitis, conventionis huiusmodi coetum genus vitat atque execratur humanum, apud deos incesta sunt nulla?" (11.1ff.); And the question that follows: "Cur ab illius...
amplexibus tamquam inlicitos vitans refugiebat adactus?" (11.4f.). "Inlicitos...adactus" makes explicit that incest is illegal. In 5.13.16, Arn. refers to the illicit love of a grandmother ("avia") Cybele for her grandson ("nepote") Attis. In 5.20 he begins by referring to the Phrygian mysteries: he would have passed them over if the name of Jupiter had not been found in them. He notes Jupiter's evil passions and illicit lusts for his own mother (5.20.9ff.: "cum in Cererem suam matrem libidinibus improbis atque inconcessis cupiditatibus aestuar
et"). He elucidates what was obviously thought to be an unfamiliar story to his readers: the Phrygians claim that Ceres is Jupiter's mother (11.1ff.), which (along with the following) suggests that incest was his main interest. He describes Jupiter's transformation into a bull in order to rape his mother:

fit ex deo taurus et sub pecoris specie subsessoris
animum atque audaciam celans in securam et nesciam
repentina immittitur vi furens, agit incestius res
suas et prodita per libidinem fraude intellectus et
cognitus evolat. (5.20.16-20)

From the union Proserpina is born. When Jupiter like a wether (5.21.15: "verveceus") sees his daughter, he forgets his former crimes (1.17: "sceleris") and returns to his previous deeds. He changes himself into a dragon because he knows it is impious for a father to have sex with his daughter: "et quia nefarium videbatur satis patrem cum filia
comminus uxoriam coniugatione misceri, in draconis terribilem formam
migrat..." (11.19ff.). He continues in 5.22: Jupiter burned for his mother Ceres (11.8f.). Many mothers lost their honour and chastity because of him (1.19: "pudoris spoliatus est honestate"). It is the same story everywhere (1.20: "eadem ubique est Iuppiter fabula"). Incest is again accentuated:

Etiamne in matrem, 'etiamne in filiam efferati pectoris
appetitionibus adhinnivit, neque illum sanctitas aut
reverentia genetricis, horror etiam pignoris ex se
sati ab imagine potuit tam foedae cogitationis ab-
ducere? (5.22.29-33)

Jupiter is vividly described as an animal in 5.23.1-6. The question, "Et eos qui haec tractant existimari se velle pios, sanctos religion-
que custodes?" (5.23.20f.) should be compared with a number of phrases in the edict, viz.:

"Quoniam piis religiosisque mentibus nostris ea, quae
Romanis legibus caste sancteque sunt constituta,...
(Mos. et rom. leg. coll. 6.4.1).
Id enim pietati nostrae maxime placuit, ut sancta 
nessistudinum nomina optineant apud affectus suos 
piam ac reliquisam consanguinitati debitam caritam. 
(6.4.2)

Nihil enim nisi sanctum ac uenerabile nostra iura 
custodiunt et ita ad tantam magnitudinem Romana 
maiestas cunctorum numinum fauore peruenit,... 
(6.4.6)

Arnobius reaches his climax in 5.29. He asks whether these are 
the gods that pagans attempt to force Christians to worship, "the 
like of which you would not wish yourselves to be, nor anyone rel-
ated to you by blood or ties of friendship?" (McCr). The Latin is: 

Hoscine nobis deos inportatis insinuatis infligitis, 
quorum similes nec vos esse neque alium velitis quam-
quam sanguinis vobis gradu et iure familiaritatis ad-
junctum? (5.29.14-17)

Compare the "consanguinitati" (top of this p.: 6.4.2) and the fol-
lowing, both from the edict, with the above:

cum quibus autem personis tam cognatorum quam ex ad-
finium numero contrahi non licet matrimonium, hoc ed-
icto nostro complexi sumus:...(6.4.5)

This introduces the kinds of marriages now defined as illegal (p. 
34 supra). The following questions which Arn. poses would appear 
to establish that he has intended to attack this specific section 
(6.4.5) of the edict:

Potestisne impubibus et praetextatis vestris quas 
Liber induxerit pactiones suis cum amatoribus indi-
care? Potestis vestras nurus, quinimmo vobis mat-
rimonio coniugatas ad verecundiam Babonis impel-
lere atque ad pudicas Ceres voluptates? Vultis 
vestri iuvenes sciant audiant discant, Iuppiter ip-
se qualis in unam extiterit atque alteram matrem?
vultis adultae virgines robustique adhuc patres, 
idem iste in filiam qua luserit arte, cognoscant?
vultis germani iam fervidi atque ex isdem seminibus 
fratres eundem rursus accipient concubitus, lectul-
os non esse aspernatum sororis? (5.29.18-29)

The explicit condemnation of Jupiter's incest with his sister would 
appear to be significant. As Barnes has noted, the main innovation 
of the edict was forbidding the marriage of siblings. The rest 
of the chapter is important. Note the following which includes in 
parentheses possible parallels with the edict:

Ita ergo non protinus ab huiusmodi fugiendum diis 
longe ac ne inrepat in animum tam impurae religio-
nis obscenitas, audientia tota claudenda est? Quis

Finally, we may add the criticisms of Jupiter's committing incest with his daughter (5.35.19ff.: "quid exspecti arietis proles, quid satisfactio his facta, quid quae rursus gesta sunt libidine obscenioriorem cum filia.") and mother (5.37.16ff.; 44.3-10) which end Book Five. The conclusion is that the references to the practice of incest among the gods, especially Jupiter, in Arn. are to be taken as allusions to Diocletian's (and Maximian's) Edict Against Incest.

The references to Jupiter and Apollo in 1.26 which we have analysed (pp.25-30, esp. 29f. supra) are similarly to be interpreted as being allusions to the events preceding the persecution. Yet it is difficult to accept that the same ps. is to be dated after 23 Feb. 303 because Arn. mentions the persecution of Christians in it (11.1-7). First, every method of persecution enumerated can easily describe those applied under either Decius or Valerian, and in the case of "beluarum laniatibus" (1.7) there is explicit evidence. To turn back to 1.26.4f., "exuitis nos bonis" could apply to either of these persecutions. Eusebius informs us that under Decius Christians suffered the spoiling of their goods (ουπαρχαι τοις ἰμαγας: HE, 7.11.18).

158 Barnes (1982), p.62, n.76 suggests that Galerius issued the edict on Diocletian's orders. "Exemplum edicti Diocletiani et Maximiani Augg." in 6.4.1 with the Caesars' names denotes its universal promulgation. As a rhetor Arn. will have undoubtedly studied its contents (p.34, n.154). Admittedly the gods' immorality was a common apologetic theme, but the noted parallels and the details of Arn.'s polemics support my conclusion. It cannot be argued that Clem. Alex. supplied Arn. with most of his ideas. See the list of parallels in A. Röhrich, De Clemente Alexandrino Arnobii in irridendo gentilium cultu deorum
However, the confiscation of church property was the centrepiece of Valerian's persecution. Cyprian gives what appears to be a paraphrase of the latter's Second Edict which was promulgated c. the middle of the summer of A.D. 258. It was addressed to the senate and directed that all clergy should be punished. Senators, men of rank, and knights were to lose their dignity and to be deprived of their property ("bonis spoliuntur"; cf. Arn. 1.26.4f.: "exuitis nos bonis"). If they persisted in their faith they were to be executed. "Matronae" were to be deprived of their property and banished. The "caesariani" were to forfeit their property and also be banished. It seems that Arn.'s first two phrases fit well with this (cf. Tert., Ap. 12.5 for banishments). Indeed, the "exterminatis patriis sedibus" could refer either to the banishments or to the loss of dignities described by Cyprian. All the tortures mentioned by Arn. can refer either to the reign of Decius or Valerian. Every form of capital punishment named can be found either in Eusebius or in the letters of Cyprian which cover these two persecutions.


and before these to Tertullian's own day (Ap. 12). It is significant also that Arn. is silent about the two provisions of Diocletian's First Edict which distinguished the Great Persecution from all its predecessors.¹⁶³ There is no mention of the destruction of Christian churches/meeting houses or the burning of scriptures. If Arn. had been so interested in the details of those events which preceded the persecution which happened thousands of miles away in the East, reflected in the references to Jupiter and Apollo (1.26), it would appear reasonable to expect to find some kind of reference to the destruction of churches and scripture which took place in his homeland North Africa. Although the references to the gods in 1.26 are interpreted as being veiled allusions to those events which preceded the First Edict which we have analysed above (pp.25-33), the persecutions mentioned in Adv. nat. 1.26.1-7 do not provide indisputable evidence for dating the text after 23 February A.D. 303.

Continuing with Arn.'s references to the persecutions of Christians, we observe that in his prayer to the High God found in Adv. nat. 1.31,¹⁶⁴ Arn. asks the deity to grant pardon to those who persecute his servants and to forgive those who flee from the worship of his name and religion.¹⁶⁵ Here "persequentibus" (1.31.17) does not necessarily mean those who actually inflicted the kind of physical injury mentioned in 1.26.1-7. It would be best to understand the word as representing those enemies of Christ and his followers with whom Arn. has been arguing since the beginning of the Book (1.1).

¹⁶³ The actual contents of the edicts issued under both Decius and Valerian are lost. It seems that Decius' First Edict (late 249) ordered the arrest of clergy. The Second Edict, early in 250, ordered universal sacrifice. Christians also had to pour libations and to taste sacrificial meat. Valerian's First Edict, the summer of 257, ordered some kind of acknowledgement of Roman religion. The Second Edict is mentioned above (p.40: cited from Cypr. in n.160).

¹⁶⁴ Not noted by McCr, p.243, n.46; cf. also Leb, pp.30-4.

¹⁶⁵ 1.31.16-19: "da ueniam, rex summe, tuos persequentibus famulos, et quod tuae benignitatis est proprium, fugientibus ignoscet tui nominis et religionis cultum."
They represent the new intellectual movement which included Neoplatonic philosophers (see chs. 3, 5-6 infra) which had apparently begun to take on more of a politically-oriented nature since the death of Plotinus. Their argument, though not new — Celsus had said the same in the second century and Cyprian refuted similar views held by Dositheus — was that Christianity was intellectually disreputable. Porphyry published a work in fifteen books entitled Against the Christians (late third/early fourth centuries: see ch. 4 infra) which ridiculed both Christ and Christians and maintained that Christianity should be a capital offense. His method of attack was very similar to the attacks upon religious and philosophical paganism found in Eusebius (PE) and Arnobius: all three use the works of the authorities of their opponents to prove their unreliability as sacred truth. Sossianus Hierocles the governor of Bithynia (Lact., Mort. pers. 16.4; Div. inst. 5.2; PLRE I, p.432) wrote his Lover of Truth before the persecution began. It was addressed to (not against) the Christians. Hierocles upheld the laws against the Christians in Nicomedia very enthusiastically when the persecution began. Eusebius wrote a refutation of his work. Lactantius also speaks of a philosopher, perhaps a Neoplatonist, who wrote a tract comprised of three books against the Christians. He used to dine in the imperial palace in Nicomedia. We do not know his name, but the suggestion of Chadwick and Wilken that it may be Porphyry, is reasonable. We should not overlook Ad Marc. 4, in which Porphyry informs his new wife Marcella that he had been called away because of business with the Greeks. Chadwick has interpreted this to mean "that he had been invited to attend the confidential deliberations which preceded the launching of the persecution of

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166 Div. inst. 5.2.3ff. 167 H. Chadwick, The Sentences of Sextus. A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics. Cambridge, 1959, 141; cf. 143, n.1: Lact. possibly wrote XV and this was corrupted in the MS. to III. Porph. may have written I-III in Sicily and IV-XV for Diocletian's propaganda.

168 R.L. Wilken in Schoedel and Wilken (1979: Theol Hist 53), pp. 130ff., argues that the three books mentioned by Lact. refer to the Phil. Or. and not the CC. The former was an early anti-Christian work.

169 T.D. Barnes, "Porphyry Against the Christians: Date and Attribu

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the Church under Diocletian in 303." The Neoplatonic influence would appear to have been significant: "Porphyry desired to encourage the imperial authorities in a policy of bloody repression."

These evangelists of the Great Persecution understood that the New Age of the Augusti could only materialise if the Christian religion were eradicated. They provided the intellectual justification for, and might indeed have been one of the principal causes of, the more militant anti-Christian tendency of the new imperial theology of the tetrarchy. It is the same kind of condemnation of Christianity which one finds in the first two books of the Adv. nat. In the ps. in question, it is just such persecutors of the followers of the Christian God for whom Arn. prays. And it is the same kind of persecution, this time directed against Christ, to which Arn. refers in 1.65.17-22:

Quaenam est ista crudelitas, inhumanitas quae tanta, quinimmo, ut verius eloquar, fastidium, supercilium, nuntiatorem munieris et portitorem tanti non tantum verborum maledictionibus scindere, verum etiam bello gravi atque omnibus persequi telorum effusionibus et ruinis? 172

Although Cyprian's letters abound with military terms to describe the Christians' experiences of the state persecutions of his day, Arn.'s Nuptiliis Suis, which defended against the criticisms that he had deviated from his master's celibacy. It would appear from this that the "known facts" about Porphyry's life suggest a degree of moral/philosophical vacillation: the Ad Marc. was written c. 300/01, a few yrs. before Porh. died.

172 Hierocles is named on an inscription (CIL 3.133) from Palmyra, c. the end of the third century as "vir perfectissimus, praeses provinciae". His work cites the contradictions of Christian scripture and describes Peter and Paul as disseminators of deceit. He argues that the miracles of Apollonius of Tyana are superior to those of Christ. Lactantius (div. inst. 5.2) alludes to Hierocles. See A. Meredith, "Porphyry and Julian Against the Christians", ANRW, II.23.2, 1119-49, for the anti-Christian propaganda of the Neoplatonists of the third and fourth centuries. The date of the Κατὰ Χριστιανῶν of Porphyry c. the end of the third/beginning of the fourth centuries which Barnes gives in JTS n.s., 24, 1973, 424-42, strongly suggests a close connection of the work with the Great Persecution. Cf. also A. Cameron, "The Date of the Κατὰ Χριστιανῶν", CQ, n.s., 17, 1967, 382-4.
173 Cf. Ep. 15.1 (PL, 4.264): Celerinus described as a soldier of God in glorious conflicts; Ep. 25.2 (PL, 4.288): the victorious warfare of the martyrs ("militiae victoriosae") praised; Ep. 53 (PL, 4.346f.): the fortitude of Ninus' (et al.) warfare ("militiae sua fortitudine"); Ep. 78 (PL, 4.420f.): martyrs called the "Dei milites" furnished with "coelestibus armis", from Nemesianus et al. to Cyprian.
war here refers to the mounting persecution of the pagan intelligentzia. There is no prima facie evidence to provide a specific date of writing other than, so it would appear, before the First Edict of Diocletian.\footnote{174}

In Adv. nat. 2.5.22-7 it is again evident that Arn. is reflecting upon the intermittent persecutions of the past:

\ldots quod cum genera poenarum tanta sint a vobis proposita religionis huius sequentibus leges, augetur res magis et contra omnes minas atque interdixta formidinum animosius populus obnivatur et ad credendi studium prohibitionis ipsius stimuli excitetur?

His argument is not unlike that of Tertullian. At the beginning of the chapter Arn. refers to his opponents who find the Christian religion ludicrous. Due to their obstinacy they refuse to believe in the credibility of the faith which Christ has now revealed. To prove the truth of his faith, Arn. refers to the enormous growth of Christianity in a short time throughout the world. Now, he says, there is no nation so barbaric which has not been ameliorated because of the influence of Christ's love and the acceptance of his sacred doctrines. These are simply stepping stones to his main point, viz. that only Christ offers the one way of the soul's salvation. Eusebius makes the same points in his attack upon Porphyry in the PE. It appears (see chs.3, 5-6 infra) that Arn. and Eus. had a common enemy. He continues by acknowledging that although the pagans have in the past established a great variety of punishments for those who follow the laws of Christianity, it does not stop increasing. He apparently thought that he could turn what appeared to the pagans as the weakness of Christianity (i.e., it is persecuted: it must therefore be "bad") into one of its greatest strengths by using the execution of the faithful to prove the sacredness of their religion:

An numquid haec fieri passim et inaniter creditis, fortuitis incursibus adsumi has mentes? itane istud non divinum et sacram est? aut sine deo eorum tantas animorum fieri conversiones, ut, cum carnifices unci alii-que innumeris cruciatrus quemademmodum diximus inpendeant credituris, velut quadam dulcedine atque omnium virtutum amore correpti cognitas accipient rationes at-que mundi omnibus rebus praeponant amicitias Christi? (2.5.27-35)

His mention of the executioner's hooks ("carnifices unci") recalls Cyprian's statement that the martyrs who vanquished the grappling-

\footnote{174} Cf. 1.64.25-43: Christ "solum" (1.25), not the Christian, is persecuted.
hooks that racked and mangled them (during the Decian persecution) were stronger than their torturers.\footnote{Ep. 8.1 (PL, 4.246): "...steterunt torti torquentibus fortiores, et pulsantes ac laniantes unguas pulsata ac laniata membra vicerunt." The same was true under Diocletian: Mort. pers. 16; cf. Tert., who says something similar in Ap. 12.4: "ungulis dereditis latera Christianorum."} And Anullinus the proconsul is found frequently ordering the mangling of Christians stretched out upon the "horse" (eculeus) with these same instruments of torture.\footnote{Pass. SS. Dat. Sat. (de'Cavalieri: ST 65): e.g., 9.3; 10.1.} Although the date of Arn.'s birth is unknown (see ch.2 infra), it would appear certain that he grew up during the second half of the third century. This was a period when a Christian enjoyed the peace which existed in the Church since Gallienus, when the Church continued to grow throughout the Roman Empire, but nevertheless when the horrors of former persecutions were still very much alive in the minds of the faithful. Cyprian explicitly urged the presbyters and deacons to mark down the dates of all martyrs' deaths and to celebrate their memories.\footnote{Ep. 37.2 (PL, 4.328). Nicholson (1984), p.102, argued that Arn. was recollecting the persecutions in "relative security." He agreed with McCr, p.279, n.104. He retracted this in his thesis (1981), p.99, n.292.} Calendars of the North African Church surviving from the period indicate that they followed his advice. As Frend has rightly observed, "the terror of those days was long remembered in Africa and the west."\footnote{Frend (repr. 1981), p.427.} Again, there is no evidence for a specific dating of the text.

However, Arn.'s opponents also used the persecutions of the past in their present attack upon the faith. This argument coheres well with the tone of their attack throughout the first two Books. For it follows that if Christianity causes the natural disasters and military catastrophes which have befallen the Roman Empire, and it is defined as the enemy of the Roman state religion, it should therefore be eradicated. All of 2.77 is devoted to refuting the pagan discussion (1.1: "dicitis") about the persecution of Christianity defined as (just) punishment. The ps. provides evidence for the growing movement within the pagan intelligentsia which preceded the Great Persecution and argued for the total annihilation of the Christian religion. Augustine (Civ. Dei 10.31) and Eusebius (PE 1.2.2ff.; 4.1.3) inform us that Porphyry had an identical intention. Note 2.77.1ff.:
atio nostra est, non persecutio, nec poenam vexatio
inferet sed ad lucem libertatis educet.

He has just before (2.76.1-5) responded to a pagan's (most probably Porphyry) question why God allows the Christians to suffer persecution, if they trust him for their safety. Then in 2.77.11f. he mentions the execution of Christians by flames, banishments, tortures, and beasts. His argument is that such a death is a liberation for the Christian, and the persecutions are understood only as a means of deliverance from corporeal bonds. Those pagans who would like to see the reinstatement of the death penalty for Christians will only cause the latter to benefit from this desire. This is communicating in language that Neoplatonists will have fully understood. For the argument, as we have observed, is found in Porphyry, and the opponents of Arn. have followed their leader, if indeed Arn. is not responding directly to Plotinus' successor.

Book Two ends with a reference to what might appear to be the persecution of Christians. This is not so because Arn. includes his pagan opponents in the ps. He addresses them (2.78.1: "hominis") and then advises that they cease obstructing their hopes by senseless investigations. They should not trust their own beliefs rather than an august thing, meaning that they should accept the tenets of the Christian religion:

Quare, homines, abstine quaestionibus vacuis impedire spes vestras, nec si aliter quam vos putatis aliquid se habet, vestris potius opinionibus credere quam rei debetis augustae. (2.78.1-4)

He adds: "Urgent tempora periculis plena et exitiabiles imminent poenae" (114f.). Since the pagans are included, this probably refers to 1.3, a ps. which may provide evidence that a famine was occurring during the time of writing the Adv. nat. (see ch.3 infra). The pagans mention a crop failure and note that the scarcity of grain has a more relentless grip on them. Arnobius in 2.78 is simply acknowledging that natural calamities have occurred, but he denounces the pagan accusation that Christians are to blame, and offers his opponents a better hope through the "rei augustae" of Christ. Hence also Adv. nat. 2.76f. are to taken as a reference to past persecutions.

The conclusion which is obvious, concerning all the ps. referring to the persecutions of Christians covered up to this point (2.78 inclusive) is that they all derive from information that Arnobius might
have received about the persecutions which preceded the promulgation of Diocletian's First Edict of 23 February A.D. 303. Definitive prima facie evidence which further strengthens this conclusion can be found in Adv. nat. 3.36.1-6. The use of the imperfect subjunctive forms of the verbs in the ps. denotes a present contrary-to-fact conditional sentence:

\[
\text{Si totidem nos modis totidemque sententiis deorum vestrorum subrueremus fideum, nulli esset dubium, quin ira et rabie concitati ignes, feas et gladios atque alia postularetis suppliciorum in nos genus, quibus sitim soletis vestram nostri sanguinis adpetitione proluere.}
\]

If Christians were to undermine belief in the gods, there would be no doubt that the pagans would demand their execution by fire, sword, and other ways. It is obvious that this is the gist of the passage. This attitude is one which the pagans are accustomed to make: "sol- etis" (1.5) in this context points to past persecutions. Although the present is characterised by the expression of much hostility toward the Christians by the pagan intelligentsia/ruling classes in N. Africa, it cannot be established that it is a time of official state persecution of them. One can clearly see this in Adv. nat. 3.7: some of the intelligentsia were presumably advising the senate to destroy Cicero's works in order to preserve the mos maiorum. The passage does not, as McCracken's chapter heading indicates (p.197: "Some would burn not only Christian books but also Cicero's"), imply that Christian literature was already being burnt (i.e., to satisfy the provisions of an imperial edict). But it would be a serious mistake, on the other hand, to imagine that absolute harmony existed between pagans and Christians in Roman North Africa when Arn. was writing the first three Books of his work. Indeed, one is justified to conclude from the ps. studied so far that storm clouds were rapidly gathering over the Church. The conclusion is that all references to persecutions found between Adv. nat. 1.26 and 4.16 (inclusive: there are no such references between 3.36.1-6 and 4.18) concern those which preceded the promulgation of the First Edict in Roman North Africa c. April 303. Allusions to Jupiter and Apollo in 1.26.12-24 appear to relate to two events which preceded the persecution c. the winter of 302.

Two facts about 4.17.7-10 should be considered together. First, the ps. is found in the same Book in which an allusion to the First
Edict appears. Second, the explicit remark about torturing the body to force Christians to worship the gods is well documented in the martyrologies that describe Anullinus' method of torture in Africa Proconsularis. The ps. is:

Quid dicitis o isti, qui ad deorum nos cultum membrorum laniatibus invitatis et suscipere nos cultum vestrorum compellitis numinum?

It is necessary to analyse the reference to the First Edict (see p. 35 supra). Arn. begins 4.34, as noted above (p.35) with a diatribe against Jupiter's adulteries. Laws should be made to repulse the same kinds of wrongs from the deities as they do from humans. In 4.34.20-8 he lists examples of human laws which proscribe various kinds of slander. Only the gods are unprotected. Theatrical performances are criticised in 4.35. By pandering to lust the actors and mimes abuse the gods in the theatres (11.1-6). Venus and the Great Mother, both of whom were worshipped at Sicca Veneria (see ch. 2 infra), are found to be disgraceful (11.14-21). Hercules and Jupiter are the last two deities mentioned. First, "illa proles Iovis" (1.22) is ridiculed for the story about him in Sophocles' Trachinian Women (Trach. 749ff.). He names the work and describes (partly) a scene from the play based upon it to condemn the immorality and utter foolishness of pagan religious literature. Finally, described as "maximus ipse regnator poli" (11.26f.), Jupiter's role as an adulterer which leads "astray the purity of the wives of others," (McCr) is attacked in vivid detail (11.27-32). Arn.'s coup de grace appears in the following chapter. Instead of destroying (burning) Christian literature and churches, the pagans should rather burn this kind of literature and tear down the theatres in which the immoralities of the gods are perpetrated:

Quod si haberet vos aliqua vestris pro religionibus indignatio, has potius litteras, hos exurere debuitis olim libros, (istos) demoliri, dissolvere theatra haec potius, in quibus infamiae numinum propudios corrodantur in fabulis. Nam nostra quidem scripta cur ignibus meruerunt dari? cur immaniter conventicula dirui? (4.36.12-18)

He continues with a description of the kind of worship in Christian churches that makes human beings the moral opposites of Jupiter et al. (11.22f.: "...humanos faciat,...mites venerundos pudicos cast-

179 E.g., Pass. SS. Dat. Sat. (de' Cavalieri: ST 65), passim. The "horse" (eculeus) was the main instrument of torture.
The above is an explicit reference to Diocletian's First Edict of 23 February A.D. 303. And the fact that the vituperation of the immoralities of Hercules and Jupiter immediately precedes this reference obviously represents a veiled criticism of the policies of "Herculius" and "Jovius", especially if - and there is no reason to expect otherwise - the First Edict was pregnant with the same kind of religious language that appears in the Edicts Against Incest, On Maximum Prices, and Against the Manichees. The orders to burn scripture and destroy churches were the two new characteristics of the Diocletianic Edict which distinguished it from those of former persecutions. It began to be enforced in Roman North Africa c. April. Frend was the first to observe that relations between the duumvir of Abthungi, Alfius Caecilianus, and the bishop Felix were friendly. Caecilianus informed Christians who had asked him if the edict had come to him that it had not, but he had already seen its provisions enforced at Zama Regia (Seba Biar, Tunisia: c. 35 miles SE of Sicca Veneria, henceforth="SV") and Furnos Maius (Ain Founa, Tun.: c. 75 miles NE of SV). Their churches had been destroyed and scriptures had been burnt. In Abitina, Africa Proconsularis (c. 50 miles NE of SV, Chouhoud el Batin, Tun.) bishop Fundanus delivered his scriptures and they were burnt at the forum. Burning religious literature in Roman N. Africa was not unprecedented. Arn. does not

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mention the execution of Christians in the passage. Indeed, he does not remark about the issue again until 5.29. It is true that Felix the bishop of Thibiuca (?),185 (Hr. Zouitina, Tun.: c. 80 miles NE of SV in Afr. Procon.) was executed 15 July A.D. 303. Had this event already occurred by the time Arn. wrote Adv. nat. 4.36, his silence is easily explained as no doubt being due to the major themes (i.e., the immoralities of pagan theatrical performances and literature) which he addresses. Thus it would be incorrect to conclude that the ps. antedated the bishop's death.

The statement in 4.17.7-10 about forcing Christians to worship the gods by torturing their bodies (pp. 47f. supra) fits well the evidence surviving from the period in N. Africa under Anullinus. First, concerning worship, a statement in Act. purg. Fel. leaves little doubt as to whether Christians were forced to sacrifice to the gods during the Great Persecution in N. Africa.186 Also, Anullinus remarked to Crispina on 5 December 304 that all Africa had sacrificed to the gods.187 On the subject of physical torture, we may refer to the torture of Christians in Carthage on 12 February 304 (pp. 27f. supra). The conclusion is: 4.17.7-10 most probably relates to the incipient phases of the Great Persecution which occurred in Roman N. Africa c. April and thereafter; and 4.34-36.23 include a veiled criticism of the anti-Christian policies of Herculius and Jovius (4.34; 4.35.22-32) and an explicit reference to the First Edict of the Great Persecution (4.36.22f.).

After criticising the myths relating to Jupiter Elicius, Attis, and the mysteries, Arn. in 5.29.10-4 addresses the "nationes":

185 See PCEAfr I, pp. 407f., for the problems inherent in the attempt to identify the location of the city referred to in Felix's passio as "...episcopus...in ciuitate T(...)...".

186 "nam cum persecutio esset indicta christionis, id est, ut sacrificarent aut quascumque scripturas haberent, incendio tradarent...et erat tunc temporis magistratus Alfius Caecilianus..." (CSEL 26: Ziwsa, p. 198). Frend (repr. 1981), p. 500, argues for an early date (April 303) for the events described; Lepelley, art. cit., p. 230, n. 30, disagrees: forced sacrifice came in 304 after Caecilianus had left his office; and the ius-sio from the proconsul did not apply in Byzacena. Both are weak: the former overlooks provincial interpretations added to Edict I (Barnes (1981), p. 23, believes that Anullinus "added his own interpretation to the imperial edict" by forcing Christians to sacrifice to the gods.); the latter assumes that Abthungi was not governed by the proconsul (against the text).

187 In disagreement with de Ste Croix, HTR, 47, 1954, p. 91, who explains Anullinus' statement as a rhetorical exaggeration.
Quid dicitis o gentes, quid occupatae, quid deditae templorum venerationibus nationes? Ad haecine nos sacra flammis exiliis caedibus atque alio genere suppliciorum compellitis et crudelitatis metu?

As noted above (pp.25-9), the remark about executions, especially by incineration, could be taken to describe the initial outbreak of persecution in Nicomedia. The exiling of Christians did not come until late in the persecution, when Maximin modified the death penalty. It is likely that "exiliis...compellitis" refers to the overcrowding of the prisons in the eastern half of the Roman Empire as a result of the enforcement of the Second Edict. This ordered the imprisonment of all clergy, including bishops, presbyters, and deacons. Because of the strain which the enforcement of this edict put upon the prison system in the East, there was undoubtedly quite a number of clergy who were exiled from their provinces, whose prisons could not accommodate them. This would help to explain the reason for issuing the Third Edict before Diocletian's Vicennalia on 20 November 303, which offered an amnesty to the imprisoned clergy provided that they first sacrifice to the gods (Eus., HE 8.2.5; 8.6.8f.). In any case, the ps. does not provide any more specific evidence for dating it than sometime after 23 February 303, taking into account the ps. we have analysed.

Two ps. remain. In 6.11.22ff. there is a statement the significance of which has apparently been completely overlooked by scholars. Book six is devoted to refuting pagan temples (6.1-8) and images (6.9-27). Almost in the middle of the Book is found the following:

Sed studiis facere quid pervicacibus possimus, quid intentantibus gladios novasque excogitans poenas? (6.11.22ff.)

What does Arn. mean by "novasque...poenas"? There are three possibilities of interpretation. First, he may simply be referring to the new punishments contained in the First Edict compared with those of earlier (i.e., under Decius and Valerian) persecutions. This would relate directly to 4.36.22f. which specifically enumerates the two provisions of the First Edict which distinguished the Diocletianic Persecution from its predecessors. Second, he may be referring to new kinds of punishments, e.g., unique kinds of bodily torture, devised by the N. African officials particularly for the enforcement of the edict(s) in their provinces. Lactantius remarks about the excess
of cruelty during the persecution (e.g., Mort. pers. 14), and this agrees with Eusebius' account of events in the East (e.g., HE 8.6.10: compared with the persecution in Africa). Third, "new punishments" may refer to the proscriptions which any of the edicts issued after the First Edict contained. In this case "penalties" may be a better term. The first interpretation has the support of no hard evidence to establish that Edicts Two, Three, and Four were actually promulgated in the western provinces. It becomes problematical when we consider the fact that "penalties" are mentioned in 5.29.13f. without this qualification, and 6.11 appears in the same book at the end of which Arn. acknowledges that the refusal to sacrifice to the gods (by Christians) is a capital offense. The second is based upon evidence derived from sources which are not directly related to the persecution in N. Africa. Of these possible interpretations, the third appears to be the best for the following reasons. Arn. refers to the First Edict in 4.36.17f., focusing upon the destruction of churches and scripture. These were new proscriptions in themselves. Also, in 5.29.13f. he mentions "alio genere suppliciorum" in addition to flames, exiles, etc., which may imply penalties contained in a new edict. "New punishments" of 6.11.24 may allude to any of the Edicts issued after the First Edict. And the fact that Arn. gives no more details about their meanings would support this interpretation: it is probable (though not proved) that the last three edicts were not promulgated in the western provinces. Finally, the statement precedes by only fifteen brief chapters the remark in 6.27.1-10 that the refusal to offer sacrifice (et al.) is a capital offense.

The final reference to the persecution of Christians appears in 6.27.1-9, which is the last chapter of Book Six. It introduces the longest attack upon a pagan religious practice, sacrifice, found in the work. Thirty-two chapters of Book Seven (7.1-32) are devoted to a refutation of this religious practice which, as we observe below (ch.6), appears to have the De abstinencia as a main source. In the ps. under analysis Arn. claims that it is with respect to sacrificing and other forms of worship directly related to it, that the pagans stir up hatred against the Christians, call them atheists, and impose upon them capital punishment "through the savage tearing of wild beasts" (McCr). The complete Latin text is:

Quoniam satis, ut res tuli, quam inaniter fiant sim-
ulacra monstratum est, de sacrificiis deinceps, de caedibus atque immolationibus hostiarum, de mero, de thure deque aliis omnibus quae in parte ista coniunct poscit ordo quam paucis et sine ullis circumlocutionibus dicere. In hac enim consuetudinis parte invidias nobis tumultuosissimas concitare, appellare nos atheos, et quod minime (munia)a tribuamus diis, poenas etiam capitis beliarum crudelitatis inrogare.

The Fourth Edict ordered men, women, and children living in every city to come together and offer sacrifice to the gods and pour libations (Eus., Mart Pal. 3.1: the first half of 304). Scholars are not agreed as to whether it was promulgated in the West. It appears that Arn. cannot solve the problem because as we have observed (p.50, n.186 supra), Christians were forced to sacrifice in Africa Proconsularis and Numidia when the First Edict was enforced. There is no indication in the ps. whether the victims of the capital punishment were clerics or laypeople. Also, it is impossible to determine whether the remark about execution by beasts describes events which took place in N. Africa or in other provinces about which Arn. had been accurately or inaccurately informed. If the Fourth Edict was promulgated in N. Africa, it did not arrive until c. April/May. No less than thirty-four laypersons were executed at Ammaedara in 304. Yet the method of execution used is unknown. Authentic N. African martyrologies that survive from the period do not provide evidence that the killing of Christians by animals was practiced. We do not know, however, how many martyrs were executed. It is possible that Maxima, Donatilla, and Secundus were martyred in this manner at Thuburbo Maius (Hr. Kasbat, Tun.: c. 70 miles E of SV) on 30 July A.D. 304. They were.

188 Frend (repr. 1981), p.502, argues that the Fourth Edict was both promulgated and enforced in the West. Cf. Mandouze, PCEAfri I, p.716. The fact that the Numidian martyrs were laypeople, and the evidence from the Acta Crispinae are in his favour. A.H.M. Jones, op. cit., p.72; Baynes, CAH, XII, pp.665f.; and de Ste Croix, art. cit., pp.88f., agree that only the First Edict was enforced in the West. Barnes (1981), p.23, argues that Anullinus added forced sacrifice to the First Edict.

189 It reached Palestine around the same time: Mart. Pal. 3.1.

190 See p.27, n.96 supra. 191 PCEAfri I, p.715f.

192 Ibid., pp.288f. 193 Ibid., p.1047. 194 Ibid., p.716: Their passio gives "ciuitas Tu(bu)rbitana." Thus Thuburbo Minus (Tebourba, Tun.: c. 45 miles NE of SV) is also possible.

young girls, a fact that supports the argument that the Fourth Edict was enforced in N. Africa. Marciana's execution - she was fed to a leopard - seems to be based upon fact, but her illegality was turning over a cult status.196

Crispina197 was brought before the tribunal at Theveste (Tébessa, Algeria: c. 66 miles SW of SV) before Anullinus the proconsul on 5 December 304.198 Augustine and the Calendar of Carthage provide evidence independent of her passio that she was a real martyr.199 Her crime is expressly defined by the proconsul:

Ut omnibus diis nostris pro salute principum sacrifices, secundum legem datam a dominis nostris Diocletiano et Maximiano piis Augustis et Constantio et Maximo nobilissimis Caesaribus...Amputa superstitionem et subiuga caput tuum ad sacra deorum Romanorum. 200

It is late 304 in N. Africa, and a laywoman is brought to court and charged for neglecting to sacrifice to the gods for the health of the Roman emperors. According to the text, the lex was issued by all four rulers. With an obstinate spirit recalling the tradition of the N. African martyrs, Crispina responds: "Cotidie adoro deum meum omnipotentem: praeter eum nullum alium deum novi."201 Anullinus' attempts to


196Cf. Monceaux, op. cit. (III), p.158, who does not accept as factual the statement that Marciana was fed to the leopard. A new, objective, and comprehensive study of the N. African martyrlogies is badly needed. I have found a few scholars who ignore evidence that may not support their theses.

197See PCEAfr I, pp.251f. Passio Sanctae Crispinae is found in de'Cavaliere, 1902, ST 9.

198Pass. Crisp. 1: "Diocletiano novies et Maximiano (octies) Augustis consulibus die nonarum Decembrium apud coloniam Thebestinam in secretario pro tribunali adsideante Anulino proconsule,...".


201Pass. Crisp. 1.
to force her to worship the "sacra numina" \( \text{(Pass. Crisp. 1)} \), and we recall Adv. nat. 5.29.10-4, where Arn. responds to Christians being forced under torture to worship the gods. Anullinus' threat to decapitate Crispina if she does not burn incense to the Roman gods in the temples should be compared with Arn.'s "quid deditae templorum venerationibus nationes? Ad haecine nos sacra...caedibus atque ali genere suppliciorum compellitis...?" \( \text{(5.29.11-4)} \); and the "de thure" of the above ps. \( \text{(p.53: 6.27.4)} \). Another general comparison is Arn.'s comment that it is in respect of the refusal to sacrifice, pour libations, and burn incense that Christians are called "atheos" \( \text{(6.27.7)} \); and Anullinus' utter frustration expressed by the question, "Quid pluribus sufferimus impiam Christianam?" \( \text{(Pass. Crisp. 2)} \). The proconsul in the passio threatens Crispina with the sword, and compare Arn.'s statement in 6.11.22ff. \( \text{(p.51 supra)} \). Yet the most significant ps. in the passio is the following:

\[
\text{Caput tibi amputari praecipio, si non obtemperaveris praecptis imperatorum dominorum nostrorum, quibus deservire cogeris subiugata: quod et omnis Africa sacrificia fecit, nec tibi dubium est. \text{(Pass. Crisp. 1)}}
\]

Here Anullinus' sole interest is that a Christian laywoman sacrifice to the Roman gods. We find no mention of the necessity to surrender scriptures in this passio. Yet early in the same year \( \text{(12 February 304)} \) Anullinus is repeatedly found demanding from the tortured Christians stretched out upon the eucleus, any scriptures that they might have. How can we account for the proconsul's change of emphasis? Why is there not one word uttered about giving up scriptures? At an official tribunal we should expect to hear the proconsul clearly define the charges that have been brought against the accused. Suffice it to say that according to the evidence from the ancient text that we have just exegeted, Crispina was beheaded on 5 December A.D. 304, at Theveste, Africa Proconsularis, for refusing to sacrifice to the gods. The Numidian martyrs, executed at Milev (Mila, Alg.: c. 155 miles W of SV) in the summer of 303 under the governorship of Valerius Florus.

\( \text{202} \text{ Pass. Crisp. 1: "...ut in templis sacratis flexo capite diis Romano-}
\text{rum turas immoles...Caput tibi amputari praecipiam, si venerabiles deos adorare contemperis."}

\( \text{203} \text{ See the preceding note and Pass. Crisp. 2: "gladio eam animadverterti iussi."}

\( \text{204} \text{ See pp.27f., n.97 supra.} \text{ 205} \text{ Pass. Crisp. 2: "...extendens cervicem suam decollata est..."} \)
"in diebus turificationis" undoubtedly relate to the enforcement of the First Edict. Yet it is clear from Optatus, writing a little more than sixty years after the events that he describes, that under Anullinus and Florus, those who could not come to the sacrifices were forced to burn incense. Also, according to the Acta pugationis Felicis, it would appear indisputable that Christians were forced to sacrifice to the gods during the enforcement of the First Edict in N. Africa. We recall Arn.'s "de thure" of 2.27.4. But the main axe to grind relates to the execution of Christians for refusing to sacrifice to the gods (7.1-32). This is explicable in conjunction with: (1) the enforcement of the First Edict in N. Africa also required Christians to offer sacrifices; (2) Optatus' statement (De schism. Donat. 3.8. CSEL: Ziwsa, p.90) about the burning of incense and offering sacrifices; (3) Anullinus' attempts to force Crispina to burn incense and sacrifice to the gods as well. The present writer would take the latter to be supportive of the argument that the Fourth Edict was both promulgated and enforced in Roman N. Africa sometime after c. April/May A.D. 304.

Hence the statement made by Anullinus at Crispina's tribunal on 5 December 304, "quod et omnis Africa sacrificia fecit, nec tibi dubium est" (Pass. Crisp. 1), is not to be interpreted (too easily) as a "rhetorical exaggeration", but as a description of actual events which had occurred during the period c. April 303-5 December 304. We do not (see p.53 supra) know the method of execution in a vast majority of cases derived from the persecution in N. Africa. Arn. informs us that Christians were thrown to animals for refusing to sacrifice (6.27.8f.). For the execution by beasts during the persecution in N. Africa, based upon the evidence supplied by the martyrologies, one is confronted with an argumentum ex silentio. Christians were killed in this manner in Palestine and Phoenicia according to Eusebius. He unfortunately does not organise his descriptions of the events of the persecution in any systematic chronological order (HE 8. 7.1ff.). He nevertheless compares the large number of martyrs in Egypt

206 CIL 8.6700. For V. Florus' date see now Barnes (1981), p.23, n.77.
207 De schism. Donat. 3.8. 208 See p.50, n.186.
209 This is the opinion of de Ste Croix in HTR, 47, 1954, p.91, on which see p.54, n.200; p.50, n.187 supra.
with those of Africa, but once again the manner of their death is not mentioned (HE 8.6.10). However, it would be erroneous to conclude from this frequent silence in the sources that Arn.'s information is not factual: there is no reason to reject the remark about execution by beasts as not describing actual events of the persecution in Roman N. Africa.

The persecution in N. Africa lasted c. two years. A possible terminus ante quem for 6.27 may be 5 December 304, when (as we observed) Anullinus the proconsul told Crispina that all Africa had sacrificed. We have suggested that Arn. cannot solve the debate as to whether the Fourth Edict was enforced in N. Africa. Yet 6.27 in light of Crispina's trial and the lengthy refutation of animal sacrifice can only suggest otherwise. The main fact upon which to focus is that the state's forcing Christians to sacrifice in the period between mid-April 303 and 5 December 304 in Africa Proconsularis can easily help to explain (1) the statement that Christians are being executed for refusing to sacrifice to the gods (6.27.1-9: burning incense and pouring wine libations are also mentioned; on the latter Eus., Mart. Pal. 3.1 reveals that it was a requirement of the Fourth Edict); (2) the lengthiest attack upon a pagan religious practice, animal sacrifice, found in the work (7.1-32) which follows. It is extremely doubtful that Arn. would have devoted thirty-two chapters to attacking sacrifice (including incense in 7.26-8, and wine libations in 7.29-31, all of which Arn. himself defines as being directly related to sacrifice in 6.27.1-9), and had begun his diatribe with such a preface (6.27.1-9), if the forcing of Christians to sacrifice had not been a contemporary issue in N. Africa when he was writing this section of his book. We may give a date sometime before the termination of the persecution in N. Africa for these passages. This would appear to be most certain. 210

Before making any conclusions to the present study, we may mention two passages that possibly allude to two of Diocletian's reforms. The first one is 1.14.6f.: "abundantias rerum tantas ut commercia stuperent universa, pretiorum auctoritate prostrata". Monceaux maintained that Arn. in this ps. "paraît faire allusion aux brusques variations dans le prix des denrées, qui décidèrent Dioclétien, en 301, à promulguer son célèbre édit De pretiis rerum." Le Bonniec tends to agree, but he adds that if this is the case, the allusion was made under favourable economic circumstances and from the point of view of the consumer. That the Edict was certainly neither promulgated nor enforced in any of the western provinces would not pose a serious problem for the credibility of this interpretation. First, as a professional rhetor, Arn. will have undoubtedly been interested in any new law of the empire. Second, the title of his work indicates that he was not addressing a select group of persons geographically restricted. Third, the allusions to the policies of the tetrarchy already noted should not be ignored. The conclusion is that the passage is a probable allusion to the Edict issued November/December 301. Note that the latter stipulates that no one can exceed the prices now fixed by the emperors, "but that the blessing of low prices has in no way been impaired in those places where supplies actually abound..." (Trans.: 3-7 after 303) noted p.12 and n.36 supra; cf. F.A. Wright, Fathers of the Church. London, 1926, p.140; the end of the 3rd. cent./beginning of the 4th.: Bryce-Campbell, ANF 6.407; c. A.D. 300: Johann H. Kurtz, Church History. 3 vols. Trans., J. McPherson. London, 1888-90. I (1888), p.64; Adolf Harnack, Geschichte Der Alchristlichen Litteratur Bis Eusebius. 4 vols., Leipzig, 1893-1904. Teil I, Bd. II: Die Uberlieferung Und Der Bestand (1893), p.735; E.G. Sihler, From Augustus to Augustine. Cambridge, 1923, p.171; A.C. McGiffert, A History of Christian Thought. 2 vols., London, 1933. II, p.39; G. Quispel, VC, 2, 1948, p.123; McCr, p.12: I find it amazing that McCr can date the Adv. nat. #300 and yet argue that Arn. used the Varronian chronology (p.10: "Here we can be almost certain...".). G. Bardy, "Arnobius", RAC, 1, 1950, col.710; A.J. Festugière, "Arnobiana", VC, 6, 1952, 208-54, p.209; F.L. Cross, The Early Christian Fathers. London, 1960, p.184; also cf. McCr, p.245, n.76, for additional dates.


213 See ch.2 infra; Barnes (1981), pp.10f. for the date.

214 See p.34, n.154 supra. 215 See p.37, 11.4-12 supra.

216 See pp.30-9; 48f. supra. A partial English translation of The Edict On Maximum Prices is readily available in Lewis and Reinhold (see p.49, n.184 supra), II, pp.464-72.

Finally, in 2.40 Arn. is responding to what appears to be a Porphyrian (see ch.3 infra) concept. His opponents believe that God has sent the souls into the world to learn evil and return to him. His remark about souls being most greedy (2.40.17: "avarissimae") for possessions agrees both with the tone and the language found in the preface to The Edict On Maximum Prices: "Thus, when the pressure of high prices appears anywhere - may the gods avert such a calamity! - avarice...will be checked by the limits fixed in our statute and by the restraining curbs of the law". Another probable allusion to the Price Edict may be found in the comment about seeking to obtain high (2.40.22: "caritatem") and cheap (2.40.23: "vilitatemque") prices for goods, with which we should compare the ps. just quoted. Arn.'s condemnation of those who count the money coming from the blood of the poor (2.40.23f.) may have been inspired by the statement in the edict that profiteers charge an indescribably high price for their goods in villages, towns, and on every road: "human speech cannot find words to characterize their profit and and their practices. Indeed, sometimes in a single retail sale a soldier is stripped of his donative and pay." Found in the same chapter is the second possible allusion to a Diocletianic reform. He refers to the reduction of the provinces of the Roman Empire to the size of one country estate: "...quamvis provincias totas rus facerent unum,..." (2.40.26f.). For the division of the N. African provinces under Diocletian, a manuscript from the seventh century preserved in the library of Verona's cathedral known as the laterculus Veronensis, provides invaluable information:

fol. 256, recto, 16-19.219

16 Diocensis africæ habet provincias numero. VII.
17 proconsularis; bizacina. zeugitana. numidia cirtensis
18 numidia miliciana; mauritania caesariensis.
19 mauritania tabia; insidiana. felix saeculum;

Dates of the above divisions related to the present enquiry are: By-

217 Lewis and Reinhold, II, p.465. The statement in 2.40.19ff. about excavations may be an allusion to the marble quarries which existed at Simitthu (Chentou, Tun.: c. 25 miles N of SV: see ch.2 infra).
218 Ibid. 219 The text with critical analysis can be found in Barnes (1981), pp.201-25. He dates (pp.203ff.) the division of the western provinces depicted in the list between 303 and 314.
zacena: before 305; the two Numidias: between June and November of 303; Caesariensis: 293.\textsuperscript{220} Divisions of other provinces were also made.\textsuperscript{221} We recall Lactantius' comment that Diocletian "cut up the provinces into tiny pieces."\textsuperscript{222} Arn. is not that specific, mainly because he was writing during the persecution. And although his remark will not allow any precise calculation, "totas" (2.40.26) following "provincias" may help to argue for a date at least as late as the division of the Numidias between June and November of 303. This would appear most reasonable, and "totas" would also obviously apply to similar divisions made between 293 and 302 in such provinces as Aegyptus, Arabia, Asia, Britannia, Creta et Cyrene, Hispania Tarraconensis, Italia, Moesia Inferior.\textsuperscript{223} It can be argued in this case (as we did in relation to the probable allusions to the Price Edict, pp.58f.) that the allusion to the reduction of provinces can easily antedate the division of the Numidias, but the suggested date fits well the collective chronology of the pss. which we have already analysed. The conclusion is that 2.40.26f., considered in light of all the internal evidence found in the Adv. nat. that may help to solve the problem of dating the text, may be an allusion to Diocletian's reduction of the Roman Empire's provinces, and a most reasonable terminus post quem is between June and November of 303, when Numidia was divided into Numidia Cirtensis and Numidia Militana.\textsuperscript{224}

**Summary And Conclusions.**

A great amount of material has been investigated. It is therefore necessary to give a summary of the study up to this point, and then come to the conclusions. Concerning the date (A.D. 327) given in the Chron. by Jerome, which conflicts with that found in the De vir. ill. 79, we have concluded that the theory of an editorial error, though impressive, does not explain the problem as well as the suggestion that Jerome probably discovered the correct date in

\textsuperscript{220} See Barnes (1982), pp.212, 220, 222. \textsuperscript{221} Ibid., pp.209-24.

\textsuperscript{222} Mort. pers. 7. \textsuperscript{223} Barnes (1982), pp.211-22.

\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., p.222: "...Aurelius Quintianus is attested as praeses on 20 November 303 at Macomades Minores, i.e. as governor of Numidia Cirtensis." For the evidence see p.172.
one of the lost works/letters of Lactantius (pp.4-9). The other information found in the Chron. derives from either oral tradition or a North African ecclesiastical source, perhaps even a combination of the two (pp.9f.). Jerome provides the general date of the tetrarchy for Arnobius and the writing of the Adv. nat. Turning to internal evidence, general allusions to foreign invasions (1.4) do not allow a precise date for Book One (p.11). One should not automatically assume that the Varronian chronology is used in Adv. nat. 2.71 only because it is used in 5.8.30-6 (p.14). It must be established that Varro is used in 2.71, independent of any ps. which reveals a direct influence from him. Porphyry's Contra Christianos explains why Arn. develops his argument and makes the specific chronological points as he does in 2.71 (pp.22ff.). An early chronology from the Republican period may have supplied Arn. with the genealogical material beginning with Saturn. Cato and Fabius are possible sources (p.15). Circumstantial evidence was given to suggest that Varro was not followed in 2.71 (pp.14-8). A strong case has been presented to show that Arn. in 2.71.24ff. and Varro are not in agreement about 120 years being the length of human life (p.20). Finally, Varro and Arn. do not give the same mother of Saturn: the former gives Hecate and the latter gives Terra/Taia (pp.21f.).

It was acknowledged that most scholars date the Adversus nationes during the Great Persecution because there are not an insignificant number of allusions to the persecution of Christians found in the work (p.24, n.84). This method of approach is not sound. It was therefore necessary to analyse each individual reference to persecutions in light of those which preceded the Diocletianic Persecution. We concluded that all such allusions/references found in 1.26, 31, 65, 2.5, 76, 77, 78, cannot be used to establish that Arn. was writing during the Great Persecution (pp.39-47). And 3.36.1-6, by referring to persecutions in contrary-to-fact sentences that use verbs in the imperfect subjunctive, establish that Adv. nat. 1.1-3.36.1-6 can be given 23 February A.D. 303, as a terminus ante quem. With relative confidence a similar conclusion was made for all references to persecutions found between 1.26 and 4.16. Remarks about Jupiter and Apollo in 1.26 have been interpreted as being allusions to events that preceded the Great Persecution late in 302 (pp.25-9). There is evidence found else-
where in the Adv. nat. that Arn. uses the Jupiter/Diocletian association: attacks upon Jupiter's committing incest (pp.33-9) appear often to include allusions to Diocletian's law De incestis nuptiis; 1.14.6f., 2.40.17, 22, 23f. probably refer to his edict De pretiis rerum; 2.40. 26f. to his reduction of provinces; 4.34-6 to the Edict Against The Christians (pp.58ff.; 47-50, respectively). External evidence from pagan sources was given to show that this was not an uncommon association (pp.30-3). Comments about the persecution of Christians that occur between 4.17 and 6.27 are given a date after 23 February 303 because of the explicit reference to the First Edict in 4.36.22f. The section 6.27-7.32 is explicable in light of prima facie evidence derived from proconsular legal proceedings under Anullinus, the latest being dated 5 December 304, which establish that Christians were being executed for their refusal to sacrifice to (and burn incense in honour of) the gods (pp.51-7). We may illustrate the above by giving the following chronological outline:

Supra. Adversus Nationes. Historical Reference. Date.
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lified: Diocletian and Galerius present.
32f. 1.26.16-20. Apollo at Didyma con- Winter of 302
sulted by the Augusti.
59f. 2.40.26f. Diocletian's reduction 1 May 295 (at of the provinces: pro- Damascus).
ably division of the Numidias meant.
33-9 4.22.16-31; 23.1-9; Edictum de incestis nuptiis. 23 February
24.23f.; 26.15-29; 303: Nicomedia.
34.1-6,12-8,16-20; 303: Africa.
5.9.6-15; 10.1-5; 5.29.10-4. Secundum edictum de 303.
13.16; 20.9ff., 16- 34.1-6,12-8,16-20;
20; 21.15-7,19ff.; 1 May 295 (at
22.8f., 19f., 29-33; Damascus).
23.1-6,20f.; 29.14-
7,18-29,29-42; 35.
19ff.; 37.16ff.; 44.
3-10.
48ff. 4.36.12-8. Edictum de Christianis. 23 February
(Cf. 4.34f.; also 4.17.7- 303: Nicomedia.
10.)
50f. 5.29.10-4. Secundum edictum de 303.
Christianis.

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225 Duval, op. cit., 2, 693-5, gives an inscription dated 22 December 304, in the central apse of a chapel annexed to the basilica at Tébessa,
The conclusion is that Arnobius began to write the *Adversus Nationes* no earlier than the last quarter of A.D. 302, and finished Book Seven before the persecution had ended and thus sacrifice was a contemporary issue, sometime (probably) during the first half of 305.

In honour of seven martyrs, six of whom are associated with the name of Crispina in various manuscripts commemorating the 5th of December 304. 226 I do not mean that 6.11.22ff. refer to Edict I (see pp.51f. supra), but that Christians were forced to sacrifice beginning with its enforcement in N. Africa.

227 There is no hard evidence to establish that the Books were not written in the sequence in which they appear.

228 According to the chronology of Cato, Rome's foundation (=FR) occurred in 752 B.C. This would place Adv. nat. 1.1-2.71 sometime before A.D. 298. The chronological outline above would appear to rule this out. According to Cincius, FR was in 728 B.C., which would place Adv. nat. 1.26 (allusions to events before the persecution) sometime before 322. We have agreed with McCr (p.4, n.14 supra) that this is impossible. FR according to Polybius was 750 B.C., and this would place 1.26 shortly before A.D. 300. The only chronological system that coheres with the interpretation of the pss. given above, assigning to 1.26 a date as late as the winter of 302, is the Fabian, which gave 747 B.C. for FR. This would place Adv. nat. 2.71 as late as the end of 302 or, more likely, the beginning of 303. Yet there is a good possibility that the chronology used in 2.71, as we know in the case of the Varronian in 5.8.30-6 (p.14 supra), was selected purely for apologetical purposes.
A BIOGRAPHICAL EVALUATION: JEROME.  

Arnobius sub Diocletiano principe Siccae apud Africam florentissime rhetoricam docuit scripsitque Adversus Gentes quae vulgo exstant volumina. (Jerome, De vir. ill. 79)

Arnobius in Africa rhetor clarus habetur, qui cum in civitate Siccae ad declamandum juvenes erudiret...

(Id., Chron. ad an. A.D. 327) 2

'Arnobius': An Onomastic Analysis.

The author of the Adversus nationes is known only by one name, the apparent cognomen of Arnobius. It is mis-spelled several times in the MS. codex Parisinus (1661) as "Arnovius", a mistake, as

1 In beginning this study, I would like to point out to the reader that a book has never been published in English which is exclusively devoted to any aspect of Arnobius' thought. Micka's work (19-43) covers what appeared to the author as the main theme of the Adv. nat., "Divine Anger" (See infra, chs. 3-5 passim, for criticism of his thesis.), and compared this with Lactantius' views on the same subject. There is little critical analysis of chronological, biographical, and (other) theological problems. McCracken offers a translation with notes and an introduction. Le Bonniec has done the same (including a critical edition of the text) for Book One in the Bude series (other bks. are in preparation; as well as an edition in the Corpus Christianorum). An Italian trans. by Laurenti appeared in 1962, and select pss. (with an introduction by Rapisarda) by Corsaro in 1965. Only 9 bks. published this century in other languages fit the category: Tschiros (1905: Latin), Gabarrou (2 in 1921: French), Tuiliius (1934: German), Hagendahl (1936: French), Rapisarda (2: 1939 and 1945: Italian), Kraft (1966), and Amata (1984). Of these Rapisarda's Arnobius. Cantania, 1945, is defective in that the author is too zealous to defend the impossible: Arn.'s orthodoxy! In addition to the 6¾ pp. of bibliography (cf. LeB, pp.109-19: selective) in McCr, pp.232-8, of which a little more than 2pp. (232-4) include bibliographies, editions, partial editions, and translations, works (published and unpublished) related to Arn. that have appeared since 1949 added to this list would still fill up less than ten pages. As far back as 1929, A. G. Amatucci, Storia della letteratura latina cristiana. Bari, p.107, n. 7, could advise: "è necessario un nuovo studio completo." It is necessary still. Good unpublished works are: C. Burger, Die Theologische Position Des Älteren Arnobius. Heidelberg, 1970; J.M.P.B. van der Putten, Arnobius Adversus Nationes, 3,1-19, uitgegeven met inleiding en commentaar. Leiden, 1970; A. Sitte, Mythologische Quellen des Arnobius. Wien, 1970. (Booth's thesis was unavailable for this chapter.)

2 The date of the Adv. nat. has been analysed in ch. I supra, pp.1-63. All following Latin sub-titles to this ch. are taken from Jerome, Chron. loc. cit.
McCracken has rightly noticed, understandable when one considers the confusion which arose in late Latin between the b and v. Jerome's source(s) provided only the one name as well. The title page is absent in P, however, and it is here that the tria nomina would have been found, if indeed Arnobius possessed both the praenomen and nomen. Basing his argument upon etymological reasons, Moricca held that Arnobius was "interamente greco." He has given such names as Ἀρνέος, Ἀρνίας, Ἀρνίππος, Ἀρνίσκος, Ἀρνοκλῆς, as examples of common prefixes; and Μπλέος, Ζνόβιος, and Μπλόπιος for the common suffixes. And it was because Arnobius apparently possessed only one name (Greeks basically had only one name in antiquity.) that McCracken suggested that he might have been Greek in race. Yet it would appear that Le Bonniec's contention that both views are definitely "sans aucune certitude", is credible for the following reasons.

All of the above scholars have failed to analyse the following pagan epitaph from Tébessa (Theveste, Africa Proconsularis: ILAlg I, 3284=CIL 8.1951): "G. IVL. VICTORINVS V.A. LX H.S.E. IVLII VITALIS ET ARNOBIUS. PATR. KARISS. TRITURRI." This can easily be restored to: "G(aius) Iul(ius) Victorinus (v(ixit) a(nnis) LX. H(ic) s(itus) e(st). Iulii Vitalis et Arnobius patr(i) kariss(imo) Triturri." The full name of the father obviously was Gaius Iulius Victorinus Triturrius, the latter being a nickname and forming a detached signum. No exact date can be affixed to this epitaph, but a possible terminus post quem c. the early third century A.D. is reasonable, since this period provides the earliest dated example of a cognomen in the suffix ius/ia in Latin epigraphy.

3 McCr, p.5. The fact that Arnobius was a very rare cognomen in Latin nomenclature undoubtedly added to the confusion.
5 Moricca, op. cit., 607. 6 McCr, 5. 7 LeB, 7.

9 Ibid., p.72: CIL 6.1056: "T. Iuni(us) Laurenti(us)."
Triturrius and Arnobius are such cognomina. A possible terminus ante quem may be c. the early fourth century A.D. when the praenomen and nomen - here attested by Gaius Iulius - were already well in decline (except amongst the aristocracy) in Latin nomenclature. Since C. Iulius was apparently not an aristocrat, a date c. the late second/early third century may be relatively safely affixed to this inscription. This proposed terminus ante quem takes into account the survival of the first two traditional names to the end of the fourth century among the upper classes, and also the African inscriptions derived from a later period than those of Rome which are much more difficult to date.

The Iulius Arnobius in the inscription has customarily taken his father's nomen, Arnobius thus being a cognomen. Excluding this name for the moment, all the other names found in the epitaph are common Latin names which ostensibly denote a Roman descent. This inscription establishes that a North African, most undoubtedly a pagan, bore the name Arnobius as a cognomen, was of (at least paternal) Roman descent, and probably possessed the tria nomina as well. The question is what specifically can one say about the cognomen Arnobius, especially noting that the author of the Adversus

10I. Kajanto, "The Latin Cognomina", SSFCHL, 36.2, Helsinki, 1965, 1-418, p.115, shows that the new cognomina in ius/ia began to appear at the end of the 2nd. cent. A.D. but did not become a significant element in Latin nomenclature until the 4th. century. For Triturrius see p.117.


12Kajanto (1963), 2.

13Ibid.

14A practice transmitted from the Republican period. Cf. M. Tullius Cicero, whose son received his father's tria nomina; and cf. other epitaphs from Tebessa which follow the same pattern as above, e.g. ILAlg I, 3105, 3156, 3187, 3212, 3271, and 3282.

15Note that he and his brother, Vitalis, may have had a praenomen. The engraver may have omitted both names to save space and expenses. I. Kajanto, "The Emergence of the Late Single Name System", in N. Duval and H.-G. Pflaum, eds., L'Onomastique Latine, Paris 13-15 Octobre 1975. CNRS 564, Paris, 1977, 421-30, p.425, on the other hand, shows that with the exception of certain places in Mauretania Caesariensis, in the nomenclature of the common people the gentilicium went rapidly out of use during the 4th. cent. A.D., and was almost extinct in the early 5th. cent. This would support the proposed terminus ante quem given above.

16There is no evidence to suggest that it is a Christian epitaph.
nationes is known only by this one name? Is McCracken justified in suggesting that Arnobius might indeed have been of the Greek race because he apparently possessed only one name? Kajanto's onomastic studies have revealed the weakness of McCracken's conjecture. After a thorough analysis of Roman and Carthaginian inscriptions, Kajanto has concluded that the use of the praenomen and the nomen were in acute decline by the beginning of the fourth century of the Christian era. Also, the Christian inscriptions from both Rome and Carthage reveal that "most persons in Christian epigraphic material bear only a cognomen." Roman Christian inscriptions from c. A.D. 200-410 disclose that 82.5% of the men and 80.5% of the women had only a single or double cognomen. Carthaginian material gives a higher percentage (from the second century A.D.): 98% for men and 99% for women. One cannot, therefore, suggest that Arnobius of Sicca Veneria was a Greek only because he apparently bore one name. We may give another example from the third quarter of the 4th. century A.D., Optatus of Milev (Mila, Algeria). The title page of his work simply gives Sancti Optati Mileuitani Libri VII.

Yet there is strong evidence that would appear to establish that Arnobius apparently possessed a sound knowledge of the Greek language. Rohricht made a thorough study of the parallel texts of Plato, Cicero, and Arnobius in the nineteenth century and concluded that the latter used Plato directly. We may also note his dependence upon the Protrepticus of Clement of Alexandria in the working up of his sources for Books Four, Five, and Six. Fifty-one Greek writers are named in the Adv. nat., as compared to twenty-four Latin ones.  

17 Kajanto (1963), 122.  18 Ibid., 14f.  19 Ibid., 9: "Table 3".  20 Ibid., 10f., "Table 5". Cf. pp.16f. for the four reasons for the victory of the single name system in the late empire: (1) weakening of the traditional unity of the gens and the granting of universal citizenship by Caracalla (A.D. 212: possession of the tria nomina had signified Roman citizenship); (2) loss of distinctive function of the nomen; (3) revival of ancient habits of nomenclature among urban populations in the eastern provinces; and (4) weakening of official control of nomenclature.


23 See p.39, n.158 supra.  24 See Marchesi, 413f.; McCr, 34ff.
Another pertinent observation to make is that Festugière's argument that Arnobius might have read the Platonic works which he names (Phaedrus in 2.7.15; 2.34.10; Politicus in 2.13.20; Theaetetus in 2.7.27; 2.13.14; Timaeus in 2.36.9; 2.52.9; 4.16.33; Meno in 2.24.1; cf. 1.8.22 and 2.14.3ff.) in intermediate ὅτατι is weak, especially in the case of the Meno, a work rarely cited in Middle Platonic authors. And it is hardly ever found in Neoplatonic authors as well. Plotinus never refers to or quotes from the work, and Iamblichus omitted it from his canon of Platonic writings. Finally, notwithstanding other notable Arnobian scholars who have argued that he had a direct knowledge of the Platonic works named in the Adv. nat., in an article in 1949 McCracken made the following observations. First, Τοῦοκ appears six times transliterated in Arn. (2.3.14; 12.32; 16.9; 19.8; 29.8; 63.22), and in each case the Φ is incorrectly represented in the Latin by P, f, or Ph. In 3.29.24-34, he discusses the interpretation Κρυσκούς=Χροσκούς, and the scribe in 1.26 has given in P the incorrect χρωνοκός. In 3.41.4 Reifferscheid and Marchesi (followed by McCr) suggest that "laude" (P) should be restored to the original λαυδακός. Finally, in 5.5.11 and 5.8.13, Pyrrha in P is "Pyrrha", and McCr suggests that the archetype had ΠῤΙΠΑ, which obviously did not show the aspirates. It would be a mistake to suggest that Arnobius was a Greek because he had a sound knowledge of the language. There remains, therefore, for the present enquiry Moricca's contention that Arnobius is a Greek name because similar prefixes and suffixes exist in Greek nomenclature. Kajanto's works unfortunately do not consider Arnobius. He does conclude, however, that the cognomen Arnensis, which incidentally was popular in Roman N. Africa, is derived from Arnus, a river.

26 See J. Dillon, The Middle Platonists. 80 B.C. To A.D. 220. N.Y., 1977, 428: the Meno is cited 4 times. Admittedly, the Dominican scholar (see preceding n.) notes the strength of this argument.
28 Ibid.
31 Ibid., 48.
32 Ibid., 40.
33 Ibid. Cf. McCr, 303, n.13.
in Etruria. In addition to Africa, it was also a popular cognomen in N. Italy. There were even inhabitants of Sicca Veneria who bore it, a fact which led Lassère and Ferchiou to suggest that this indicates a reinforcement of people by colonies derived from the provincial capital. An original Latin derivation of the tribe would appear indisputable. It will be further noted that Bechtel's Greek personal names lists do not include Arnobius. Yet a Greek geographical cognomen that has been transmitted in Latin is possible: Ἀρνος (or Ἀρνα) describes at least three eastern cities. Such an explanation would appear to be both superficial and problematical, however, since Arna was a Latin city in Umbria as well.

There are on record three persons who bore the name Arnobius, and if one accepts the view that Arnobius junior was an African monk, all came from North Africa. All three were Latin-speaking persons, and an unquestionable Roman descent can be established for one (the Iulius Arnobius in the epitaph), who is most probably the earliest of the three. The name Arnobius is not attested in Greek nomenclature, and the suffixes ius/ia appeared quite late in Latin

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34 Kajanto (1965), 190, with reference to ILAlg I, 2640.
35 Cf. e.g., CIL 8.854, 1035; IAMLat 2, no.94; and the indices of cognomina in CIL 8. For the geographical extension in Italy and N. Africa see TLL 2, cols. 624f.
39 The locations were in Lycia, Thessaly, and Boeotia. See TLL 2, col. 624, s.v. "Arna" or "Arne"; and cf. CIL 6.8790.
40 See TLL 2, col. 624, s.v. "Arna". Viz., the Iulius Arnobius from Theveste (Tébessa: CIL 8.1951=ILAlg I, 3284); Arnobius of Sicca Veneria; and Arnobius "the younger" whose specific place of origin is unknown, but some have suggested Africa. See on this now Altaner-Stuiber, 459.
41 As we have observed, the praenomen and nomen had all but disappeared except among the aristocracy by the end of the 2nd. century A.D. The two other Arnobii are known only by the one name.
nomenclature. Convincing evidence that suggests that Arnobius was a Greek name is lacking, and it would be safe to conclude from the above data taken as a whole, that the author of the Adv. nat. was most probably of Roman/Latin descent. We may conjecture a derivation along geographical lines on the order of Arnus/Arnensis/Arnobius; or perhaps even a direct transmission Arnus/Arnobius.

Sicca Veneria In Roman North Africa: Location, Topography, Agricultural Significance, And Religious Character.

Jerome informs us that it was in Sicca Veneria (henceforth "SV"), Africa Proconsularis, which is the modern Le Kef, Tunisia, that Arnobius taught rhetoric very successfully. He does not state either that Arn. was born there or that he grew up there. It indeed has been suggested that SV was his birthplace, and a recent work on Graeco-Roman writers even gives the date of "c. 235" for his birth. Some argue that SV was undoubtedly his birthplace because the city was not the kind of place which would have attracted an orator from another (i.e., non-African) province of the Roman Empire. Recent studies have shown that such an assumption is fallacious, as will be noted below. It is equally possible that he immigrated to SV from another North African city/province. Suffice it to say that his place and date of birth are unknown. Regarding the former question, somewhere in N. Africa may be likely, especially in view of a good number of passages which betray an African context/psychological outlook.

One of the many that we shall investigate is Adv. nat. 1.39, where Arn. enumerates several curious religious practices indigenous to Roman (and earlier) North Africa, of which some are still practiced in modern Tunisia.

43 A.D. 205 (CIL 6.1056) is the earliest dated inscription.
45 M. Grant, Greek and Latin Authors. New York, 1980, 52.
46 McCr, 242f., n.40; LeB, 8. 47 Analysed in this section.
Dated either under Elagabalus (A.D. 218-22) or Alexander Severus (222-35), an inscription reveals the complete, and therefore apparently official, Roman name of the city: Colonia Tilia Veneria Cirta Sicca Nova. Probably a few years after the annexation of Africa Nova, Sicca Veneria became an Augustan colony. Pliny informs us that it was one of the early Numidian colonies. There is no archaeological, epigraphical, or literary evidence to support him. And scholars have not reached a consensus concerning the meaning of the Cirta nova appellation. It has been variously explained as being due to a geographical similarity between Cirta (Constantine) and SV; that SV was a castellum of Cirta; that the ancient Cirta of Sallust was actually located at Le Kef; that a double community existed in SV comprised of Cirtenses and Siccenses (the former representing for a lengthy period a municipium); or that the name represents a moral rather than an administrative substitution. Salama's study of a milestone found at Lorbeus (Lares: ILTun 1636) des-

48 CIL 8.15858: "C(oloni) c(oloniae) I(uliae) V(eneriae) C(irtae) S(iccae) n(ovae)"; cf. ibid., 1632: "novae" precedes "Siccae"; and 16258: "Cirt for "Cirt", and "nova Sicca": otherwise all 3 are the same; cf. 1634: "Cirtae Novaes Siccae"; 1648: "Coloniae Ilvaiae Cirtae Novaes"; and e.g., 16367: 18668: ILAlg I, 1347f.


50 H.N. 5.2.22 (LCL: Rackham).


55 A. Berthier, J. Juillet, and R. Charlier, "Le Bellum Jururthinum de Salluste et le probleme de Cirta", RecConst, 64, 1950, 1-104; 107-37 (appendices): Sallust's Sicca was assimilated to Thubursicu Bure (Teboursouk) (pp.47ff.).

56 A. Berthier, "Note sur l'épigraphie du Kef", RecConst, 68, 1953, 177-98.

57 P. Romanelli, Storia delle province romane dell' Africa. SII 14,
ignating SV as the point of departure on the way to Carthage, suggest-
ging the administrative independence of the two cities, caused him to theorize that SV was the provincial capital of Africa Nova.  

This view is preferable to the others just enumerated. Also, based on an onomastic study of inscriptions from SV, Lassère has made two conclusions.  

First, the names bear the mark of a romanization of the Numidian population which occurred after the promotion of the city to colonial status by Augustus. Second, only forty-one of the 163 gentile names found at SV are not found at Cirta, a resemblance strongly intimating a movement of people from Cirta to Sicca and its castella, Nebeur and Ucubi. Augustus' reinforcement of the colony of Cirta and its pagi in 26 B.C. makes perfect sense in light of this evidence.  

Although noting that the problem is not solved, Desanges posits that the term "doit être mis en parallèle avec l'expression Nouμidia vêca employée par Ptolémée par opposition à l'ager Cirtensis."  

A New Numidia thus was gradually organised around a New Cirta.  

Finally, Beschaouch's epigraphical study has revealed that the ager Cirtensis to which Desanges referred and an ager Siccensis existed under the empire, and pagi were subdivisions of their territories. The coexistence of Roman tribes (i.e., the Quirina) and the similar territorial organisation of these two Julian colonies account for the Cirta Nova title.  

Beschaouch derived his interpretation from a new inscription found in the summer of 1980 at Henchir Mest (Le Krib=Musti: c. 30 miles NE of SV) which describes the town as being an enclave existing between two territories. Its eastern gate was the western limit

Rome, 1959, 198.  

Salama, art. cit., 97-115. It is dated c. 44-27 B.C.  

Lassère, op. cit., 151: e.g., Caninius, Clodius, Cornelius, Fabius, Furius, Sallustius, Volisius, etc.  

Ibid., 216f.  


Ibid., and adding: "Toutefois on ne saurait, en l'absence de preuves, considérer le problème comme résolu."  

On the pagus now see G. Charles-Picard, "Le pagus dans l'Afrique romaine", Kar 15, 1969-70, 3-12. This is analysed in detail in ch. 3 infra.  

of the pertica of Carthage (p.108, fig.2), constructed under Gordian III in A.D. 239. The western gate was the eastern limit of the territory of SV, covering an area of c. 29 miles and being called the pertica Siccensium. 65 Pagi included in the latter territory were (e.g.) Aubuzza (Henchir Zezza: c. 16 miles S of SV: CIL 8.16367), Ucubi (Henchir Kaoussat: c. 18 miles E of SV: CIL 8.15669), Nebeur (c. 10 miles NE of SV), and Pagus Veneriensis (Koudiat es Souda: c. 11 miles SE of SV). We recall those who fallaciously assume (p.70, n.46 supra) that SV will not have attracted an orator from another province because of its insignificant status as a N. African city. Of the above studies mentioned, those of Salama, Lassère, and Beschaouch would appear to be the most convincing and technically do not exclude each other. Sicca Veneria seems to have had a much more prominent provincial status than has hitherto been thought.

Salama's map reveals that Sicca Veneria was located at the intersection of three roads in Roman N. Africa: the main road leading from Carthage to Thagaste (Souk-Ahras, Algeria); another going from Ammaedara (Haidra, Tunisia) to Bulla Regia (Hamman Daradji, Tun.) to Thabraca (Tabarca, Tun.); and one from Althiburos (Medeina, Tun.) to Simitthu (Chemtou, Tun.), also ending at the port of Thabraca. 67 SV was located at the SW tip of the Djebel Dyr (3,445 ft.), which was five miles to the NE, 68 and c. 105 miles SW of Carthage. An exact figure for the population of SV has never been calculated, and an attempt to do so may prove an impossible task, a main reason perhaps being 69

65 Beschaouch, art. cit., 115, map, fig.7. 66 On this pagus see L. Poinssot, "Note sur une inscription de Koudiet-es-Souda (Tunisie)", CRAI, 1913, 424-8. Its sociohistorical relation to Arn.'s conception of divinity is noted in ch. 3 infra.

67 P. Salama, Les voies romaines de l'Afrique du Nord. Algiers, 1951. The latter was the marble route (p.61) connecting the port of Thabraca with the Numidian quarries located at Simitthu (A.D. 129 under Hadrian, CIL 8.2119f.). See also P. Toussaint, "Note sur la région reconnue en 1897 par la 2e brigade topographique de Tunisie", BACTH, 1898, 196-225, p.199.


that apparently a considerable number of citizens lived outside the city limits.\textsuperscript{70}

It is known, however, that these inhabitants lived off the land. In the summer of 1924, M. St.-Jean studied the agricultural establishments dating from the Roman period which were located to the N and E of the city.\textsuperscript{71} Some of the buildings measured c. fifty to sixty metres long and thirty to forty wide, they were fortified on the rocky plateaux around the Djebel Dyr and the right bank of the oued Smida,\textsuperscript{72} and the size of the farms often measured c. two-hundred acres (c. forty hectares).\textsuperscript{73} Buildings found on these sites included the owner's residence (often containing a private bath), barns, stables, and oil-mills.\textsuperscript{74} Some of the residences were quite exquisitely ornamented. St.-Jean discovered numerous fragments of fine statues, columns, mosaics in marble, etc.\textsuperscript{75} This evidence suggests that a rather wealthy farming community existed in and around SV. Indeed, Lassère maintains that due to its economically lucrative harvests, SV "ait attiré les correspondents de quelques grandes maisons de commerce."\textsuperscript{76} Epigraphical evidence confirms that the city was not without its wealthy: P. Licinius Papirianus bequeathed 1,300,000 sesterces to the city during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 169-80) to sustain six-hundred children annually.\textsuperscript{77} And we should not ignore that it is in relation to the agrarian life that Arnobius can speak of the wealthy\textsuperscript{78} and working class\textsuperscript{79} Christians and pagans.

\textsuperscript{70}CIL 8.641 distinguishes between residents who live within and outside the city. Exact figures for most N. African cities are lacking. See A. Mahjoubi, Les cités romaines de la Tunisie. Tunis, 1969, 7.

\textsuperscript{71}R. Lantier and L. Poinssot, "Note sur les établissements agricoles d'époque romaine dans Le Kef", SNAF, 1928, May, 211-6.

\textsuperscript{72}Ibid., 213f. Cf. C. Denis, "Fouilles d'une nécropole romaine au Kef (Tunisie)", BACTH, 1894, 374-8, p.374. I am relying on these early archaeological studies because there have not been any recent excavations at Le Kef as far as I know.

\textsuperscript{73}Lantier and Poinssot, art. cit., 214.

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., 215.

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid., 214.

\textsuperscript{76}Lassère, op. cit., 155.

\textsuperscript{77}CIL 8.641. See A. R. Hands, Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome. London, 1968, 185, document no. 20, and pp.89-115 for the historical background of such philanthropical acts.

\textsuperscript{78}Adv. nat. 1.16.19f.: "...Christianos ditiones et locupletissimos ...", the context being a discussion of crop production.

\textsuperscript{79}Ibid., 1.21.2-8: "Oportunis imbribus vestra inrigent rura, pluviorum quicumque sunt rores nostris ab agellulis abigant. Lanitia current vestra numerosis fetibus multiplicari, sterilitatem infaustum nos-
St.-Jean also found on the slopes of hills located on these farms notched steps in successive gradations which had been made to ensure the stability of the soil against torrential rains. This archaeological discovery may help to elucidate a passage in the Adv. nat. (1.3), where Arn. responds to the unjust pagan accusation that the Christians were to blame for the hard rains that kill their crops. Finally, on the N side of the city on the way to Tunis, St.-Jean discovered the remains of ancient olive orchards and vineyards. There are a number of passages in the Adv. nat. which cohere well with this information: a reference to olive vineyards (1.21.6ff.); Saturn is the planter of the vine who bears the pruning-hook (3.29.32ff.); Minerva the discoverer of the olive (3.31.9f.); Saturn protects sowing (4.9.16f.) and is called the guardian of the countryside (6.12.5ff.: "custos ruris", and note that the discoveries of St.-Jean were outside of the city to the N, a fact that will be reconsidered in ch. 4 infra) and a pruner of branches (6.12.6f.: no doubt an allusion to the cultivation of olives). Especially in respect of these (and other) remarks about the African national deity Saturn, the sociohistorical significance of these statements in relation to Arn.'s conception of divinity will be analysed in detail in chapter four.

Early literary sources attest that the strip of land stretching from SV to Sitifis (Sétif, Alg.), and from Calama (Guelma, Alg.) to Madauros (Mdaourouch, Tun.) was very fertile for the cultivation of cereals, especially wheat. Limiting our analysis to SV, we note:

tris pecuariis inferant. Ex olivis vestris atque vinetis plenam faciant autumnatatem fundi, at ex nostris exprimi unum prohibeant palmitis rorem."

80 1.3.39f.: "Difficiles pluviae sata faciant emori et sterilitatem indicunt terris."

81 St.-Jean ap. Lantier and Poinssot, art. cit., 215: "on observe un peu partout au printemps des touffes régulières d'une végétation dépassant sensiblement les cultures voisines qui se profilent en lignes régulières diversément espacées autour d'un même établissement." The spacings were: 1.50-2, 3-4, and 8-10 metres; diameters of the clusters were 1,2,3 and 4 metres. St.-Jean found ancient oil vats on some of the farms.

that Sallust's description of Metellus' first campaign in 109 B.C. includes a remark about Marius being detached from the marching column with a few cohorts to obtain maize at Sicca Veneria. 83 The connection between religion and the agrarian life, especially in respect of crop production, which the Adv. nat. betrays is certainly suitable for a N. African context. 84 It might have been for the purpose of acquiring a sufficient amount of grain that Carthaginian mercenaries rebelled in 241 B.C. and went to Sicca Veneria. 85

Little can be said about the topography of SV. Excavations led by General d'Aubigny, creator of La société archéologique du Kef, late in the nineteenth century resulted in the discovery of an amphitheatre outside the city. 86 Elliptic in form, its great axis measured c. one-hundred metres, the smaller being c. eighty metres. 87 Ruins of rowed seats were at that time very poorly preserved. 88 Depicting chase scenes in this amphitheatre, a mosaic found at Le Kef in May 1932, vividly portrays life-size ostriches and deer. Due to its finesse, realism, and attention given to detail, it is one of the best mosaics preserved from Roman N. Africa. 89 Near the Turkish kasbah (1679) outside the city there was a theatre. 90 It was there that Arn. undoubtedly saw the plays of Euripides (et al.) as a pagan which he derided zealously as a Christian (e.g., 7.33.21; Sophocles: 4.35.22-6; 7.33.20). 91 A huge fountain connected to a


84 The following passages include invaluable information: 1.2;1.3; 1.9;1.13;1.14;1.15;1.16;1.19;1.21;1.29;1.30;1.33;1.38;2.8;2.37; 2.40;2.65;2.74;3.6;3.11;3.23;3.24;3.29;3.31;3.32;3.33;3.34;3.36;4.7; 4.8;4.9;4.11;5.32;5.35;5.37;5.39;5.40;6.2;6.12;6.16;6.25;7.32;7.34;7.38.

85 Polybius, Hist. 1.66.6 (Buettner-Wobst). Note that Augustine refers to SV in passing (an encounter between Urbanus and Darius) in Ep. 229.


90 See A. Ennabli, "Sicca Veneria (Le Kef)", PECS, 834.

91 He did not have to go to Carthage to see such plays, assumed by Warmington, op. cit., 104. There was a theatre at Thugga (Dougga, Tun.) also. See the illustration in P.A. Février, "Urbanisation et urbanisme
great subterranean canal has also been discovered. As in the case of a vast majority of Roman cities in N. Africa, SV had its baths, on the west side of the city, a part of which was enclosed in a large hexagonal hall preceded by a double portico. It was probably the eleven large (28 by 7 metres) cisterns located north of the kasbah that provided most (if not all) of the water for the baths and helped to satisfy the other needs of the townspeople as well. A small aqueduct passed close to the theatre. Concerning Christian churches, Esperandieu discovered that a vast majority of Christian inscriptions were found in the environs of the Bab-El-Cherfline mosque, and suggested that one should look there for the ancient Christian necropolis of Le Kef. He conjectured that the earliest of the Christian places of worship might have been in the vicinity as well. Two Christian basilicas have survived: Ksar-el-Ghoul (length 33, width 16 metres) and Dar-el-Kous, a grand Byzantine basilica whose apse of six metres in width still stood in 1976.

The picture of the religious life of the city is not much clearer. Punic steles bearing diamond-shaped objects and a man entering a (temple?) door overlaid with palm leaves reveal striking resemblances to those of Leglay's dossier on the Saturn cult. Turning to the imperial period, neither an unusual number of standard Roman gods nor any particularly indigenous N. African deities are revealed in the epigraphical evidence of SV. A priest of the Great Mother hon-

93 Ennabli, art. cit., 834. 94 E. Esperandieu, "Note sur des fouilles exécutées aux citerres du Kef (Tunisie)", BACTH, 1885, 568-71, p.569.
95 Ennabli, art. cit., 834, observes that they are remarkably preserved (1976) and were served by springs flowing from the southern flank of the Djebel Dyr.
96 Toutain, op. cit., 71. 97 Esperandieu (1889), 42, no.80.
98 Ibid., 139. See id., "Note sur quelques basiliques chrétiennes de Tunisie", BACTH, 1884, 158-60, p.158, theorising that Ksar-el-Ghoul might formerly have been a pagan edifice because its form resembled the judicial basilicas of the Romani.
99 Ennabli, art. cit., 834. 100 Esperandieu (1889), 147, Pl. I; 149, Pl. II; cf. (e.g.) SAM I, 406, no.6; 405, no.1 and Pl. XV, fig. 1, all derived from Ain-Nechma (Thabarbus)
ours the goddess on his epitaph. Dedications are found to the Cer-eres, Fortuna Redux, Hercules, Juppiter, Honos and Virtus, "deis Parentibus", Sol, and the di superi and inferi. Archaeological discoveries have confirmed the veneration in SV of Mercury, and possibly of Roma and Neptune as well. Finally, according to Cagnat and Gaulkler, there were temples existing in the city dedicated to Pietas Augusta, Venus, and Virtus Augusta. Many fragments formerly belonging to pagan temples dedicated to unidentified deities were found embedded in the walls of the Christian basilica Dal-el-kous.

However, the deity that made SV famous as a leading centre of cultic prostitution in N. Africa was Venus: "Siccae enim fanum est Veneris, in quod se matronae conferebant, atque inde procedentes ad quas tum, dotis corporis iniuria contrahebant, honesta nimirum in honesto vinculo coniugia iuncturae." It is obvious from the

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101 CIL 8.1649: "DMS Q. Valerivs Severvs Platienses sacerdos Matris Magnae pvis vixit ann. LV HSE"; cf. ibid., 15848: "Matri devm Magnae sacrvm." See Toutain (1896), 212, n.5, for the criobolium and taurobolium practiced at Mactar (Mactaris) under Probus (A.D. 276-82).
102 Ibid., 1623.
103 Ibid., 1623.
104 Ibid., 1624.
105 Ibid., 1627f.
106 Ibid., 1626: from the reign of Carus (A.D. 282-3). Cf. CIL 8.15565: the same divinities are found venerated at Ucubi, a castellum of SV and note Adv. nat. 4.1.3.
107 ILTun 1609.
109 See E. Espérandieu, "Inscriptions inédits recueillies en Tunisie par M. Denis et communiquées par M. Espérandieu", BACTH, 1892, 154-69, p.169, no.52 (=CIL 8.17516), a pagan epitaph: "Qui hoc sepulcrum violarit, deos superos inferosq(ue) iratos habeat!" Cf. IRT 274.
111 H. Saladin, "Rapport sur la mission accomplie en Tunisie (Le Kef)", NAM, 2, 1892, 556-9, p.559, fig. 167.
112 Majoubi, op. cit., 111: Several temples have been found close to springs, e.g., at Carthage, Zaghouan; Ain Tebornok (Tubernuc); Hr. Mest (Musti=Le Krib); SV; Hammam Daradji (Bulla Regia), etc. The principal deities associated with springs were Neptune and the nymphs.
113 MHTP, 75 (CIL 8.15849).
114 Ibid., 96 (CIL 8.15881).
115 Ibid., 100 (CIL 8.15850).
116 Ibid., 126.
117 Val. Max., Fact. et dict. mem. 2.6.15 (Kempf). See McCr, 242, n.37, for paleographical evidence which argues against Halm's reading "Cirtae" in place of "Siccae" in the passage cited.
preceding passage, and the imperfect thse of conferre, that Valerius Maximus is describing a moribund cultic practice. It is logical to assume that the Romans eradicated what would have appeared to them as an immoral practice. Yet practices like this one have a tendency to continue in some way, if not indeed officially protected by the state. Although it is based upon inferences recognizing common sociohistorical characteristics of the ancient and modern periods that may be too subjective, Teutsch claims to have noticed the possible continuation of a similar practice in the Ouled Nail in S Algeria among some of the women there. Again, Solinus maintains that the practice was introduced at SV by immigrants who came from Eryx, but Teutsch rightly observes that onomastic and archaeological evidence is lacking to support this. Arn. may be referring to a possible continuation of the practice in Adv. nat. 3. 27.6ff.: "Ergone dea cogente in villissimi nominis scorta suam saepius produnt etiam nobiles dignitatem...". It is interesting in respect of the cult of Venus at SV, that it was possibly early in the fourth century that the curator of the res publica was also the curator Veneris at SV, as the following inscription indicates:

Mirae bonitatis adque integritatis uiro, Valerio Romano u(iro) c(larissimo), curatori reip(ublicae) col(oniae) Sicicensium et Veneris, ob restauratum deae simulacrum quod iamdudum a latronibus fuerat, interrupta templi munitione, sublatum, statuam Venerii ad propagandam saeculis omnibus memoriam, patrono fido amore posuerunt. (CIL 8.15881)

The "iamdudum" may be directly related to Adv. nat. 6.20.1-10 and 6.21, but especially 6.22.1-5 which precedes a scathing attack upon the image of Venus that continues for two chapters (6.22-3). Robberies of the statues of the gods is the main theme of these chapters. The remark about the Caracheni (6.23.29f.) who "lift bars by devices unknown" to strip bare pagan temples may indicate a reliance

118 "Cui gloriae Punicarum feminarum, ut et comparatione turpius apparent, dedecus subnectam."

119 Noted years ago by the great Africanist J. Toutain, CPER 3, 82. Nothing found in the text authorises one to conclude that Val. Max. is describing contemporary events.

120 Cf. Warmington, (OCD), 984; and R.C.C. Law, "North Africa in the Period of Phoenician and Greek Colonization, c. 800 to 323 B.C.", CHA 2, 87-140, p.130: immigrants from Eryx introduced the practice.


upon personal (i.e., non-literary) and perhaps even local experiences of the robberies of cultic statues. And it is quite possible that the statue of Venus which had for a long time been left in need of restoration mentioned in the inscription, might have inspired Arn.'s attack upon the images, especially the fact that robbers take them from the temples unprotected by the gods, in Adv. nat. 6.20-3. The date that has been assigned to the Adv. nat. compared with the suggested date of the inscription, makes this hypothesis acceptable. For according to PLRE I (p. 770), Valerius Romanus may well have been the parent of F. Valerius Theopompus Romanus (CIL 6.6993), who was unknown before the fourth century. We may agree with Lepelley's suggested date for the inscription sometime in the late third/early fourth century A.D.124

There are a few references to various aspects of N. African culture in the Adversus nationes. In 2.32.12-8 the Psylli are mentioned. Famous for possessing an antidote for snake bites in their bodies,125 they lived in the region around the Greater Syrtes.126 Pregnant with references to Graeco-Roman, Syrian, Egyptian, and Ethiopian gods is 1.36, wherein the "Titanes et Bocchores Mauri" (1.25) refers to the local gods of the Moors. Note Cyprian's comment: "Mauri vero manifeste reges colunt, nec ullo velamento hoc nomen obtexunt."127 Similar statements appear in Tertullian128 and Lactantius.129 The Mauri comprised the indigenous masses living in E Mauretania Tingitana who eventually expanded by immigrating into N Morocco.130 A logical inference according to this evidence is that Arn. is referring to Chieftain worship. Yet a specification of divinities venerated by the gens Maura is perhaps a better possibility. In 1947 M.A. Merlin discovered an inscription at Beja (Vaga) containing the names of seven

125 Pliny, H.N. 7.2.14. The tribe was named after king Psyllus whose tomb was in the region of the Greater Syrtes.
129 Div. inst. 1.15. 130 CPER 3, 39. Strabo, 17.3.2. Desanges, op. cit., 144f., on H.N. 5.17. HAAN 5, 107. The following are also related to the Mauri: CIL 8.2637-41; 8435; 9195; 9327; 14644; 20251f.; 21486; 21665; 21720.
Moorish gods. Two of these resemble deities mentioned in the works of Tertullian and Arnobius. The former’s "Varsutina Maurorum" (Ad nat. 2.8.5. CChr: Borleffs) is similar to the "Varissima" of the inscription, and CIL 8.14444 (Hr. Ramdan, c. 15 miles NE of Beja/Vaga): "Diis Mauris Fudina Vacurtum Varsis". A closer correspondence can be seen existing between Arnobius’ "Bocchores" and Merlin’s "Bonchor". Beja was c. forty-five miles NE of SV, both being in the same province. Arnobius' knowledge of these local gods indigenous to N. Africa was evidently not derived from literary sources, but would rather indicate a personal knowledge of the cultic practices of the gens Maura. Their gods were worshipped in such African cities as Theveste (Tébessa), Madauros (Mdaourouch), and Thubursicu Numidarum (Khamissa). Note also the plural of Arn.’s "Bocchores", the fact that no one deus Maurus was apparently ever worshipped alone, and the appearance of "Macurtam" and "Macurgum", two very similar names, in the same inscription. In 6.5.6f. the Garamentes are named. This ethnic group occupied the long valley of the Wadi el-Agial due S of the Hamada el-Hamra in Libya. Frugi-ferius designates Saturn the national deity of Roman N. Africa in 6.10.24, and the epithet frugifer was very popularly used to underscore the deity’s lordship over the fecundity of crops. We shall examine in minute detail the sociohistorical significance of the epithetical function of frugifer in Arn.’s conception of divinity in chapter four.

Finally, in 1.16.12-6 Arn. asserts that the Gaetuli and Zeugitani...
experienced a great drought in the same year that the Mauri and the nomads reaped "messes amplissimas" (1.14). According to the Peutinger Table, the geographical extension of the Gaetuli proceeds from Theveste (Tebessa, Alg.) and Thelepte (Medinet el Kdima, Tun.) to Capsa (Gafsa, Tun.) in the south-western part of Africa Proconsularis. Gasco's onomastic study reveals that their territory extended into Numidia up to Gadiaufala (Ksar Sbahi, Alg.), to due S of Cirta (Constantine, Alg.) and due N of Madauros (Mdaourouch, Tun.). And the Peutinger Table (7.2) gives the farthest extension southward of Gaetulia as just S of Sabratha in Tripolitana in the area of the Djebel Nefoussa. Zeugitana by the beginning of the fourth century appears to have been synonymous with Africa Proconsularis. As stated above (p.80, n.130), the Mauri were indigenous to eastern Mauretania Tingitana, the oued Moulouya (Mulcha sive Malva) forming the limit of their kingdom. "Nomades" probably designates the wandering Numidians who lived in transportable mapalia (Pliny, H.N. 5.22) much like the Mexican immigrant farmers, who live in their automobiles and move from farm to farm, do in the southern U.S. today. Keeping the above geographical delineation in mind, Arn. is essentially sharing with his readers personal knowledge of the agricultural situation during a memorable year in Africa Proconsularis (Zeugitana and part of Gaetulia), Numidia (Nomades and Gaetuli), and the Mauretaniae (Mauri). It is concluded from the above data taken as a whole that Arnobius' statements concerning North African culture corroborate Jerome's locating him in Sicca Veneria, Africa Proconsularis.

140 Peut. Tab. 4.5-5.1. See Desanges, 342-6, on H.N. 5.30.
144 See HAAN 5, 93; Desanges, op. cit. (1980), 145, observes that Mauri eventually came to be associated with the more eastern peoples in North Africa and finally became synonymous with both of the Mauretaniae. If Arnobius is accurately describing the geographical extension of Christianity in Roman N. Africa, and there is no reason to reject his testimony, not only was it spreading throughout all the African provinces, but also it was penetrating all social strata related to the rural economy (cf. 1.16.19f.); and Adv. nat. 2.5.15-8 discloses that it was making converts of members of the upper classes/intelligentsia.
aris. Hence 2.40.15,19ff. may be added to the above list. In response to the question why God sent souls to the earth, Arn. asks the pagan philosophers: "Idcirco animas misit, (sc. Deus) ut... effoderent altos montes et viscera ignota terrarum in materias verterent alieni nominis atque usus...". As we have mentioned (p. 59, n.217 supra), this may be an allusion to the marble quarries at various places in N. Africa. At Simithu (Chemtou, Tun.) the giallo antico or yellow-orange marble was quarried and still in use when Arn. was writing the Adv. nat. (Diocl., Ed. de pret. xxxii.6: Mommsen and Blümmer). Ancient quarries were also located at SV's pagus, Pagus Veneriensis (Koudiat es Souda, Tun.), on the Djebel Bou Rbia, c. ten miles SE of SV.

It is an historical fact that African patriotism could often be expressed by anti-Roman sentiment. The question to explore vis-à-vis Arnobius is whether this attitude is genuinely communicated in the Adv. nat. To begin, Roman imperialistic expansion is condemned as insanity. Yet in another passage the very same thing is praised.

In attacking the belief that Roman imperial greatness is due to the help of the gods, Arn. asks where was Pellona when the Romans were defeated at the Caudine Forks in the Second Samnite War, or when Hannibal defeated their army at the Trasimene Lake (under C. Flaminlius). Anti-Roman sentiment may be equated with African patriotism in the latter, as well as in the mention that the Punic Hannibal plundered Italy's wealth (near Cannae) and claimed world domination. Also, Venus is called the source of Roman domination, a disparaging remark considering Arn.'s vituperation of her cult throughout his work. Pellona, he argues, has failed to uphold Roman national honour. Yet this may emphasise more the stupidity of worshipping the goddess rather than a display of ill will towards the empire.

145 See Toutain, op. cit. (1896), 46; NASS, 36; A. Ennabli, "Simithu (Chemtou)", PECS, 841; Desanges, 292, on H.N. 5.29.
146 See Poinssot, art. cit. (CRAI 1913), 424, n.2.
147 Adv. nat. 1.5.16-9: "ut modo Romani velut aliquod flumen tormens cunctas submergerent atque obruerent nationes, nos videlicet numinas praecipitavimus in furorem?" On Arn.'s views of war related to his critique of Roman religion see D.F. Wright, "War in a Church-Historical Perspective", EQ 57, 1985, 133-161, p.141.
149 Ibid., 4.4.19ff.; Livy, 9.2.6.
150 Ibid., 21f.; Livy, 22.4-7.
151 Ibid., 2.73.6-9; Livy, 22.44-50.
152 Ibid., 4.27.8f.
Even more significant perhaps is the fact that he ends Book Seven (and therefore the work) by observing that the Great Mother has subjugated the innocent world to the extent that the Roman Empire might become preeminent and its rise to power prove the perdition of humankind.\textsuperscript{154}

To sum up, 1.16.12-6, 1.36.25, 6.5.6, and 6.10.24 (pp.80f. \textit{supra}) would help to argue for locating Arn. in a N. African environment. One can also relatively safely deduce from the above statements (pp.83f. \textit{supra}) that anti-Roman sentiment does denote African patriotism in the \textit{Adversus nationes}. Two observations related to N. African religious history should be made. First, in speaking of one factor that caused the acceptability of Manichaeism in N. Africa, Decret refers to "ce réflex anti-romain, tourjours vivace en Afrique, et dont l'oeuvre d'Arnobe...,fournit déjà, dans le premier tiers du IVe siècle, une assez bonne illustration."\textsuperscript{155} Second, the possibility that anti-Roman sentiment might have played a significant economic/social rôle in initiating Donatism\textsuperscript{156} does not permit one to "find in Arnobius...a hatred of Rome unknown to the early Africans, and one which will very soon give strong support to the Donatist schism."\textsuperscript{157} Nor do the few pss. noted above allow one to speak of Arn.'s "violento sentimento antiromano.\textsuperscript{158}" Monceaux understands the remarks to express an "amour du pays natal",\textsuperscript{159} which is better. Yet acknowledging that anti-Roman comments almost invariably appear in pss. that attack the gods, we may best explain them as being due to the zeal of a convert for his newly-acquired religion in the face of official state persecution. There are only a few glimpses, however, of the attitude that had an effect upon such movements as Manichaeism and Donatism in N. Africa, to be found


\textsuperscript{158}E. Buonaiuti, \textit{Il cristianesimo nell'Africa Romana}. Bari, 1928, 281, n.3.

\textsuperscript{159}Monceaux, III, 242: 1.3;16;21;36;2.73;4.4;27;5.1-4;18;7.40;50f.
in the pages of the Adversus nationes.

In attempting to evaluate Jerome's locating Arn. in SV, a consideration of 1.39.1-11 is also necessary. This enumerates some of the author's pagan religious beliefs and practices:

Venerabar, o caecitas, nuper simulacula modo ex fornacibus prompta, in incubibus deos et ex malleis fabricatos, elephantorum ossa, picturas, veternosis in arboribus taenias; si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem et ex olivi unguinem sordatum, tamquam iesset vis praesens, adulabar, adfabar et beneficia poscebam nihil sentiente de trunco, et eos ipso divos, quos esse mihi persuaseram, adficiebam contumeliis gravibus, cum eos esse credebam ligna lapides atque ossa aut in huiusmodi rerum habitare materia.

Although Nock seriously doubted the authenticity of this statement as a genuine autobiographical account of Arn.'s former religious views, there is a greater possibility that the opposite is true. Nock failed to consider that 1.39 might represent an assurance that Arn.'s desire to join the faithful (see below) was genuine, and he did not take into account N. African religious practices very similar to some listed in the passage. First, note the apparent survival in modern Tunisia of one of the practices. The "veternosis in arboribus taenias" may imply a conceptual antecedent of modern Tunisian animistic beliefs (not to be confused with dendrolatry): "Aux branches de l'arbre, on attachait des chiffons, des rubans, des vêtements; c'était sans doute à l'occasion d'un voeu, d'une prière." The deity (was and) is thought to reside in the tree. At Fernana in the region of Ain-Drahem the practice continues: there is a giant tree the sacred character of which is recognised by the whole population of the village.

The belief that a divine power resides in a stone, not to be confused with litholatry, is the centrepiece of Arn.'s testimony. It may have been one of the predominant religious practices before

160 A.D. Nock, Conversion. The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo. Oxford, 1933, 258, suggests "that his account of his former attitude agrees almost verbally with the common ancient descriptions of the type of the superstitious man."

161 Decret and Fantar, op. cit., 251. I assume also that W.H.C. Frend, "Arnobius", OCD, 122, had the above passage in mind when he wrote: "He reveals curious pagan beliefs current in Africa...".

162 Decret and Fantar, op. cit., 251.
This curious practice constituted a part of ancient Berber religious culture and goes back to protohistoric and prehistoric N. Africa. It is a form of animism or the belief in, and adoration of, spirits which live in inanimate objects. Specifically, the way that Arn. describes his devotion to the deity residing in the annointed stone by prayer and verbal address, denotes a kind of fetishism or attributing a protective power to an impersonal force. Philo of Byblos describes the practice among the Phoenicians as using Baîtûloî (Latin: baetuli). Apuleius of Mad- auros (Mdaourouch: c. 45 miles due SW of SV) mentions it in several of his works, and it seems to have taken an active part in his religiosity. Cyprian condemned the practice, as did M. Felix, Lactantius, and Augustine. Epigraphical data from such places as Thala (Thala), Henchir-es-Srira, and Djebel-bou-Kournein attest its use in the Saturn cult. Again, it has apparently survived in modern Tunisia, especially among the bedouins in the southern part of the country. At the Mzara (consecrated place) two kilom-
etres from Sidi Asker, animistic beliefs associated with trees and stones are practiced in close conjunction with each other. At the Mzara of Sidi bel Mabrouk, adoration of spirits believed to reside in stones is practiced in the same way that Arn. describes, viz. by anointing with oil. Another modern parallel is that koura cult objects (i.e., "boulets de pierre") in Tunisia are similarly venerated: worshippers confide in them, speak to them, and ask blessings from them. A safe deduction from the aforementioned data both derived from and related to Adv. nat. 1.39.1-11, would be that the pre-Christian practices which Arn. enumerates are genuine autobiographical statements, and that they support the contention for his African provenance. There is not a strong argument against Jerome's locating Arn. in Sicca Veneria, Africa Proconsularis.

The Cult Of Saint Peter.

It is necessary to observe a final fact about SV and a possible connection with Arnobius. In the vaulting of a Byzantine basilica at Le Kef (Dar-el-Kous), on a Greek cross the letters S PTRS have survived. There is little doubt that these stand for SANCTUS PETRUS. Another Greek cross at the site has the letters SCS on the top vertical beam in the centre, a P on the left horizontal beam, and an R on the right horizontal beam. At the bottom of the vertical beam there is an S. Again, this would strongly suggest SANCTUS PETRUS.


177 Ibid., 30: "...on lui parle, on la baisse et chacun agit en cela selon ce que lui inspire sa devotion (niya)." On anointing stones with olive oil see p.30; Cf. Arn. 1.39.6f.: "tamquam inesset vis praesens, adulabar, adfabar et beneficia poscebam...".


179 Leclercq, DACL 8.1, col. 697 and fig.6456, col. 699; more recently: Duval, op. cit. (1982), I, 96f., no.44, fig.65; CIL 8.27690=ILTun 1605; and II, 638.
If this is correct, SV is not unique as a site in N. Africa where Christians dedicated a cult to the apostle.\textsuperscript{180} Raynal has observed that the names of SS. Peter and Paul were inscribed upon the beams of the cross in a mosaic in the church at Uppena (Chigarnia, Tun.).\textsuperscript{181} This is exactly like the crosses noted from SV. Veneration of the apostles SS. Peter and Paul appears to have had a rich history in N. African Christianity,\textsuperscript{182} but scholars are in disagreement concerning the sociohistorical development of the cult. Thus Frend has argued for the existence of a Donatist cult of these saints,\textsuperscript{183} and this has been criticised by Février.\textsuperscript{184} The latter has interpreted the numerous Numidian inscriptions related to the cult as denoting a "Contre-propagande qui s’appuierait sur une théorie de l'unité et des liens avec le siège de Rome, telle qu’on la trouve chez Optat et chez Augustin."\textsuperscript{185} Yet the evidence appears to suggest, as Raynal has also observed,\textsuperscript{186} that there was a cult of the apostles in existence among both groups. Donatism did not flourish at SV, and the inscribed crosses there will not allow a Donatist identification of them. One can therefore rather safely deduce from the evidence given that a cult of St. Peter existed at SV at least as early as the Byzantine period. We would be going beyond the evidence to identify it as being Catholic rather than Donatist. A quite early date for the origin of the tradition at SV is most probable, but how far back it goes is presently not (and may never be) ascertainable.\textsuperscript{187}

Focusing upon Arnobius, it is perhaps significant that St. Peter is the only Christian predecessor named in the Adv. nat.:\textsuperscript{188} "Vider-
\textsuperscript{180} D. Raynal, "Culte des martyrs et propagande Donatiste à Uppena", CahTun 81-2, 1973, 33-72, p.54, n.59.
\textsuperscript{183} W.H.C. Frend, "The Memoria Apostolorum in Roman North Africa", JRS 30, 1940, 32-49.
\textsuperscript{184} P.A. Février, "Martyrs, polemique et politique en Afrique (IVe-Ve siecles)", RHCM 1, 1966 (Jan.), 8-18, p.15.
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid.\textsuperscript{186} Art. cit., 43.\textsuperscript{187} Leclercq, DACL 8.1, col. 698; Frend (1940), 32f.; and Février, art. cit., 9-14, give the epigraphical evidence.
\textsuperscript{188} McCr is totally inaccurate to state that "Arnobius nowhere names a single Christian predecessor..."(p.41; cf. p.34); the most recent introduction to Arn.'s Christianity, LeB, 68-80, does not mention the following significant ps.!
ant (sc. Romani) enim currum Simonis magi et quadrigas igneas Petri orae diffilatas et nominato Christo evanuiisse..." (2.12.22ff.). Contextual considerations of the passage compared with similar stories about the apostle Peter absolutely justify Marchesi's emendation of P's "paetri" to "Petri" (2.12.22). Appearing at the end of a discussion about the universal appeal of Christianity, the fantastic encounter between Peter and Simon Magus is given. Some of the details which Arn. gives are not found in any other literary source. Whether there is any relation between the ps. and the legends that St. Peter brought Christianity to Africa, it is not known. Information derived from one or more of Tertullian's works cannot explain Arn.'s source(s).

Too many differences exist between the Acta Petri and Arn. to suggest a literary dependence. In the former (NTA II: Schneemelcher), written c. A.D. 180-90, Simon is carried up into the air while all Rome observes. Peter asks Christ to let Simon fall down and break his legs in three places. He falls, is stoned, and is carried to Aricia where he dies. Arn.'s differences are: Simon flies in a chariot, his legs are not broken in three places, and he is carried to Brunda where he commits suicide. The same observation holds for The Apostolic Constitutions: Simon flies over Rome carried by demons; Peter asks Christ to throw Simon down and bruise him; he commands the demons to let him fall down "headlong" (cf. Arn. 2.12.26: "praecipitatum"), and his hip and ankle bones are broken. A three-day dispute between Simon and Peter is given, after which the former departs for Tyre, in The Pseudo-Clementine Homilies. After a comparison of the Arnobian account of the encounter between Peter and Simon and the works we have named, the salient features of the former are: Simon is in a chariot; after his fall he is carried to Brunda, and there he commits suicide.

In Arn. Peter is portrayed as the great wonder-worker and conqueror of heretics rather than as the holy martyr. He may have selected a story about Peter as such, and placed it at the climax of an argument concerning the universal appeal of Christianity, to counterattack Porphyry's scathing criticism of this famous saint. Hierocles

See Monceaux, I, 5. Cf. De an. 34; Adv. omn. haer. 1.2; De idol. 9; Ap. 13.9. The Latter confuses the statue inscribed "Sancti deo" with the Sabine god Semo Sancus.


Ps.-Clem., Hom. 3.29-58 (NTA II: Irmschen and Ogg, 549-52).
also compared the miracles of Apollonius of Tyana with those of Christ, which were of inferior quality. Later, the opponent of Macarius Magnes followed these examples. Thus published vituperations of Peter in the period immediately preceding the Diocletianic Persecution may explain why Arn. used the legend in 2.12-29, but not the source(s) that supplied him with it. A reasonable hypothesis is that a local Petrine myth associated with the cult of the apostle in N. Africa, possibly deriving from SV, may be Arn.'s immediate source. It is the kind of Christian myth with which a pagan fresh from the opposite camp would have been confronted and used, especially if he wanted to impress the bishop of the church where the saint was venerated.

Arnobius The Rhetor.

In both pss. Jerome stresses Arnobius' success/fame as a rhetor. No one has disputed his word. We may quote Hagendahl: "In Arnob hören wir, vielleicht deutlicher als in Apuleius und Tertullian, ein Echo der forensischen Beredsamkeit, die Afrikas Glorie war." Internal evidence found in P supports Jerome: "ARNOVII ORATORIS LIB III

I.e., if in fact he is different from Porphyry. See infra ch.5. I am not entirely convinced that in some pss. of the Apocr. Porphyry is not M. Magnes' opponent. Contra: Barnes, JTS, n.s. 24, 1973, 424-42.

This is the best hypothesis. Oral tradition depicting the saint as such is another possibility, as well as as apocryphal literary source. The proposed hypothesis will have to be confirmed by answers to the following: whether there is a direct relation between the cult of Peter in SV and the ps. cited, and exactly when the former was established; the identity of the source(s) which furnished the myth. It is possible that archaeological excavations at Le Kef may shed some light on the problem.

De vir. ill. 79: "florentissime rhetoricos docuit"; Chron. ad an. A.D. 327: "rhetor clarus habetur".


Arnobius thus stands in the N. African tradition which includes such rhetors as Fronto, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, Augustine, and Victorinus. The teaching of rhetoric may have steadily improved both in respect of the quality of teachers and the requirements of the syllabi given in classes since the promulgation of an edict of Gordian III (A.D. 238-44). This ordered the dismissal of any incompetent grammatici and oratores from their positions. Yet by the sixth century Greek literary culture had disappeared from Africa, and Courcelle has explained the close relation between Greek and Latin literature in the midst of Roman decline as being due to considering the grammaticus and rhetor as insufficient disseminators of literary culture. This may help to explain Arn.’s knowledge of Greek sources; and the epitaphs – there are similar inscriptions from Roman N. Africa – of the two sons of Q. Vetidius Juv- enalis that boasted “utraq(ue) lingua eruditus” (ILAAlg I, 1363f.: Thubursicu Numidorum=Khamissa, Alg.), both having been sent to the university at Carthage (late 2nd./early 3rd. cent. A.D.). Whether the enforcement of Gordian III’s edict entailed a more regimented educational system (than had formerly existed) that required a standard syllabus for all teachers to follow is unknown. It is impossible to trace the specific content of rhetorical education in N. Africa at the beginning of the fourth century (A.D.). A passage in a work of Apuleius (2nd. cent. A.D.) refers to the feast of the muses wherein the first cup is poured by the litterator who teaches one how to read. The grammaticus then adorns with different kinds of 1908, 14-25, analysing the Arn./Quint. connection, legal knowledge, etc. 199 See McCr, 566, .244; LeB, 8. 200 CJ 10.53.2 (Krüger): “Imp. Gordianus A. Heracliano. Grammaticos seu oratores decreto ordinis probatos, si non se utiles studentibus praebant, denuo ab eodem ordine reprobari posse incognitum non est.” 201 P. Courcelle, Late Latin Writers and their Greek Sources. Trans., Wedeck. Cambridge, Mass., 1969, 2-8. 202 See T. Kotula, “Utraque lingua erudit. Une page relative à l’histoire de l’éducation dans l’Afrique romaine”, CollLat 102, 1969, 386-92, esp. Pl. XX, figs.1f. 203 If such details were known, one might get a better picture as to the literary works with which Arn. was familiar and possibly how he worked up some of his sources. 204 Flor. 20. Cf. D.L. Clark, Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education. N.Y., 1957, 65; S.F. Bonner, Education in Ancient Rome. From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny. London, 1977, 34-89.
knowledge, followed by the rhetor who furnishes one with the weapons of eloquence. Based upon the Greek educational system, this general structure had not changed even in Augustine's day, it could provide a lucrative income, and its close affiliation with pagan religious culture was unavoidable. Indeed, Tertullian explicitly states that the pagans' literature was the basis for training "ad prudentiam et liberalia officia." 

The goal of instruction in rhetoric is much clearer. It enabled the student to become eloquent, to speak and write persuasively, to present a declamation comprised of examples from history, to argue one's point of view commandingly, to prove one's case at the bar. Such training enabled the student to embark upon a career in the imperial civil service. Quintilian envisaged a programme that was both varied and flexible. The rhetor in the early imperial period developed exercises in composition and declamation; selected prose works for critical exegetical analysis; and lectured on formal theories of rhetoric. Works used by the rhetor for these exercises undoubtedly varied and were to a great extent determined by the professor's own formal educational background, extra-curricular readings, and personal literary tastes. For example, although scholars are not agreed about the authors studied in detail in Augustine's

205. E.g., Conf. 1.9,13,14,16, etc. See J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine. The Growth of St. Augustine's Mind up to his Conversion. Dublin, 1954, 40f. For general historical background of the system: M.L. W. Laistner, Christianity and Pagan Culture in the Later Roman Empire. N.Y., 1951, 8-17.

206. Aug., Conf. 4.2. 207. Ibid., 1.19. Tert., De idol. 10.1 (CChr: Reifferscheid and Wissowa): "Quaerendum autem est etiam de ludimagistris, sed et ceteris professoribus litterarum. Immo non dubitandum affines illos esse multimodae idolatriae. Primum quibus nescisse est deos nationum praedicare, nomina, genealogias, fabulas, ornamenta honorifica quaeque eorum enuntiare, tum sollemnia festaque eorum obseruare, ut quibus uectigalia sua suppudent." He adds that the 1st. payment received by the ludimagister from each pupil is consecrated to the name and honour of Minerva.

208. Ap. 14.2. 209. W.M. Smail, Quintilian on Education. Oxford, 1938, xxxii-v, but note xxxv: "There is no indication of a serious and methodical study of history in the Roman schools." Later, at least in N. Africa, it was different. Aug. (Conf. 1.13) had to memorize the lessons of Aeneas, Dido, etc., and Tert., M. Felix, Arn., and Lact. demonstrate a knowledge of Roman history. For Arn., considering 2.71, his references to the annals, etc., "sound" knowledge may be applicable.

210. Ibid., 64. The tradition at this point changed little throughout the imperial period.
post-secondary education, at college he himself could boast that he understood all that he read on rhetoric, logic, geometry, music, and maths without the aid of a teacher. Selection of sources to read/study at this level appears to have been due to personal ambition and literary tastes. From this it would be difficult to ascertain with hardly any degree of certainty which texts Arn. might have used in his classes. The frequency with which a particular author's name appears in the work cannot be a guide in this case. Lucretius, for example, is named once in Adv. nat. 2.10.19 (=De rer. nat. 4.1168), yet there are no less than fifty pss. which betray literary dependence upon him. Also, it is possible that the polemical argument of a certain section has predetermined the selection of sources. An example is 1.38, where Arn.'s praise is indebted in form to Quintilian's delineation of the laus deorum (Inst. 3.4-9: also content: see ch. 3, sect. 2 infra), and in content to Lucretius' eulogy of Epicurus in De rer. nat. 5. Finally, his fondness for a polemical method of literary retortion implies that he may be using his opponents' sources against them, a possible example being, as noted already (supra, ch. 1, pp. 22ff.), the chronological details of 2.71 (et al.) corresponding to a ps. of Porphyry's CC. Interests of this nature undoubtedly took Arn. beyond the familiar works of the syllabus, and indeed his own library.

Yet it is significant that two of the main rhetorical devices used in the orator's educational discipline are indicated in the work. The controversia involved a debate concerning the correct course of action to take in legal cases. Focusing upon a real law, it necessitated the fabrication of fictitious court cases.


212 The definitive work is H. Hagendahl, Latin Fathers and the Classics. A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers. SGLG VI, Goteborg, 1958, ch.2, 12-47.

213 The purpose of the laus deorum (aretalogy) was to praise the gods' majesty, special powers, and the discoveries whereby they benefit the human race, as well as their exploits handed down by antiquity (Quin., Inst. 3.7.7). Cf. the praise of Christ in Arn. 1.38.

214 Quin., Inst. 2.1.9. See also: Henri I. Marrou, Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique. Paris, 1938, 53; O'Meara, op. cit., 43; Smail, op. cit., xxxvi.
order to assign his students these exercises, the rhetor had to have ample legal knowledge, and Arn. manifests familiarity with forensic science.\(^{215}\) The goal of the **suasoria** was declamation, to persuade one's audience to accept a certain point of view.\(^{216}\) It was presented in the form of a speech written by the rhetor/student himself, but put into the mouth of a well-known historical figure. Hannibal was a favourite subject in Roman education.\(^{217}\) Arn. apparently refers to this device in 2.19.18ff.: those skilled in "oratoriam" do no more "ut loquamur suadenter in litibus". But he also uses it. **Suasoriae** would often attempt to establish whether an action was safe (tutum), legally permissible (ius), etc., and Seneca offers a good number of examples.\(^ {218}\) Compare key words that appear in Arn.'s conclusion to a series of **suasoriae** in 4.16.58-65 (e.g., "iusta"; "tutius"). Arn. is the first Christian writer to use this device in a critique of a pagan religious idea. One of the best examples is the ps. mentioned (4.16), where he plays off the five Minervas against each other in the form of short speeches put into the mouth of each goddess, which of course contradict each other. Another fine example to which we shall turn our attention in another chapter (VI infra) is the speech given by the innocent ox in 7.9 against animal sacrifice. Although technically each speech is representative of an exercise known as a **prosopopoeia**, the general tone of the argument fits well its description as a **suasoria**.\(^ {219}\) The former was an actual impersonation of a historical personage (cf. Arn. 4.16) through whom the rhetor could skillfully develop a major premise of his argument. Quintilian stated that Cicero's characters spoke in his speeches better than they did in real life.\(^ {220}\) It was the most difficult of all tasks related to the delivery of **suasoriae**.\(^ {221}\)

During the Great Persecution orators apparently formed only one segment of the upper classes/intelligentsia who were joining the

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\(^{215}\) E.g., Adv. nat. 1.59; 2.6; 2.19; 2.67; 4.34. The only studies in any detail of Arn.'s legal knowledge are Ferrini, art. cit., 343-6; and the obscure work by Mulvey: see p.90, n.198 supra.


\(^ {217}\) Bonner, op. cit., 279.

\(^ {218}\) Suas. 2.11; 5.18, 26 (LCL: Winterbottom); cf. Quin., Inst. 3.8.26; Bonner, op. cit., 279-87.

\(^ {219}\) Quin., Inst. 3.8.49.

\(^ {220}\) Ibid., 3.8.49f.

\(^ {221}\) Ibid., 3.8.50; Sen., Suas. 6.18.

\(^ {222}\) Quin., Inst. 3.8.49.
ranks of the faithful. As noted (p. 82, n.144 supra), Arn. discloses that "oratores grammatici rhetores consulti iuris ac medici, philosophiae etiam secreta rimantes" (2.5.15ff.) now seek instruction in the faith. Liebeschuetz has acutely observed that the Adv. nat. is significant for the evolving attitudes of the Roman classes, and Bossier made a similar observation. We should perhaps not interpret the ps. cited (2.5.15ff.) as being rhetorical exaggeration because evidence derived from an historical document describing events contemporaneous with Arn. confirms that Victor of Cirta (Constantine, Alg.), a "grammaticus latinus", was a Christian. Finally, although Diocletian's Edictum de pretiis fixes the rhetor's monthly salary at 250 denarii per student, many factors such as class size, his popularity, how many students actually paid fees at the end of term, - professors then did not have the blessings of advance term fees as they do now - whether he possessed a municipal chair, etc., hinder one's giving an estimate of Arn.'s social position, wealth, etc. Also, it is doubtful that the edict was promulgated/enforced in the West. Considerations of the provincial status of SV and Jerome's testimony, and Nicholson's suggestion that Eumenius' appointment as Professor of Latin Literature at Autun for 600,000 sesterces annually (and the restoration of its college) may have been part of official governmental policy to revive Latin letters (p. 7 supra), all strongly suggest that Arnobius enjoyed a prominent status as a rhetor in Roman N. Africa at the beginning of the fourth century. Jerome's assertion that Arnobius was a successful professor of rhetoric in SV is therefore absolutely credible.

...et adhuc ethnicus ad credulitatem somniis compelletur...

The Means And Motives Of The Conversion: Dreams.

Most scholars have accepted Jerome's account that dreams led Arn. to embrace Christianity. For example, Waszink suggests that

225 Gesta apud Zenophilum (CSEL 26: Ziwsa, p.185).
Adv. nat. 2.46.29ff. and Jerome's account do not conflict with each other – an argument used by some who reject the story's authenticity – "for in the second and third centuries of our era there was a general interest in dreams and their classification...in which unreliable dreams had their place no less than prophetic ones." Yet doubters remain. In 1.39 the motive of the conversion is not mentioned. Cyprian's account stresses deliverance from sin and vice through the holy water of baptism. Arn. emphasises the abandonment of former superstitious practices in favour of the true religion. Christ has simply led him to the truth. One should perhaps not expect Arn. to conceal the fact that he had been recently converted. Against McCracken (p. 15) we note that Adv. nat. 3.24 provides no occasion to speak of dreams. An argument from silence against Jerome is weak. A statement about the conversion being recent may have served a double purpose. First, it may have assured the bishop (see infra this ch.) of his sincerity to join his flock. Second, it may have prevented any hasty conclusions being made concerning the inauthenticity of his faith or orthodoxy of his religious ideas. On the latter note the sensitivity to his scriptural apology in 1.47: he twice states cautiously that he is only giving a summary. This may imply that his opponents were more familiar with the contents of Christian scripture than he.

One looks in vain, however, for an explanation as to how Arn. was converted. McCracken refers to the story about Jupiter's revelation to T. Latinius in a dream in Adv. nat. 7.39 as if it invalidated Jerome's account. Le Bonniec has observed, however, that the pagan was punished in the story for not positively responding to the message communicated by the dream. One should note also that 7.39 coheres well with 1.46.29ff. since the former high-

227 J.H. Waszink, VC 4, 1950, 117ff., p.118. 228 Cf. e.g., Cruttwell 2, 631; Neander, op. cit., 449; Freppel, op. cit., 32; Moule, DCB, 50; P. Schaff, History of the Christian Church. 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1892, II: 856; Oehler, op. cit., x; Bryce-Campbell, x; and Mulvey, op. cit., 10, who suggests that Jerome is reporting a legend.

229 Ad Don. 3 (CChr: Simonetti). 230 Adv. nat. 1.54-9. I am inclined to favour this view rather than Christian literature in a general sense.

231 McCr, 615, n.130, argues that Arn. used Cic., De div. 1.26.55. Q. Fabius Pictor is another possibility.

232 McCr, 15. 233 LeB, 9.
lights the ridiculous nature of Jupiter's revelation, viz. that to a dancer at the secular games. Both passages are restricted to vain dreams, and one should not deduce therefrom that Arn. interpreted all dreams in this manner.

A very common characteristic of humankind's religious experience in antiquity was the belief that the divine could make contact with human beings by means of dreams. It is evidenced in the thought of such philosophers as Plato and and Stoic Marcus Aurelius, \(^{234}\) and it is one religious experience that was common among both pagans \(^{235}\) and Christians. \(^{236}\) Thus we find that the historian Dio Cassius believed that a demon instructed him in a dream to write his history. \(^{237}\) And oneirocritical studies reached an apex with Artemidorus of Ephesus (late 2nd. cent. A.D.) who wrote a book of dream-interpretations. Aelius Aristides (A.D. 118-80), the greatest hypochondriac of antiquity (at least on record: Adv. nat. 1.49.1-16 informs us of thousands more), from 145-7 remained incubated in the temple complex at Pergamum and received prescriptions in dreams from Asclepius. \(^{238}\)

Turning to Roman Africa, Saturn frequently communicated to his devotees through dreams or ex visu. \(^{239}\) Though not related to Saturn, the latter experience is attested in epigraphical evidence from SV. \(^{240}\) From the annals of N. African Christianity we may note that Tertullian \(^{241}\) and Cyprian \(^{242}\) firmly believed in experiencing the divine...
per visionem. One can also recall the visions of the N. African martyrs, and there is the memorable dream of Monica. And by the end of antiquity, Macrobius, who is thought to have been a N. African, was able to comment upon a rather sophisticated classification of dreams: (1) somnium=enigmatic dream; (2) visio=prophetic vision; (3) oraculum=oracular dream; (4) insomnium=nightmare; and (5) visum=apparition. In respect of Arn. the neophyte supposedly led to Christ by dreams, it is worth noting the respect that Augustine held for the admonishing of God in a dream revealed to a potential catechumen. Revelations of this nature during sleep indicate God's willingness to admonish one to join the faithful. The fact that Augustine mentions this to Deogratias, who is seeking advice on catechetical exercises, suggests that this was a common experience among new converts to North African Christianity.

Relying upon the N. African evidence, the most common revelation appears to have been that ex visu or the simple visio of which Cyprian is so fond. For those who would discount as completely false Jerome's "somniis compelletur" on the basis of an argument from silence, a closer investigation of 1.46 may indirectly support his story. In enumerating the contemporary miracles of Christ, Arn. acknowledges "qui (sc. Christus) iustissimis viris etiammunc inpollutis ac diligentibus sese non per vana insomnia sed per purae speciem simplicitatis apparat...". The last six words are significant. Just before he has remarked that Christ revealed himself after his resurrection to many people in the daytime. The use of "apparat" is a definite affirmation of the belief in some kind of theophany. Possible noun parallels, to be compared with the salvific "aura" of 2.60, which is found in a discussion of a personal act of meditation, might be ex visu, visio, or even apparentia. Number five of Macro-
ius' Neoplatonic classification of dreams noted supra (p. 98) equates visum with apparition. These considerations may indeed indicate that Arn. believed in the ability of Christ to reveal himself to men in his day and only indirectly implies that an original personal experience of *ex visu compelletur* might have undergone a trans-mediterranean name change to "somniis compelletur". Jerome's reading into the last six words noted above (p. 98) his own experience could very well account for such such a change. 250

Jerome states how, but not why, Arn. became a Christian. That is, the content of the dreams/visions and the specific message which they revealed is unknown. References to the faith of the martyrs have been analysed in the preceding chapter, and they probably played a part in the conversion. 251 Some suggest the decision was prompted by a desire for immorality. 252 Considering the strong fear of death which Arn. himself confesses to have, a non-Epicurean idea analysed in the following chapter, this is another good possibility. Others have thought that dissatisfaction with paganism accounts for motives of the conversion. 253 Frend suggests a "profound disillusion with the old religion" caused the conversion, 254 while Newton and Mulvey specify the revolting character of the cult of Venus. 255 The moral superiority of Christ compared with the kind of religious ethics transmitted from the pagan cults may be another factor. 256 A major theme that binds together Books 3-7 is indeed the immoralities of the gods, and there always existed according to Liebeschuetz a rather ambiguous relationship between religion and morality in Roman religious paganism. Arn. reaches a powerful climax in his attack upon this very weakness in 6.25 (cf. 4.36), a criticism of the build-

250 Ep. 22.30 (LCL: Wright): "Ciceronianus es non Christianus."

251 Cf. Freppel, op. cit., 32; Moule, DCB, 50; Monceaux, III, 244, includes this in a list of possible motives, as does Moricca, I, 608; cf. LeB, 11.

252 E.g., Quasten, 2, 391 and F. Cumont, *Les religions orientals dans le paganisme romain*. 4th ed., Paris, 1929, 220, n.55, add the fear of death; Altaner-Stuiber, 184; LeB, 11, with ref. to 2.78; Monceaux, III, 244: above all it was an "intellectual" conversion.

253 Cruttwell, op. cit., 631; Neander, op. cit., 449.


256 Monceaux, III, 244; McGiffert, 2, 41; Moricca, I, 608f.

257 Liebeschuetz, op. cit., 39-54.
The significance of these are that every religious revival from Augustus, as Liebeschuetz has shown, during the imperial period included both moral reforms and the erection of temples. As we have noted in the preceding chapter (pp. 33ff.), during the Tetrarchy moral reforms were applicable to all provinces. But the most active programme of temple building/renovation appears to have been restricted to N. Africa. Arn. thus may have been writing during an attempted pagan revival in N. Africa. This would help to explain the sustained diatribe of the immorality of the deities in Books 3-7, and one reason why he became a Christian.

Yet it is Arn.'s soteriology that manifests itself as the determining guideline in attempting to discover the motives of his conversion, for two reasons. First, the main function of Christ in the work is salvific.²⁶⁰ He grants immortality to the human soul.²⁶¹ Indeed, it is the salvation (=immortalization) of the soul which comprises the centrepiece of Arn.'s defence of Christianity.²⁶² Notwithstanding the unquestionable appearance of the belief in temporal experiences of "salvation" - an admittedly ambiguous term which isanalysed in ch. VI infra - found in the work,²⁶³ his soteriology is predominantly coloured by an eschatological meaning. This fact may suggest what it was that appealed to him most about Christianity and what perhaps his former religious beliefs either lacked totally or did not clarify.²⁶⁴ Second, the clearly defined and unambiguous reli-

²⁵⁸ Warmington, op. cit., 33. ²⁵⁹ Op. cit., 236f. ²⁶⁰ Ch. VI.

²⁶¹ I.e., by transforming the media qualitas animae into an essential condition of immortality (2.65).

²⁶² In Bk. 2, the overriding concern is how the soul can become incorrupt; see ch. VI infra. For a different interpretation: McCr, 301.

²⁶³ I basically mean an experience that ameliorates some aspect of earthly existence, effected by a divine power: cf. 1.3;1.6 (wars reduced since Christ's coming: cf. Eus., PE 1.4);1.22;27;38f.;42;44-54; 63;65;2.2;12;34;60;63;65, etc.

²⁶⁴ I have argued that a principal cause of the religious success of Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world appears to have been its
...neque ab episcopo impetraret fidem quam semper impugnaverat, elucubravit adversum pristinam religionem luculentissimos libros, et tandem veluti quibusdam obsidibus pietatis, foedus impetravit.

Arnobius The Enemy Of The Faith And The Hesitant Bishop.

The Latin words cited above present themselves as thorns in the side for the modern historian who attempts to discover the extent of their accuracy. Jerome associates the bishop's hesitation to admit Arnobius into the church, taking here "fidem" to designate specifically a process of Christian indoctrination ultimately culminating in baptism and communicating membership in the local church at SV, with the fact that he always ("semper") used to attack it. In the first two Books it is interesting in light of Jerome's remark, that Arn. does betray a good amount of familiarity with contemporary pagan attacks upon Christianity, principally a number of Porphyrian anti-Christian comments, all of which may imply that Arn. is himself using some of the former weapons which he used against the Church now against his opponents. If this was so, we should view Books One and Two as retractations of the anti-Christian propaganda which Arn. himself "always" used against the faith. Two examples of similar recantations are Porphyry's acknowledgment that his ideas that the object of thought exists outside the νοῦς were not correct, having recanted in writing on his third response to Amelius' criticisms; 267 and Augustine's Retractationes written in 426/7. The former offers a better parallel with Arnobius. After reading his recantation at the Neoplatonic School in Rome, Porphyry says that he explicit eschatology compared with ambiguous/vague ideas about the end found in Isiacism and other pagan cults. This may be one factor which led to Saturn's downfall in N. Africa: the cult never had a well-defined eschatology. Cf. my A Study of Graeco-Roman Pagan and Christian Soteriologies of the Second Century A.D. S.T.M. Thesis catalogued in the Yale Divinity School Library, Yale University, New Haven, Ct. U.S.A. (1982). 265 See Ch. VI infra. 266 See Ch. 5 infra. 267 Vit. Plot. 18 (LCL: Armstrong): έκ τριτιων μόλις συνεις τα λεγομενα έγνα δ Ποσφυνιος μετεθεμεν και παλινψιαν γράφας εν τη διατερικη ανέγγειν.
"believed in Plotinus's writings" (LCL: Armstrong: κάκειθεν λοιπὸν τὰ τε Βιβλία τὰ Πλωτίνου ἔπιστεύην: Vit. Plot. 18). His recantation was thus a pledge of faith in Plotinus' teachings. He was converted, i.e., he began to use these new doctrines as the authoritative norms for his philosophical worldview. The same procedure may be applicable to Arnobius. The reason for writing Books 1-2 is best understood (as noted) as such a recantation rather than as an apology in the strict sense (i.e., J. Martyr, Clement Alex., etc.). And if Arn. was as ruthless in his opposition to Christianity as he displays (in Books 3-7) in his attack upon paganism, the bishop would have had sufficient reasons to question the sincerity of his desire to become a member of his church. Moricca has admirably described the dilemma which confronted the bishop: "A giudicarlo dall'impeto focoso con cui scrive, Arnobio dovett'essere per la comunità di Sicca un terribile avversario." Most scholars accept the story without critical analysis, some reject it, or assert that it is improbable, and others cannot come to a definite decision. Mulvey rejected it outright as spurious because Arn. claims to be a Christian (already) in 1.39, noting the "nunc" of 1.11, clearly


270 E.g., Altaner-Stuiber, 183; Buonaiuti, op. cit., 279, is worth quoting: "Nell'epoca di Diocleziano, la fede di Arnobio aveva tutti i requisiti per apparire completa in sé stessa, ricca anzi di virtù normativa per tutti i fratelli di sofferenza e di speranza." An exaggeration clearly going beyond the evidence. Cf. Burger, op. cit., 6: "Er war eher froh, einem Mann in seiner Gemeinde zu haben, der die Sprache der gebildeten Gegner so gründlich verstand."; F.A. Wright, Fathers of the Church. London, 1926, 140, rejects the story because he maintains that the work was written carefully and over a long period of time.

271 E.g., as in the case of E.G. Sihler, From Augustus to Augustine. Cambridge, 1923, 167.

272 Cf., e.g., E.J. Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature. Chicago, 1942, 282: "Whatever may be thought of this quaint story..."; McCr, 17: "If the story is to be accepted...". For the sincerity of Arn. the neophyte see now LeB, 11f., with bibliography. I find no hard evidence/good reason to accept Trithemius' assertion that Arn. was a "presbyter" (De script. eccles. 53); cf. LeB, 13, n.2.
failing to distinguish personal experience from official ecclesiastical recognition/acceptance.

Evidence from the N. African ecclesiastical tradition reveals that the only bishop known by name from Sicca Veneria who precedes Arn. chronologically is Castus. He attended the Seventh Council of Carthage on 1 September A.D. 256. It is not known, but improbable, that he was bishop in 302-5. The Decian and Valerian persecutions were still to come. And judging from the extant cemetery inscriptions derived from SV, one undoubtedly considered himself fortunate to have lived beyond seventy years. An analysis of SV's epitaphs has revealed that of 109 inscriptions, six males (5.5%) and three females (2.8%) had lived past 100; and the average life span was 47.5 to 59.2 years. Jerome's statement that he came to a bishop to be admitted into a church is certainly accurate. For Cyprian said: "No one can come to communion unless the hands of the bishop and clergy be first imposed upon him." And by the Council of Carthage in 411 the African bishops were "the masters of their small worlds and so virtually irremovable." Yet Cyprian nowhere in his works or in his epistles cautions against the acceptance of a pagan. His advice to Euchratius concerning a histrio appears to assume that the latter was a communicating member. He no doubt needed spiritual reindoctrination. Cyprian wrote mainly concerned about the unity of the Church in relation to schismatics and the lapsed seeking re-entry into the Church. This silence does not mean necessarily that there was not an episcopal policy related to admitting pagans who might be potentially dangerous to the unity and peace of the Church. Rhetors were not very popular in the eyes of the Church. Had not Tertullian years before in his argument as to whether a Christian should teach pagan literature finally concluded: "fideles magis discere quam docere litteraturae."
Koch suggested years ago that Cyprian might have written his Quod idola dixi non sint to demonstrate the sincerity of his desire to join the ranks of the faithful. And Hadot conjectures that M. Victorinus might have completed Hymns I-II for the same reason. Dölger's conclusion concerning the purpose for which the Adv. nat. was written may be correct: "Arnobius hat also seine Bücher gegen die Heiden geschrieben, um dadurch dem Bischof ein Unterpfand zu geben für die Wahrheit seiner Gesinnung und den Ernst seiner Bekehrung." We must analyse the ecclesiastical evidence from N. Africa. None of the councils of the Church sheds any light on the problem. The Synod of Elvira allows a period of two years for a catechumen, provided that he has a good name, but this was Spanish and took place c. 306. Augustine may at least indirectly help to elucidate the problem.

In the De catechizandis rudibus written c. A.D. 400, Augustine advises Deogratias about how to develop an acceptable catechetical method. If there is suspicion that the potential catechumen falsely desires the faith, the bishop writes, it is necessary to acquire information about his character and motives for seeking entrance into the Church. If this cannot be ascertained, then the man is to be interrogated accordingly. In the case of one whose views conflict with those usually expected of a candidate, Deogratias is advised to reprove him as to the end of Christian doctrine, but not to anticipate the times of a narration, which means not to set a date for the first catechetical instruction. Later he suggests that the educated are to be asked about the motives for desiring the faith. Augustine might have been relying upon an old episcopal tradition for his advice. Taking into consideration the fact that Deogratias is...

280 De idol. 10.5.  
281 H. Koch, Cyprianische Untersuchungen. Bonn, 1926, 53. Quasten, 2, 364, rightly asks whether the work was ever intended for publication.  
284 De cat. rud. 1 (CChr: Bauer).  
285 Ibid., 5.9.  
286 Ibid.  
287 Ibid., 8.12.
writing only five years after he was consecrated bishop may suggest that this was the case. Yet we do not have any hard evidence to establish that the bishop of SV in the early fourth century could rely upon such a tradition. The most prudent conclusion would be that both Augustine and Arn.'s bishop were possibly acting in accordance with established ecclesiastical tradition. But we must add that the bishop at SV did not need the latter to make the decision that Jerome says he made. The power and influence of the spoken word in antiquity, especially if it came from a professional rhetor, could be as influential as a modern news documentary on the BBC. And although Jerome does not inform us how Arn. "always" fought against the faith, it would be reasonable to assume that the possibility is great that he did so in the heart of SV, viz. in the class rooms where he lectured in or close by the forum. Hence if we take into consideration all of the aforementioned data together, it appears that there is little reason to reject Jerome's account as inaccurate. In light of this, Arn.'s refutation of the importation of the stone (=Magna Mater) into Rome which ends the work looks suspiciously like a final pledge of assurance - albeit indirectly, it was the closest parallel derived from Roman history to suit his purpose - to the bishop that the animistic practice described in 1.39 is now a thing buried in the past.289 We shall investigate in the next section the question of the acceptability of some of Arn.'s heterodox Christian ideas.

Accepted By The Church.

Jerome's final statement has not sufficiently been investigated. The main problem of investigation is whether there is intrinsic evidence suggesting that Arnobius indeed "foedus impetravit". Dölger has interpreted "fidem" and "foedus" in the passage as being synonymous with Christian baptism and the "obsidibus pietatis" as a "Garantiewerk der Frommigkeit".290 According to this hypothesis, full communicating membership did not occur until after the bishop had the Adv.

288 Adv. nat. 7.49ff. 289 Ibid., 7.49.11-4;7.50.1-5,13-8;7.51.1f. should be compared with 1.39.4ff. See ch. V infra for the main polemical purpose of the pss. noted from Book Seven.

290 Art. cit., 262f.
nat. in his hands as a pledge of the former antagonist's sincerity. The bishop then had tangible proof that Arn. wanted to go the via Christi (Books 1-2) and forsake the errors of the nationes (Books 3-7). But does Jerome's statement (p. 101 supra: English trans. in McCr, 2) allow this interpretation? Note that immediately after he mentions the bishop's decision not to permit Arn. to become a member of his church, we find the remark that he wrote his "most brilliant" books "adversum pristinam religionem". This is very similar to Porphyry's recantation noted above (pp. 101f.), after which he became a follower of Plotinus. Next comes "et tandem veluti quibusdam obsidibus pietatis, foedus impetravit." There are two possible interpretations. First, the bishop initially had very serious reservations/doubts about Arn.'s intentions to become a member of the faith which he had formerly attacked, but it was his decision to suggest (or require) that Arn. write some kind of recantation both of his anti-Christian comments and of his "pristinam religionem". Second, the bishop immediately rejected Arn. without giving any interest in receiving a tangible pledge of his sincerity. It was Arn. himself who decided independent of the bishop and perhaps without his knowledge, to write the Adv. nat. as a demonstration of his sincerity. Of these two possibilities, the present writer would argue for the first for the following reasons.

First, the bishop undoubtedly had enough forethought to know that his church would benefit from a change in the religious allegiances of a well-known (see p. 90, n.196 supra) and possibly prominent rhetor who had been causing problems for the Christian church(es) in SV (and probably beyond). Second, there are a number of passages in the Adv. nat. which strongly suggest that Arn. was actually existentially involved in the Christian religion (i.e., some kind of Christian community) during the period in which he was writing the work (the last quarter of 302 to before the end of 305). By existential involvement is meant a personal, non-literary knowledge of the Christian religion brought about as the result of experiencing worship in a Christian community/church. We shall analyse this evidence below. Added to this, however, is that it is very doubtful that Arn. was baptised either before or any time during the writing of the work. The same can be said about catechetical instruction. Cayré has
rather naively maintained that Arn. was baptised after he wrote Books 1-2. There is no intrinsic evidence in the Adv. nat. to confirm this position. If he was baptised at all, and Jerome's "foedus impetravit" would imply that this happened, it occurred after the work was written in seven Books. Third, on the objection that no bishop would have accepted such a mixture of heterodox beliefs as we find in Books 1-2, it must be emphasised that (1) the theological position of the bishop is unknown; and (2) the bishop might himself have suggested that Arn. write his best "profession of faith"/recantation of attacks upon Christianity and pagan religious beliefs and practices without being instructed, but concentrate upon attacking paganism. The remaining five Books would have compensated (according to this hypothesis) for any weaknesses of the first two, and the description of "weaknesses" disappears totally if we accept the proposed recantation hypothesis. How can the first two Books be called an apology when in fact Arn. betrays very little knowledge of that which modern historians impose upon him to defend? We hear nothing about the organization, liturgy, sacraments, or polity of the N. African Church. He is apparently ignorant of the Old Testament, and there are only two possible allusions to the New Testament (1.6.6f.; 2.6.24f.: although 1.45-8, 50 suggests a fair knowledge of Christ's miracles: see Leb, 330-7; 345-9). There is no mention about the Virgin Birth, the Holy Spirit, and as we have noted (contrary to some recent scholars), only one Christian predecessor is named (Peter). Also, he twice relates that he has recently been converted (1.39; 3.24). All of this argues for Arn. being an un instructed neophyte while he was writing the Adv. nat. Finally, the bishop undoubtedly interpreted a possible testimonium written by a prominent rhetor and a former enemy of the Church as an invaluable asset during a crucial period of conflict with two hostile forces: the cult of Saturn (see ch. IV infra) and the Great Persecution.

All of this seems sound enough, but we must investigate now more deeply the question of existential involvement in a church or a community of faith. The latter term would designate a small group of Christians that might meet on a regular basis for the study of scripture and prayer, forming a Christian environment outside the context of the local church. This is not an anachronistic suggestion: we find

\[^{291}\text{Op. cit., 270f.}\]
in the Gesta apud Zenophilum a section describing how Felix the curator of Cirta moved from house to house of the subdeacons, lectors, et al., and confiscated the manuscripts of the scriptures that they had. A similar situation probably existed at SV, and it might have been in the home of one such ecclesiastical personage who had befriended Arn. that he met on a regular basis - he himself says daily (analysed below), as does Crispina! - to learn about Jesus, his miracles (which he is probably recalling from memory in 1.45-8, 50), his divinity (see chs. III, V, and VI infra), how he immortalises the human soul (Adv. nat. 1.65), hell's torments (l.c. in 2.14; cf. 2.54), other basic teachings, and to pray. Involvement in catechetical instruction, however, is extremely improbable for the same period, although a number of scholars have suggested otherwise. "Nicht einmal am Katechumen-unterricht hatte er dann teilgenommen." Burger is right. Yet he perhaps goes too far to conclude that Arn. knew the Church only as an outsider, for this assertion cancels out the possibility that he had at least been exposed to (or even marginally involved in) some kind of Christian practices before his conversion and during the writing of the Adv. nat. It would appear safe to accept Le Bonniec's suggestion that 4. 36.22-30 displays personal experience of a Christian community: cur immaniter conventicula dirui? in quibus summus oratur deus, pax cunctis et venia resolutibus exercitibus regibus familiaribus inimicis, adhuc vitam degentibus et resolutis corporum vincione; in quibus aliud auditur nihil nisi quod humanos faciat, nisi quod mites verecundos pudicos castos, familiaris communicatores rei et cum omnibus.


295 Micka, op. cit., 75: Arn.'s knowledge of the N.T. was derived from catechetical instruction. Cf. Hagendahl (1958), 32, who believes Arn. was a catechumen at the time of writing. For not very clear reasons Neander, op. cit., 449f., asserts that the work betrays not a catechumen, "but a man already mature in his convictions, although not altogether orthodox according to the views of the church." See McCr, 249, n.136, for a complete list, and his discerning remark (p. 18): "If so, he was a remarkable catechumen indeed."

296 Burger, op. cit., 6. 297 Ibid., 58: Arn. derived his knowledge about Christianity from conversations with Christians and united these with his philosophical concepts. Clearly ignoring the possibility of an existential involvement in the faith.

298 LeB, 72.
quos solidet germanitatis necessitudine copulatos.

It is perhaps significant that Cyprian\textsuperscript{299} and Lactantius,\textsuperscript{300} both of whom were N. Africans, use \textit{conventiculum} to describe Christian places of worship, although the former uses it exclusively for schismatic churches. Indeed, in his dictionary under this entry, Blaise gives examples of its use, and all are derived from African sources.\textsuperscript{301} The phrase "in quibus summus oratur deus" may suggest a personal experience of public worship.\textsuperscript{302} Prayer to the Christian God reveals itself as the most conspicuous of Arnobius' Christian experiences. Twice he refers to the daily prayers of the Christians.\textsuperscript{303} He also informs us of the manner in which prayer is offered to God. Christians prostrate themselves before God's name.\textsuperscript{304} Tertullian gives a similar description of Christian worship in his day.\textsuperscript{305} It is to be observed that Christ receives the same kind of worship. He not only promises to grant immortality to the human soul, but he has manifested that the promise will become reality. His extraordinary miracles establish this. Christians fall down before his name and majesty and worship him:

\textit{Nunc cum eam Christus non tantum promiserit verum etiam virtutibus tantis manifestaverit posse compleri, quid alienum facimus aut stultitiae crimen quibus rationibus sustinemus, si eius nomini maiestatique substernimur, a quo speramus utrumque, et mortem cruciabilem fugere et vitae aeternitate donari? (Adv. nat. 2.34.14-20)

Hands are raised in supplication.\textsuperscript{306} Tertullian\textsuperscript{307} says the same, ad-

\textsuperscript{299} De unit. eccl. 12 (CChr: Bévenot; PL 4.509). Most often ecclesia, sometimes \textit{templa dei}, are used (e.g., De hab. virg.: PL 4.442).
\textsuperscript{300} Div. inst. 5.11.10. 301DLFC, 219. \textsuperscript{301} Cf. McCr, 565, n.237.
\textsuperscript{303} 1.26.16-20: "Delius Apollo vel Clarius, Didymaeus...et hic habendus divinus est, qui aut summum imperatorem nescit aut ignorant a nobis cotidianis ei precibus supplicari?"; 1.36.1-6: "Sed non, inquit, idcirco divinis adoratis...deum fuisse contediris et...cotidianis supplicationibus adoratis."
\textsuperscript{304} Cf. 1.27; 2.34.16ff. (Christ). \textsuperscript{305} Cf. De or. 23 (CChr: Diericks): "Ceterum omni die quis dubitet prostrernere se Deo uel prima saltem oratione, qua lucem ingredimur?" Ieiunis autem et stationibus nulla oratio sine genu et religio humilitatis more celeb randa est."
\textsuperscript{306} Adv. nat. 3.6.3f.: "Devotas etenim mentes et manus pretendimus supplices...".
\textsuperscript{307} Cf. De spec. 25.5 (CChr: Dekkers): "Illas manus quas ad Deum extuleris...". Cf. De or. 14;17.
dressing Christians. According to custom, Arn. claims, Christians fall down, worship, and pray in common supplications. He affirms that all nature should bend its knee in prayer to the Rex Summus. Christ himself has taught his followers how to pray to the rerum dominus. He has enough musical knowledge to be able to refer to the tonal intervals of sounds. This and his practical experience and theoretical knowledge of the art of elocution, may have led him acutely to observe the sound of the Christians' voices which they used in their prayers to God:

Qui (sc. Apollo) si pectorum secreta nesciret nec quid in intimis sensibus contineamus agnosceret, summum tam-en invocare nos deum et ab eo quod postulamus orare vel auribus potuit scire vel ipsius vocis sono qua utimur in precibus noscitare. (1.26.20-4)

Arn. may indeed be referring to the vocal intonations of the liturgy, in which case he would be describing an act of worship occurring in a church rather than the "community" which we have defined above (p. 108). And note 1.31.16f.: "Da veniam, rex summe, tuos persequen-tibus famulos...", a petition attached to a philosophically pregnant passage, and it looks badly out of place. A request of venia for one's enemies, compared with the "venia postulatur...inimicis,..." of 4.36.24f., would strongly indicate that Arn. is drawing from personal experience of Christian worship. The oratio dominica may be the immediate source. The phrase "pax cunctis et venia postulatur magistratibus exercitibus regibus" (4.36.24f.) includes elements similar to those found in Tertullian's description of Christian worship in his day: "Oramus etiam pro imperatoribus, pro ministri:eorum et potestatibus, pro statu saeculi, pro rerum quiete...". 314

308.1.27.6-12: "nihil sumus alius Christiani nisi magistro Christo summi regis ac principiis veneratores...Haec totius summa est acionis, hic propositus terminus divinorum officiorum, hic finis, huic omnes (nos) ex more prosternimus, hunc conlatis precibus adoramus...". 309.1.31.6f.: "cui tota conveniat vita genu nixo procumbere et continuatis precibus supplicare."

310.1.38.44ff.: "et cum domino rerum deo supplicationum fecit verba atque orationum conloquia miscere" (sc. Christus).


We may make the same observation in respect of prayer for "familiaribus" and "inimicis": Tertullian gives a similar description of Christian worship: "ut et huic praecesso pares sus orando pro omnibus, etiam pro inimicis nostris".\textsuperscript{315}

Common prayers offered "resolutis corporum vinctione" coheres with N. African ecclesiastical practices. One may refer to Perpetua's prayer made in prison for her dead brother, Dinocrates. She prays for him, then she sees him come out of a gloomy place. He died at seven years of age: "For him I made my prayer."\textsuperscript{316} Compare Cyprian: "Apud inferos confessio non est, nec exomologesis illic fieri potest" (Ep. 52). And there is nothing in Arn. 4.36 which may suggest that prayer is made for those "apud inferos." Yet Tertullian\textsuperscript{317} and Cyprian\textsuperscript{318} are familiar with the custom of praying for the dead, strictly speaking. Commemorative prayers for the martyrs were also quite common.\textsuperscript{319} Finally, the experience of praying for the dead may lie behind Adv. nat. 2.63. The pagan (probably Porphyry: see ch. III infra) asks what has happened to those who died before the advent of Christ. Arnobius' answer may have been derived from his having heard prayers made on behalf of the dead during Christian worship which he mentions in 4.36.23-30: "Miseratio et illis impartita est regia et aequaliter per omnes divina beneficia concurreunt: conservatae sunt, liberatae sunt et mortalitatis sortem conditionemque posuerunt" (2.63.18-21).\textsuperscript{320} Although specifically made in reference to Adv. nat. 1.26.20-4 (see p. 110 supra), Amata's comment holds true for all the passages related to Christian prayer which we have analysed: "Qui ci troviamo in presenza di un'assemblea che prega concordemente e coralmente. E' impensabile che Arnobio non vi abbia mai partecipato."\textsuperscript{321}

The last half of the passage reveals similar parallels. Note that "auditur" (4.36.27) followed by a short list of Christian virtues may imply admonitions heard in homilies. Arnobius' mention of

\textsuperscript{315} De or. 3.4. \textsuperscript{316} Pass. Perpet. et Fel. 2.3f. (ANF 3).

\textsuperscript{317} De monog. 10.4 (CChr: Dekkers): "Enimuero et pro anima eius orat, et refrigerium interim adpostulat ei, et in prima resurrectione consortium, et offert annuis diebus dormitionis eius." Cf. De or. 29.2: "Itaque nihil nouit nisi defunctorum animas de ipso mortis itinere reuocare...".

\textsuperscript{318} Ep. 66. \textsuperscript{319} E.g., Cyprian, Eps. 33.3 (PL 4.322f.); 36.2 (PL 4.328f.).

\textsuperscript{320} Cf. Apost. Const. 8.41. \textsuperscript{321} Art. cit., 524.
"verecundos" in 4.36.28 should be compared with Tertullian's remark in Ap. 35.5 that the pagans celebrate holidays of the Caesars without "urecundia". The next word in Arn. (4.36.28) is "pudicos", and with this we may compare Tertullian's "pudicitia" in the same passage (Ap. 35.5) which also follows "urecundia", in the context of a discussion about Christian worship. Similarly found in the section of the Apologeticus where Tertullian defends Christian worship, is the description of Christians as "casti" (Ap. 35.4), with which we should compare Arn.'s "castos" (4.36.28). Note the similarity between Arn.'s "mites" (4.36.28) and Tertullian's "modesta" of (again) Ap. 35.5. Comparison should also be made between Arnobius' "familiaris communicatores rei" (4.36.29) and Tertullian's similar statement, "Itaque qui animo animaque miscemur, nihil de rei communicacione dubitamus" (Ap. 39.11). Offerings taken up in the churches for Christian benevolence are perhaps indicated here and in the following, "et cum omnibus quos solidet germanitatis necessitudine copulatos" (Adv. nat. 4.36.29f.). This is a N. African ecclesiastical tradition attested in the works of Tertullian and Cyprian. If the Adv. nat. was written during a period of drought and subsequent crop failure and food shortage, such benevolence programmes might have had a profound effect upon Arnobius, pagan and neophyte.

324 De idol. 22; Ap. 39.6: offering to feed the poor and bury them, for orphans, old slaves, shipwrecked mariners, those in the mines, islands, prisons; Ap. 39.10: Christian fraternitas upheld by "substantia familiaris".
325 De unit. eccl. 24 (PL 4.518): sons of God behoved to be "fideliter sibi unanimitatis nexibus cohaerentes"; De hab. virg. (PL 4.449): "Divitem te sentiant pauperes, locupletem te sentiant indigentes..."; cf. De op. et eleem. (CChr: Simonetti); De unit. eccl. 27 (PL 4.520); Pont., Vit. et pass. Cypr. 2 (PL 3.1542f.); cf. Cypr., Ep. 35: encouragement to take care of widows, the sick, poor, and strangers, prisoners, and all in need; Ep. 6: the brethren aid those in need with their contributions.
326 See p.76, n.84. 327 E.g., 1.3;1.13;1.19;3.11;3.24 (may be the implication);6.2;6.16;7.38. Cf. esp. Liebeshuetz, op. cit., 254: "It might be concluded that in Africa the Great Persecution took place against a background of food shortage."
328 The Christian belief in a temporal experience of salvation which frequently entailed the effect of character upon character and emphasising the importance of meeting the individual's physical and
The underlying assumption of the aforementioned passages related to Christian worship has been that they reflect a personal involvement in the Christian religion. Arnobius is describing something which he has experienced. Yet because of the number of parallels that exist between Arn. in many instances and Tertullian, we must ask whether this assumption is legitimate. Do these passages in the Adv. nat. reflect a literary dependence only? The answer is no for the following reasons. First, remarks found in a number of passages help to establish that Arn. is describing various acts of worship from the perspective of a participant recently converted, who betrays only a superficial knowledge of the things he describes, which is what we would expect from an uninstructed neophyte. These are: the mention of daily prayers, which corresponds with Crispina's statement at her trial (p. 109 supra); the comment about the sound of Christians' voices during prayer (p. 110); two references to prayer for one's enemies, implying a knowledge of the oratio dominica (p. 110); remarks about prayers made for the dead (p. 111); and the statement that it is in the churches that Christians hear (4.36.27: "auditur") how to live virtuous lives. Second, we can legitimately accept both arguments without destroying the credibility of the present interpretation: literary influences (from Tert., Cypr., etc.) do not necessarily exclude the possibility that Arn. is basing his statements upon personal opinion. He is simply describing Christian experiences in the language of those whose ranks he has recently joined.\(^\text{329}\) Also, some of the parallels noted above are marginal, and there is enough difference between Arn. and (e.g.) Tert. to support the present argument. Finally, if we take the "literary dependence only" route, we are confronted with the difficult task of explaining the elements in Arn. not found in Tertullian. Third, Jerome's text does not allow an interpretation of immediate and total rejection by the bishop (p. 106 supra), and would imply that the opposite was true. A reasonable theory would be that the bishop himself required Arn. to write a recantation of his former religion and of his anti-Christian views. Arnobius' "straw man" was Arnobius, spiritual needs, may perhaps elucidate the motives of the conversion.

\(^{329}\) On Tert.'s influence upon Arn. see McCr, 45-7; LeB, 57f. I have not found any scholar who argues for anything other than a marginal similarity between various passages in Arn. and Cypr. Yet see ch. IV infra for a literary/conceptual dependence related to divine providence.
who was furnished with a significant amount, as we shall argue in Chapters III, V, and VI of this thesis, of very fine and powerful Prophyrian artillery.\textsuperscript{330} And it would be highly likely (according to this hypothesis) that each Book was submitted to the bishop immediately after it had been written. It is concluded that Arn. was personally (existentially) participating in acts of Christian worship in the context of a church; and on a daily basis most probably with a small group of fellow-Christians from Sicca Veneria, led perhaps by an ecclesiastical personage (deacon, subdeacon, lector) directly responsible to the bishop, that met for prayer/scriptural study. Jerome's "foedus impetravit" understandably receives no direct support from the Adv. nat. which establishes it as factual because it describes the very end of what certain statements of Arn. concerning Christian worship allow us to conclude was just the beginning of a lengthy process. Indeed, the lengthy nature of the process is confirmed by Jerome, who explicitly informs us that the Adv. nat. was not Arnobius' only pledge of sincerity.\textsuperscript{331} It would therefore be illogical to reject Jerome's "foedus impetravit" as being spurious.

Summary/Conclusion.

To sum up, Arnobius appears to have been a descendent of the Roman rather than the Greek race. It is all but absolutely certain that he was an orator who wrote the Adv. nat. during Diocletian's reign (Ch. I: the last quarter of A.D. 302 to before the end of 305). It is not ascertainable whether he enjoyed great repute as a rhetor (Chron. ad an. A.D. 327) or that he taught most successfully (De vir. ill. 79), but his rhetorical abilities reflected in the pages of the Adv. nat. would suggest that this might have been true. Although one cannot prove that Arnobius actually taught rhetoric at Sicca Veneria, Africa Proconsularia, several passages of the Adv. nat. betray enough familiarity with certain uncommon details of the culture of Roman North Africa that his African provenance can be

\textsuperscript{330}McCr., 45, uses the term "straw man" to describe the adversaries of Tertullian and Arnobius. For the Arn./Porph. connection see also pp.22ff.

\textsuperscript{331}In light of the little we know about Arn., it is regrettable that Jerome does not explain in detail the meaning of "obsidibus".
fairly well established. He might have been drawn to embrace Christianity as the result of visions rather than dreams. His acute knowledge of contemporary anti-Christian propaganda may intimate the dexterous retraction of (at least) some of his own criticisms of the Christian religion, but there is simply no indisputable proof that he always used to attack it (Chron., loc. cit.). One must equally acknowledge the absence of prima facie evidence derived from the N. African ecclesiastical tradition which either antedates or is contemporaneous with Arnobius that supports Jerome's contention that the bishop of Sicca Veneria did not permit him to join the Church. The tone of the work taken as a whole, the fact that he is more zealous to vituperate pagan religious (and philosophical) culture than to defend his rather superficial knowledge of even basic tenets of the faith, and the indirect support from later ecclesiastical sources, definitely do not invalidate Jerome's testimony. Finally, although one cannot establish from the text of the Adv. nat. that Arnobius was ultimately admitted into the Church, it would be groundless to argue that there is no evidence that suggests Arnobius was existentially involved in a Christian community/church. This implies that Jerome is describing the end of a long process of proving the sincerity of his desire to become a member of the church at SV, the beginning of which is evidenced in Arnobius' remarks, derived from personal experience, concerning worship. The conclusion is, therefore, that Jerome's biographical information about Arnobius appears to be accurate on most counts. 332

332 A possible inaccuracy is that Arn. may have been led to Christianity by visions rather than dreams. See pp.95-9 supra.
III

CONCEPTIONS OF GOD.

Introduction: Methodological Procedures.

Judging from the nature of the Christian ideas found principally (though not exclusively) in Books One and Two of the Adversus Nationes, it is certain that Arnobius cannot be described as a theologian whether we use ancient (ante-Nicene) or modern definitions of the term. Yet to be fair, he never gives his reader any impression that his pronouncements concerning the "High" God, Christ - he never refers to him as Jesus - and their possible affinity to the dii, are to be interpreted as attempts to theologize about the higher powers. As the preceding chapter has revealed, "to theologize or not to theologize" was not the question. Although he himself distinguishes between pagan theologians, historians, philosophers, and mythologists, the only classification into which he places himself is that of the humble worshipper of the "Most High King and Ruler under Christ as Master" (McCr: 1.27). He was undoubtedly aware of how deceptive it would have been to his Christian and informed pagan readers to claim the title of theologian. In light of this, one main fact that an Arnobian scholar should keep in mind is that the author of the Adv. nat. was an uninstructed neophyte during the period in which he was writing the work. Another important biographical point, as noted in the preceding chapter, is that Arnobius was a professional rhetorician whose main responsibility was to prepare "postgraduates" for a career primarily in the imperial civil service or at the bar. Thus one is quite justified in asserting that Arnobius could claim as little expertise as a philosopher before his conversion to Christianity as he did as a theologian after it. As Book Two reveals, however, one would be seriously mistaken to write him off as being ignorant of either

1 The reader will recall that Books 1-2 contain what most call the "apology," but I have suggested (pp.101f.; 106f.; 113f. supra) that they are best understood as a recantation of his former anti-Christian views. Books 3-7 attack pagan deities (3-5) and cultic practices (6-7).
2 Adv. nat. 1.39; 3.24. 3 See LeB, 35, n.1 for a lengthy list.
4 See pp.113ff. supra, and the conclusions to the present chapter.
historical or contemporary philosophical doctrines/arguments. Note that in the two passages in which he refers to the religious ideas that he espoused before his conversion to Christianity (1.39; 3.24), there is no hard evidence that suggests he was anything more than an ordinary pious pagan. In respect of both philosophy and theology, it would be accurate to call Arnobius a well-read layman.

For the reasons which will become clearer as the argument of the present enquiry develops, the present writer is very hesitant to label Arnobius an "orthodox" or "unorthodox" or even "heterodox" Christian. More unsuitable still would be the epithet "heretic."

Methodological problems are the major prohibitive factors. He was writing during the ante-Nicene period. Also, one would have to establish the irreducible norms applicable to an understanding of orthodox Christian concepts (i.e., doctrines) which were current within North African Christianity during the period A.D. 302 to 305. Since the ancient ecclesiastical sources are almost non-existent for this period, region, and most importantly, subject, one is thrown back to earlier writers, the best guide being Cyprian. Yet although Cyprian might be used as a source for orthodox beliefs, the problem is further compounded, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, if one accepts Jerome's testimony that it was the bishop of Sicca Veneria who refused to admit Arnobius into the faith because he had always attacked it. We recall that Jerome's remark in the Chron. was interpreted to mean that the bishop was the one who required some kind of statement of loyalty from Arnobius, although this is not exactly what Jerome states (p. 101 supra). One is absolutely ignorant of what specifically would have been acceptable to the bishop of Sicca Veneria as orthodox. But Jerome intimates that the bishop did receive the work as a statement of such loyalty, hence the argument in Chapter II that he demanded this at his initial encounter with Arnobius. Indeed, even if he had certain dogmatic standards from which he did not allow the communicating members of his congregation to deviate, his expectations of the neophyte who was also a former enemy of the faith were most probably of a totally different category: the first two Books are much better understood as retractions of former criticisms of the faith.

5 See pp.101-5 supra. 6 See pp.105-14 supra.
rather than as an apology in the classical sense.\(^7\)

Hence one can easily understand why, in respect of the development of Christian dogma during the ante-Nicene period, Arnobius has not contributed any doctrinal legacy with which later generations positively associated his name. One need not, however, go as far as Burger and give an absolutely negative appraisal: "Einen Beitrag zur Geschichte der Apologetik darf man von der Untersuchung der theologischen Aussagen des Arnobius nicht erwarten."\(^8\) Yet the Decretum Gelasianum attests the conclusion accepted by the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the sixth century that the *Adversus nationes* was apocryphal,\(^9\) and Jerome himself suggests that one must select the good found in the the work and discard the bad.\(^10\) Undoubtedly this is a reference to what must have appeared to him as heterodox (or perhaps even unorthodox) ideas which occur in the "apologetical" section (Books 1-2). But the fact that he found something acceptable in the work – he makes the same judgment about the works of Origen, Tertullian, Novatian, and Apollinarius – meant that not everything was reproachable.

This introduction has clarified, in very general terms, some basic methodological procedures related to the study of Arnobius' Christian concepts. This is only one side of the coin, however. Christian and pagan beliefs, philosophical and more so religious, most often conflict in the *Adversus nationes*. Sometimes they converge to create a quite bewildering kaleidoscope of concepts which will forever receive anachronistic misnomers until this document is studied for its own sociohistorical significance. It is hoped that a preliminary recognition of just such a convergence will produce the kind of results that will be innocuous to future enquiries into Arnobiana. Suffice it to say at this juncture that the professor of rhetoric was the recipient of some kind(s) of tradition(s), and it is now necessary to attempt to identify the extent to which tradition and experience are related to his conceptions of the Christian God.


\(^{9}\) See Ch. I, 1, n.1 supra. \(^{10}\) Ep. 62.
Modern Research: The Epicurean Debate.

There have been four works published in the post-World War II period which have covered Arnobius' concept of God in any detail. Focusing exclusively upon those passages which discuss divine anger, Micka argued that a predominantly Epicurean idea of God is found in the *Adversus nationes*. One major weakness of this thesis is that it rather automatically associates Epicureanism with any passage found in the work that communicates a concept of divine impassibility without giving fair and serious attention to other possible explanations. Also, Micka puts all of his eggs in one basket in another way by paying so much attention to what Arnobius' God does not do to man in a negative sense - viz. he does not become angry at man and seek revenge, punish him, et al. - that he almost totally ignores what he does do to/for him in a positive sense. Especially in respect of the latter, it will be shown in this investigation that there is sufficient evidence in the *Adv. nat.* that invalidates the major premises of Micka's thesis.

McDonald's article is a general survey at best, and no attempt is made to identify possible pre-Christian philosophical and religious influences upon Arnobius' concept of God. Although Burger's study was not published, we should make the observation that the German scholar has convincingly demonstrated the Platonic nature of Arnobius' concept of God. It is to be noted, however, that he paid too little attention to Neoplatonic and Christian influences. Both McDonald and Burger did not attempt to ascertain whether there exists enough evidence in the *Adv. nat.* that might allow one to identify the Arnobian conception of divinity (God, Christ, and the gods, basically the former's relation to the latter two, hence the title of this chapter) as being Epicurean. One of the main purposes of the present study is to establish the extent, if any, to which Epicurean philosophy influenced Arnobius' understanding


of divinity.

In his article published in 1973, Jufresa succinctly elucidated the main problems inherent in the attempt to identify Arnobius' concept of God as Epicurean solely on the basis of divine impassibility, and offered an alternative tradition that possibly underlies this aspect of the African rhetor's thinking which is significant for our analysis:

Although he accurately identified the symptoms, Jufresa regrettably did not treat the disease. His conclusion is that the basic ideas characterising Arnobius' understanding of God can be better explained if they are included in the heterodox religious beliefs current in Africa during the end of the third century A.D., rather than to attribute to them an Epicurean origin. Finally, an excellent general survey of Arn.'s concept of God appears in an appendix of Amata's recent work.
One can easily deduce from the above that scholars have not reached a consensus regarding the extent to which Epicureanism influenced Arnobius. Like Micka, some have understood such influence to be restricted to his concept of God. One may refer to the recent conclusion of Contreras: "His god is more the god of Epicurus than the God of the Bible: indifferent and impassible." Contreras did not substantiate this faulty assumption by comparing Epicurean texts with those passages in Arnobius which convey an indifferent and impassible God. Indeed, one can say the same about Micka's thesis. Similar interpretations are given by e.g., de Labriolle, Mulvey, Quasten, Rapisarda, Bardy, Liebeschuetz, and Hallman. Yet none of these has made a thorough study of all passages in the Adv. nat. which are pertinent to Arnobius' concept of divinity, which occur in every Book of the work, and then compared these with those doctrines about the divine nature which Epicurus, Philodemus, Lucretius, Velleius, and Diogenes of Oenoanda (et al.) espoused. It is reasonable to assume that if Arnobius is the Epicurean that some have claimed him to be, a critical comparison of this nature should settle once and for all that his concept of divinity is unquestionably indebted to the School of the Garden. Thus, every conclusion resulting from a study using this kind of method should be corroborated by statements derived directly from the Epicureans themselves, assigning primary importance to Epicurus and Lucretius. The present study will have two basic methods. It will be critical and constructive. For example, how should one interpret Contreras when he describes Arnobius' God as being "indifferent and impassible"? If by


23 2, 388. 24 E. Rapisarda, "Arnobio. Cantania, 1945, 126, n.1: Epicurean influence upon Arnobius' idea of God did not endanger his orthodoxy!


"indifferent" he is referring to the Epicurean belief that the gods, existing in the intermundia, are not concerned about the welfare of humankind and do not intervene to ameliorate human existence in any way, then it is not difficult (as we shall establish) to demonstrate the fallacy of this view. Also, the concept of divine impassibility was not restricted to Epicureanism, and one can mention in this respect the Stoics. Note Balbus' statement: "Nam et perturbatis animis unducuntur (sc. dii): accepimus enim deorum cupiditates aegritudines iracundias." 28 The underlying concept is that of Stoic ἀπάθεια. 29 A more significant example can be found in the Neoplatonic philosopher – and a contemporary of Arnobius – Porphyry, who wrote the following to his wife Marcella c. 300/1: οὐ χολωθέντες οὖν οἱ θεοὶ βλάπτουσιν, ἀλλ' ἀγνοθέντες: ὡριγ γὰρ θεῶν ἀλληρία, ὅτι ἐπ' ἀθουλθοῖς μὲν ἡ ὀργὴ, θεῷ δὲ οὐδὲν ἀθολθοῦν. 30 This may imply Epicurean influence, but compare the following, derived from the Contra Christianos which Methodius of Olympus cites:

τὸ ὠφέλησον ἦμᾶς ὁ νῦν τοῦ θεοῦ σαρκωθεὶς ἐπὶ γῆ καὶ γενόμενος ἀνθρώπος; καὶ διὰ τὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ σχήματι λύσετο παθεῖν καὶ ὁκὴ ἀλλ' τινὶ τιμαρία; καὶ τὸ χρῆσιν τοῦ σταυροῦ; πῶς δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ νῦν, ὁ Χριστός, ἐν βραχεῖ τε καὶ περιφρισμένῳ κρόνῳ διαστολαῖς σώματι εκεχώρητο; καὶ πῶς ἀπαθὴ ἄνεν εγένετο ὑπὸ πάθους; 31

Hence he rejected the Christian concept of the incarnation on the grounds that a deity cannot undergo sufferings. Christ was not impassible. He therefore was not a god. We should be extremely careful not to identify as Epicurean a passage in the Adv. nat. because it portrays an impassible deity.

There have been very few scholars who have maintained that Arnobius was an Epicurean philosopher in toto. Notwithstanding those who have either classified him as an eclectic philosopher 32 – a view which is commendable in itself – or a Stoic, 33 some prominent scholars have

28 Balbus ap. Cic., De nat. deor. 2.70.xxviii (LCL: Rackham).
30 Ad Marc. 18 (Bude: Des Places).
31 Methodius Καὶ Πορφυρῖον (= Harnack CC Fr. no. 84) ap. GCS 27, 503: Bonwetsch.
referred to him as being an Epicurean. However, these statements appear to have been made in passing and seem not to have been the results of critical investigations. Klussman's study of Lucretian influence upon Arnobius caused him to conclude that he had been an Epicurean before his conversion to Christianity. A major premise of his argument rests upon the presumption that a long interval occurred between Arnobius' involvement in idolatry and his Christian conversion, the main text being Adv. nat. 1.39. One weakness of this on the positive side is that Klussman incorrectly assumes that all Epicureans abstained from the worship of images. But note the academic Cotta's declaration: "novi ego Epicureos omnia sigilla venerantes" (De nat. deor. 1.85.xxx). More will be said about this. On the negative side, an overwhelming majority of scholars who have analysed the nature and extent of Lucretian influence manifested in the Adv. nat. would not agree with Klussman's conclusion that Arnobius was an Epicurean. These include Jessen, Röhrich, Spindler, Tschiersch, Dalpane, Gabarrou, Rapisarda, Marchesi, and Hagendahl. The latter has done the most thorough analysis of


36 It is commonly believed that any Epicurean influence upon Arn. derives from Lucretius. Epicurus' name appears in 2.9.16 and 2.30.32.


44 C. Marchesi, "Questioni arnobiane", ARVS 88, 1929, 1009-32, p.1024.

45 H. Hagendahl, Latin Fathers and the Classics. A Study of the Ap-
Lucretian influence upon Arnobius. He concluded that there are three major areas of positive influence: the world was not created for man, the belief in the mortality of the soul, and the inability of a deity to become angry. The latter is debatable, as noted already. Yet in taking up Klussman's gauntlet by using the same text (Adv. nat. I.39) against him, he asserts: "If Arnobius had ever been an Epicurean, he would surely have shown some reminiscence of Lucretius' contempt for such acts of worship."\(^{46}\) One should understand that the cutting edge of Hagendahl's argument is that any positive Epicurean influence upon Arnobius is to be derived solely from Lucretius' poem. He observes that "nuper" in I.39.10 opposes "nunc" in I.18 of the same passage, which taken together, is inconsistent with Klussman's contention that there was a lengthy interval between the practice of idol worship and the Christian conversion.

It therefore appears that the identification of Arnobius as an Epicurean philosopher is absolutely groundless. Yet as noted above, the modern debate hinges quite acutely, and at the present moment perilously and equivocally, upon whether one can rightfully conclude that the concept(s) of divinity found in the Adv. nat. should be described as Epicurean. A tentative negative conclusion can be given forthwith. Two general examples will suffice. Note that in 3.24, the other passage (cf. I.39) that discloses any information about his pre-Christian religious beliefs and practices, Arnobius states: "At-quin ego rebar paulo ante, spontaneas esse numinum benignitates ul¬troque ab his fluere inexpectata benivolentiae munera" (3.24.6ff.). Here we find Arnobius speaking in the first person about the ideas which he held until his recent conversion. Although brief, the remark gives us enough evidence to argue against an Epicurean concept of a divinity. The "paulo ante" would also clearly invalidate Klussman's interval theory. One may go further. Epicureans would not have found acceptable the belief that kindnesses ("benignitates") and gifts of benevolence ("benivolentiae munera") spontaneously poured forth

\[^{46}\text{Hagendahl, op. cit. (1958), 17, n.2.}\]
"fluere") from the gods. The context of the passage, with a central theme being the discussion of divine providence (See Ch. IV infra.), exhibits that humans are to be understood as the intended objects of the blessings (receiving the rain, wind, harvests, etc.) flowing from the deities in heaven. Not only does this pericope establish that Arnobius believed in the beneficial contact between the divine and human worlds actually occurring, but also that he held this view before and after his conversion to Christianity. He makes a similar statement in 6.2, a passage which enumerates the characteristics of true deities which we shall analyse (with others) in Chapter V. One of these is that the dii should show impartial benevolence to all (6.2.21f.: "et individuas cunctis benivolentias exhibere."). According to Epicurean theology, the expression of this kind of concern for human beings, indeed any kind of concern good or bad, was the indisputable mark of weakness (De nat. deor. 1.124.xliv). These concepts of Arnobius do not cohere at all with those of Epicureanism. According to the latter, the deities were aloof from and totally unconcerned about intervening into the affairs of humankind. They reposed in their own ἀτοµῆς. And it happens that a crystal clear idea of divine providence, indebted to Cyprian's De bono patientiae (Ch. IV infra), follows this statement. Epicureans did not believe in divine providence. One is well advised seriously to consider Festugière's caution (in addition to Jufresa: p. 121 supra):

Ce qu'on a appelé l'épicurisme d'Arnobe me paraît très exagéré. Les imitations littéraires de Lucrèce ne prouvent rien sur le point de la doctrine et de l'esprit... La doctrine de l'ἀτοµῆς divine n'a rien de spécialement épicien: c'était un lieu commun dans la théologie païenne de l'Empire, et les stoïciens ont au moins autant contribué à la répandre. 47

The final example concerns the cardinal Epicurean theological tenet which held that the gods were quasi-anthropomorphic in appearance. This is apparently to be taken to mean that their bodies are very similar to the bodies of human beings. Philodemus thought that 48

the gods ate and drank. And Sextus Empiricus, following Epicurus himself, refers to gods' possessing lungs, tongues, et cetera. Compare Lucretius, who simply refers to the gods' bodies (De rer. nat. 5.151-4). A comparison should be made between statements made by Velleius and Arnobius. The former affirms: "Nam a natura habemus omnes omnium gentium speciem nullam aliam nisi humanam deorum...", etc. (De nat. deor. 1.18.xlvi). Arnobius does not concur, for in 3.12-19 he develops a sustained attack upon the anthropomorphic gods. Note especially 3.16.30ff.: "Nam quid in homine pulcrum est, quid, quaeso, admirabile vel decorum, nisi quod et clurino cum pecore nescio quis auctor voluit esse commune?". Similar to 6.2, in 7.15 Arnobius enumerates the true characteristics of the dii, and the first axe to grind is interesting: "(Primum) ut neque illos credas quicquam hominis habere consimile" (7.15.12ff.). In his comparison of pagan and Christian concepts of divinity in 7.35.24-28 he makes the same assertion. He may not know the form of God, but he is certain that it is not human.

It should be obvious to the reader that one modern problem related to Arnobian studies is whether the concepts of divinity found in the Adv. nat. can be correctly called Epicurean. By thoroughly analysing all relevant passages, it is a main purpose of the present study to resolve this problem by identifying possible non-Christian traditions in Arnobius' thought and ascertaining their relationship to any discernible Christian influence.

A final preliminary observation is necessary. In a vast majority of passages wherein Arnobius makes a statement about the Christian High God - Burger has called him the "Highest" God - he invariably uses some kind of epithet to describe the particular aspect of the divine nature that he is describing. Inversely, he often uses an epithet when he describes the divine being apophatically. According to the number of occurrences found for each epithet, it is important


50 "Vos hominum similitudinem gerere et mortalium vultibus existimatis esse formatos: nos effigies remur submotas ab his longe, quoniam forma mortalis est corporis, et si forte est ulla, comprehendere neminem posse indubitabili adseveratione iuramus."

51 Adv. nat. 3.19.19ff.: "Unus est hominis intellectus de dei natura certissimus, si scias et sentias nihil de illo posse mortali oratione depromi." This is in a lengthy passage in which Arn. uses much apophatic language to speak of the Christian God.
to note now that there are twenty-eight for princeps and seven for the similar principalis, totalling thirty-five together and depicting Arnobius' preferred epithets; twenty-six for rex; fifteen for pater; fourteen for dominus; eleven for omnipotens; ten for caput; seven for primus; five for auctor; five for fons rerum; four for imperator; three each for moderator, summus deus, and conditor; two each for columna, constitutor, procreator, sator, and deus superior; and only once each for

52 1.25.16; 27.7; 28.36; 32.8; 33.2; 53.11; 65.33; 2.2.13; 14; 15.4; 16.7; 19.10; 25.4; 32.4; 35.14; 36.12; 48.2; 8; 53.6; 55.6, 26f.; 60.12; 61.14; 65.4; 74.1; 3.3.12; 6.7; 4.19.20. Cf. J.M.P.B. van der Putten, Arnobii Adversus Nationes, 3.1-19, uitgegeven met inleiding en commentar. Thesis Leiden, 1970, 43, who gives 32 including principalis, followed by LeB, 250; McCr, 279, n.101, gives 18.

53 2.6.7; 22.10; 36.20; 37.2; 48.21; 64.4; 3.3.7. Technically the miseratio regia of 2.63.18f. makes the total 27; cf. 1.26.14f.; 27.7 (with princeps); 31.16; 33.5; 42.11; 60.16; 61.1; 64.33; 2.6.7 (with principalis); 35.6; 36.11, 24; 39.1; 44.1; 47.13; 51.13; 55.6 (with princeps); 58.4; 65.35; 74.1 (with princeps); 75.22; 3.3.10, 12 (the latter with princeps); 6.7 (with princeps); 3.24.8f.; 6.3.6 (with dominus and caput). LeB, 254 (on Adv. nat. 1.26.3) gives 16 occurrences for rex; on 2.63.18f.: P=miserationet; Marches=miseratio.

54 1.28.4; 25.40; 55.11; 2.2.15; 13.12; 15.5; 16.11; 28.25; 35.21; 36.2; 4.4; 2.65.22; 74.23; 3.2.10. Pater in 1.38.20 is a demiurgic creator.

55 1.25.17; 33.5.12; 38.45; 2.13.12; 15.4; 33.20; 60.21; 62.26; 74.24; 3.2.10; 4.19.20; 6.3.5; 7.2.10.

56 1.34.7f.; 36.2; 2.37.12; 45.2; 53.9f.; 55.3; 62.14; 72.8; 75.18f.; 78.1; 7.2.10f.

57 1.29.4; 2.2.15; 45.19; 46.3; 48.22; 60.32; 72.14; 3.2.14; 3.7; 6.3.5.

58 2.6.25; 29.25; 43.1; 52.24; 72.8; 3.2.9 (bis). Cf. van der Putten, op. cit. (1970), 33, who gives: 2.6.2.29; 2.52; 3.2.

59 1.30.17; 63.25; 2.32.2; 46.13; 7.35.23.

60 1.28.36; 34.12; 2.2.15; 45.18; 72.14. Note that Rapisarda (1945), 53, deduces from the use of fons rerum in 1.34.12 that God is the "creatore di tutte le cose, ed anche dell'uomo...". This inaccurate interpretation is due to the author's eisegesis of passages in Arn. to defend his orthodoxy. See the section on the creator infra.

61 1.26.18; 2.3.2; 35.28; 65.36f. 63 1.33.6; 2.74.23f.; 3.2.10.

62 1.26.21f.; 4.36.24; 7.35.15f. 65 1.29.23; 2.2.16; 45.2.

63 1.29.5; 2.46.4. 67 2.44.7; 3.2.10. 68 1.31.2; 2.45.3.

64 1.34.12; 2.45.3. 70 Actually once for deus superior (2.47.16), but cf. the very similar "potentiae superioris" of 2.20.3. J.C. Plume, "Some Critical Annotations to Arnobius", VC 3, 1949, 230-6, uses the latter to support his agreement with Zink's emendation of 1.42.11f.="inferiorum potentiarum deus" (F="interiorum", retained by Sabaeus, Salmasius, Orelli, Reifferscheid, and Marchesi). He refers
causa prima (1.31.7), conservator (2.65.1),\textsuperscript{71} liberator (2.32.11f.), maximus (2.52.27f.), unus (4.13.11), verus (7.2.12),\textsuperscript{72} divinitas (3.2.8), fabricator (1.29.25), fundamentum (1.31.8), fundator (2.2.15), genitor (1.29.25), locus rerum ac spatium (1.31.8), opifex (1.29.24), salus rerum deus (2.46.3), salutaris deus (2.78.6), sapientissimus and iustus (2.46.5). At first sight, some of these (e.g., fons rerum, imperator, procreator, fabricator, salutaris deus, etc.) would tend to count against an Epicurean identification. Others (e.g., primus, causa prima, fons rerum) may betray either a Platonic or a Chaldaean influence. Throughout this chapter and those that follow, we shall attempt to isolate and identify the underlying philosophical and religious traditions belonging to a good number of these epithets.

Finally, we should make a few brief historical observations. Religious polyonymy of the kind similar to that reflected by the Arnobian epithets above had a rather rich history in the paganism of the Roman Empire. It certainly was not restricted to Christianity. In respect of religious paganism in the empire, it was often characterised by syncretistic/henotheistic tendencies. Syncretism may have led to the downfall of Isiacism.\textsuperscript{73} Whether this is true or not, the μπρέσερ concept was widespread in the ancient world under the Roman Empire. We find its occurrence in the work of Arnobius' compatto J. Barbel, "Christos Angelos", Theophaneia. III, Bonn, 1941, 50-63, esp. 60ff.: in J. Martyr Christ the λόγος is the highest θεος-δύναμις, the leader of all other angels or powers. Yet in 2.20.3 Arn. is referring to the High God, and "interiorum" occurs in a larger context which represents a counter-attack upon Porphyry's (Phil.or.) vituperation of Christ's divinity (1.34-47), partly supported by Chaldaean theology (Ch. V infra). P coheres with this anti-Chaldaean position: cf. the acute remark of Bryce-Campbell, ANF 6, 424, n.7. I agree.

\textsuperscript{71} Although this appears on the lips of a pagan and McCr translates "a preserver", it enters the Arnobian list of epithets because (1) it describes Christ in a very important soteriological ps. (2.63f.) and (2) the salvific power and missions of Christ have been made possible by the command and direction of the High God.

\textsuperscript{72} Analysed in section II of this study. McCr does not capitalise "true" in 7.2. Yet its use in the ps. suggests Christian influence: gods must be like deus verus in nature. For its use in Tert. see R. Braun, 'Deus Christianorum,' Recherches sur le vocabulaire doctrinal de Tertullien. FLA XLI. Paris, 1962, 74ff.

\textsuperscript{73} As a result of the syncretistic annihilation of Isis she "alone claimed an infinity of divine titles: and became all things to all men." R.E. Witt, Isis in the Graeco-Roman World. London, 1971, 121. A pertinent discussion (Apuleius) with bibliography can be found in my Yale thesis, 3ff.
riot, in the Isiac aretalogy from Maronee, and in a famous papyrus from Oxyrhynchus. Nock has observed its appearance in Talmis, in N. Africa; MacMullen also, in many places related to many gods and goddesses; Frend, at Idicra (Azziz ben Tellis) near Cirta, who refers to Adv. nat. 3.6! One could continue to give similar examples. It is enough to keep the historical flow of ideas in proper perspective if only to avoid experiencing any historian's nightmare: making faulty, groundless generalizations! Yet one generalization is appropriate: Arnobius' polyonymy is often philosophically inspired, non-syncretistic, and basically abstract. We should also add that many of the above epithets are not commonly found in the Literature of North African Christianity. This is exactly what we would expect from a neophyte who is not receiving any catechetical instruction, and nobody has described Arnobius' situation any better than van der Putten: "Arn.' religieuze terminologie is niet bijzonder genuanceerd; ze lijkt meer aansluiting te hebben met heidense dan met christelijke spraakgewoonten, hetgeen bij een nieuwe bekeerling als Arn. niet verwonderlijk is." When it is necessary, we shall focus upon the technical or otherwise significant nuances of any of the epithets enumerated above in respect of sources, underlying traditions, and so forth. All the epithets listed above and indeed everything that Arnobius has to say about the nature of divinity, can be neatly placed in one of three main classifications: God and the world (i.e., man, his natural environment, and the

74 Apuleius, Met. 11.5 (LCL: Adlington-Gaselee) gives a theophany "nomine multiugo"; 11.22: "multinominis" describes Isis; etc. For the concept of ποτιώνωμεν see the excellent work of J.G. Griffiths, The Isis-Book. (Metamorphoses, Book XI). Leiden, 1975, 142-5.

75 Line 20 of the Maronee aretalogy in Yves Grandjean, Une nouvelle aretalogie d'Isis à Maronee. Leiden, 1975, 17.

76 Paxy no. 1380, 11.43-64 (Grenfell-Hunt: vol. XI, 202); cf. Plutarch, De Is. et Os. 377D.


great cosmos beyond him), God and Christ, and God and the gods.

I. God And The World.

Arnobius' understanding of God takes into account the manner in which the deity relates himself to the world, including humanity, man's natural environment, and the great cosmos beyond him. There are two main subdivisions. First, there is a significant number of passages in which Arnobius focuses sharply upon a divine concern for man's temporal and non-temporal (eschatological) welfare. A belief in a deity who initiates beneficial contact with mankind is clearly delineable in the Adv. nat. And the temporal benefits resulting from such contact can be characterised, for the purposes of clarity, as being sometimes "spiritual," sometimes "non-spiritual," although Arnobius probably will not have made such a distinction. Sometimes God is depicted as being immanent and approachable, indeed as he who takes the initial approach to man. This understanding of his nature is most frequently found in those passages which treat the worship of the Christian deity (See pp. 105-14 supra). On the other hand, a number of passages portray an exalted, quite transcendent deity. His nature and being are mysterious, almost totally unknown and unknowable, and often Arnobius' only recourse is to describe him in apophatic terms. Organically related to the latter is the affirmation that the High God was not the immediate creator of human souls.


In respect of the first subdivision noted above, those passages which underscore an approachable deity, who is able to be experienced, and who is concerned about satisfying man's collective and individual needs, often manifest themselves in references to Christian worship. Human dependence upon God in acts of worship, mostly prayer, and a concomitant divine concern positively to respond to human needs and satisfy them, characterise a majority of passages in this subdivision. The reader will immediately notice that these

81 See the conclusions to this chapter for an explanation of the reasons why I am organising pss. related to worship separately.
ideas do not convey an Epicurean understanding of divinity. If it can be established that Arnobius does indeed conceive of God as caring for humankind, then the resultant conclusion can only decisively count against an identification of his conception of divinity as Epicurean.

Prayer is most often the medium through which such dependence is expressed. Thus in common prayers Christians ask from God the princeps and rex \(^{82}\) "just and honourable things."\(^{83}\) That these "iusta et honesta" (1.27.12)\(^{84}\) are to be interpreted as the aid that God gives to man which helps him to overcome his proneness to faults (culpa), wantonness (libido), and passion (adpetitus), is clear from the following statement. During prayer, he maintains, God allows himself to be comprehended in the thoughts of his worshippers. The result is that man receives divine "munera" (1.20) and thus acquires the kind of "innocentiae voluntatem" (1.20) which enables the worshipper to cleanse himself (purgare) from sin (delictum). The human propensity to commit transgressions is overcome as the result of human contact with a God who takes an active part in improving the individual's spiritual condition:

\[
\text{Nam quia proni ad culpas et ad libidinis varios adpetitus vitio sumus infraformati ingenitae, patitur se semper nostris cogitationibus concipi ut, dum illum oramus et mereri eius contendimus munera, accipiamus innocentiae voluntatem et ab omni nos labe delictorum omnium amputatione purgemus. (Adv. nat. 1.27.16-22)}
\]

Through prayer the worshipper asks for the divine intervention to take place which produces only beneficial results: God does nothing "except that which is for the well-being of all, which is agreeable, which is very full of love and joy and gladness, which has unbounded and imperishable pleasures, which every one may ask in all his prayers to befall him, and think that otherwise life is pernicious and fatal" (Bryce-Campbell\(^{85}\), \(^{85a}\) "Il n'y a pas de doute: il y a contact

\(^{82}\) See n.116. \(^{83}\) Arn.: 1.27.6f.,9-13: "nihil sumus aliud Christiani nisi magistro Christo summi regis ac principis veneratores... Haec totius summa est actionis...huic omnes (nos) ex more prosternimus, hunc conlatis precibus adoramus, ab hoc iusta et honesta et auditiui eius condigna deposimus...".

\(^{84}\)"X"=quotation;\(^{Y}\)=reference to a text using basic form(s).

\(^{85}\) Bryce-Campbell elegantly express the gist of my interpretation.

\(^{85a}\) Adv nat. 2.55.27-34: "Hoc tenemus, hoc novimus, in hac una con-
entre le Dieu d'Arnobe et sa créature." Spanneut does not go deep enough. First, God is concerned to help man in his earthly life. Second, God initiates this help. Third, God only does what is good for/to man, which does not cohere with the second clause of the first of Epicurus' Kûriai Δόξαι, according to Diogenes Laertius (10. 139). Porphyry holds a similar view to that of Arnobius. The deity, he says, does not do anything except what is good (ἀγαθοποιοῦν γὰρ μόνον τὸ θεῖον), and anger is foreign to a deity's nature. We can go all the way back to the Timæus, however, and find the Demiurge who delegates to the new gods the responsibility καὶ κατὰ δύναμιν οὗ τι κάλλιστα καὶ ἀριστα τὸ θυμὸν διακυβερνῆν εἶσον οὗ τι μὴ κακῶν οὐκ ἐστὶ γίγνοιτο οἰκίαν. The difference between this and the Epicurean concept of deity is that it allows a positive contact to occur between gods and humans which the gods initiate and from which humans in some way benefit; while Epicureans believed that the gods were absolutely indifferent towards man and did not intervene in his life to make any contact with him, whether good or bad. We note also Porphyry's remark about divine anger mentioned above. It is the presence of the latter concept (et al.) in the Adv. nat., it will be remembered, that supposedly provides the strongest evidence for an Epicurean identification of Arnobius' God.

Before analysing how the Epicurean sources stack up against Arnobius, it is necessary to investigate the basis of the belief that only good things come from God. In 2.2.12-5 Arnobius refers to the princeps sistimius cognitionis et scientiae veritate, nihil ab eo fieri nisi quod sit omnibus salutare, quod dulce, quod amoris et gaudii laetiaeque plenissimum, quod infinitas habeat atque incorruptibiles voluptates, quod sibi quises contingere votis omnibus expetat, forisque ab his esse exitalите ac mortiferum ducat."


87 Ad Marc. 12; καὶ πάντων δὲ πράττομεν ἀγαθῶν τὸν θεὸν αἱτίον ἡγομ- ἔθα. τῶν δὲ κακῶν αἵτιοι ημεῖς ἐσμέν τι ἐλέμονα, θεὸς δὲ ἀναίτιος. Ι. e., there is more emphasis upon divine aid in the salvific process in Porph. than in Plot.: see A. Smith, Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition. The Hague, 1974, 103; cf. Civ. Dei 10.29 and Ch. V infra; and a similar idea found in Sev. Gabal., De mun. creat. or. 6.3 (PG, 56.487= Harnack CC Fr. 42); in the Gen. creation story Porph. understands why God prohibits the knowledge of evil, but why the knowledge of the good?

88 Tim. 42E (LCL: Bury). An analysis of possible responses of Arnobius to Chaldaean soteriology appears in section II of this study.
to whom Christians pray "qui bonorum solus caput et fons est". In a Chaldaean oracle designed to proclaim the monarchical rule of the Supreme God, Porphyry gives the similar ἀρχὴ τῆς ζωῆς. We may note also that the African M. Victorinus' epithets are the same, viz. "caput fontemque dicemus, principium" (Adv. Ar. IV.12.6-9. SC 68 I: Hadot), and Hadot, agreeing with Courcelle, has argued that they are indebted to Porphyry. Both agree that Adv. nat. 2.2 owes much to Porphyry. According to Chaldaean theology, one technical use of θεός accentuated the paternal intellect as the preeminent source from whom all cosmic powers emanated. He is πάντων πηγή, πάντων δὲ καὶ ἀρχὴ. A closer parallel exists between Arnobius and Porphyry in respect of a deity able to do good (supra: Ad Marc. 17) and who does not cause the bad. With Adv. nat. 2.55.27-34, which we have cited above (p. 132, n.85a), cf. Ad Marc. 24: κακῶν ἀνθρώπων οὐδεὶς θεὸς ἄτιτλος ἀλλὰ νῦν ξανθὴ δ ἐλέομενος.

A concept of God who is the source of all good things for man should now be compared to Epicurean theology. Note the very first of Epicurus' Κύριαι δόξαι: Τὸ μακάριον καὶ ἐθαρτὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτὸ πράγματα ζητεῖ ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ παρέχει, ὡστε ὅποιος ὁργᾷ ὑπὲρ χάριτος συνέχεται. Ἐν ἀθέτοις γὰρ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον (Diog. Laer. 10.139). As the above passages which we have cited from the Adv. nat. (and more to come) demonstrate, the conflict between Arnobius and Epicurus occurs with ὑπὲρ χάριτος συνέχεται. Epicurus thought that a display of divine kindness

92 Throughout this chapter possible Porphyrian/Neoplatonic influences are noted; chs. V-VI deal with passages in Arn. which suggest that he is responding to various Porphyrian anti-Christian writings.
93 Aion and Hecate were conceived as noetic entities forming a reservoir of the transcendent Father's powers. See GOL, 82, n.58: Procli., Crat. 59.3: Aion=ἐπώνυμον συνοχεῖον τῶν πηγῶν; Ib., 82, n.59: Id., Tim. 1451.17: Hecate=πηγὴ πηγῶν; Dam. II.67.3: πηγὴ τῶν πηγῶν καὶ πηγὴ ἐπώνυμον; cf. Ib., 83, nn.1-3; 83: Life and 1st Intellect=πώνυμον πηγὴ, πάντων δὲ καὶ ἀρχὴ (Theos. 15). It is significant that E. Des Places, "Les Oracles Chaldaiques", ANRW II.17.4, 2299-2335. pp.2313f., suggests that fons in Arn. pertains to "la doctrine des viri novi, 'les sages de Porphyre' et pour une bonne part Porphyre lui-même." He should know.
towards man was a weakness (ἐν ἀσθενεῖ). Velleius, Philodemus, Lucretius, and Diogenes of Oenoanda97 have followed their master. Again, cf. Porphyry: καὶ πάντων δὲ πράττομεν ἄγαθον τὸν θεὸν αἵτων ηγώμεθα. τῶν δὲ κακῶν αἵται ἡμεῖς ἐσμέν οἱ εἰλόμενοι, θεὸς δὲ ἀναίτιος (Ad Marc. 12);98 and Adv. nat. 2.55.29-34: "nihil ab eo (sc. Deo) fieri nisi quod sit omnibus salutare, quod dulce, quod amoris et gaudii laetitiaeque plenissimum, quod infinitas habeat atque incorruptibles voluptates, quod sibi quisque contingere votis omnibus expetat, forisque ab his esse exitiable ac mortiferum ducat." Both count against an Epicurean interpretation because both allow God to do good to man. Arnobius' God is therefore neither absolutely transcendent nor isolated from man.100 Finally, it is noteworthy that Adv. nat. 2.55.27-34 receives no critical analysis from McCracken, who interprets the first part of the passage as being Epicurean.101

Although an Epicurean could emphasise the importance of living a pious life,102 this did not presuppose the belief in a divine concern for, or intervention in, man's earthly life for the purposes of bringing him aid. Compare Adv. nat. 1.28.2-5:

Meliorisne sunt causae, qui Grundulios adorant Lares, Aios Locutios, Limentinos, quam sumus nos omnes, qui deum colimus rerum patrem atque ab eo deposcimus rebus fessis lanquentibusque tutamina?

It would be illogical for Arnobius, who is comparing the worship of pagan divinities with that of his God, to state that he asks for "tutamina" directly from God ("ab eo") without expecting him to grant his request. He asks for protection when faint and weary. The exact meaning of the Virgilian phrase "rebus fessis" (Cf. Aen. 11.335. LCL: Meliorisne sunt causae, qui Grundulios adorant Lares, Aios Locutios, Limentinos, quam sumus nos omnes, qui deum colimus rerum patrem atque ab eo deposcimus rebus fessis lanquentibusque tutamina?

94 De nat. deor. 1.45.xvii;1.51.xixf. 95 Philodemus, De Dis 3, Fr. 85,5ff., p.17 (Diels): discussion in Rist (1972), 154; cf. De Dis 1, col. 7, Iff., p.14 (Diels).
96 De rer. nat. (LCL: Rouse-Smith) 1.44-9;2.646-51,1090-1104;4.12-33-9;5.76-90,110-234;6.379-422.
98 See n.87. 99 Francke, op. cit., 73. 100 LeB, 76.
Fairclough) may be derived from other passages where it is found. In 1.25.16-20 it denotes the absence of a sense of safety which worship of the deus dominus agrees provides:

Deum principem, rerum cunctarum quaecumque sunt dominum, summitatem omnium summorum obtinentem, adorare, obsequio venerabili invocare, in rebus fessis totis ut ita dixerim sensibus amplexari amare suspicere...

In 3.24.1-17 it describes the frailty and weakness of humans whom God as the rex poli providentially and indiscriminately blesses by granting them such necessary things as the sunshine, nighttime, winds, rains, and (good) harvests (3.24.11f.). This is a very important statement considering that the Adv. nat. appears to have been written during hard agricultural times. Indeed, in Chapter IV we shall observe that there is strong evidence found throughout the Adv. nat. which suggests that the specific cause of the malady was drought, a significant historical event when we consider that Saturn the main (and national) agrarian deity of Roman North Africa was in serious conflict/competition with the Christian God during the period.

To the above examples taken from Arnobius we may compare a similar statement in 1.29, where he defends the worship of the caput rerum (11.3-6). He does so by asserting that people exist because of this God; they have either been sent by, or have fallen directly from him to the earth. He continues by affirming that God is the cause by which men walk, breathe, and are healthy; he has granted men the right to keep the earth's produce, and he has established the heat of the sun to make it grow. It is these kinds of provisions for man's welfare that are probably implied in the remark that it is from the deus summus that Christians ask what they need. Underscoring the deity's

Epicurus attended all the religious festivals according to Philodemus, De Pietate col. 109, 8ff. ap. T. Gomperz, Philodem über Frommigkeit. Herculaneische Studien. Zweites Heft, Leipzig, 1866, 127: οὗ (μόνον) δὲ τοῦτο ἐδοξαμαζευσαν (ἐπίκουρος) ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ (ἀ θαν) ἔργων ἀυτῶν εὐδοκεῖται πάσας ταῖς πατρίδοις ἐορτάσας καὶ θυσίας κεκρήσας την ἡμέραν...
lordship over man's natural environment, his ability to regulate and control its processes, and the close relationship between the agrarian life and religious beliefs often found in N. Africa, 1.30.1-8 provides more conceptual evidence for the providential concern of God for man:

Nonne cogitatio vos subit considerare, disquirere, in cuia possessione versemini, cuia in re sitis, cuius ista sit quam fatigatis terra, cuius aer iste quem vitali reciprocas spiritu, cuius abutamin fontibus, cuius liquore, quis ventorum disposuerit flamina, quis undo-sas excogitaverit nubes, quis seminum frugiferas pot-estates rationum proprietate distinxerit?

A more detailed sociohistorical analysis of the concepts underlying this passage is given in Chapter IV. For the moment it is invaluable to observe that the above concepts which explicitly convey the belief in divine providence, do not at all square with either Epicurean theology (i.e., Diog. Laer. 10.139: p. 134 supra) or physics. For the latter, Epicurus' explanations ap. Diog. Laer. 10.84-116 in his Εισ-τολὴ Ἡκατὼν Metéorón addressed to Pythocles, of such celestial phenomena as the sun's heat (10.90-2), the nighttime (10.94f.), the winds (10.106), and the rains (10.100) are incompatible with Adv. nat. 3.24.11f. Compare Epicurus' teaching concerning the relation of the celestial phenomena to the gods' activities: καὶ ἡ θεία φύσις πρὸς ταύτα μεγερρήμα προσαγέονται, ἀλλ' ἀλεητοῦργητος διατηρεῖτο καὶ ἐν τῆς πάθῃ μακαρίδητι. We may add to this statement that the praise of Epicurus' discoveries in Lucretius' poem, 107 Velleius' scathing attack upon the Platonic and Stoic doctrines of providence, 108 and similar views found in Philodemus 109 and Diogenes of Oenoanda, clea

clearly reveal that all Epicureans separated the regulation of celestial phenomena and the laws of the natural world from any kind of divine control or supervision. Yet Arnobius makes it clear that all terrestrial and celestial (things and) beings depend upon God for their life and substance, and without him they would not exist! 111

107 De rer. nat. 5 passim; 2.167-83;5.73-81;6.43-534.
111 2.2.16-9: "a quo omnia terrena cunctaque caelestia animantur motu
This remark appears in the passage which Hadot and Courcelle have established as being indebted to Porphyry.

There are two other passages related to worship, emphasising prayer, which betray an indisputable divine concern for the well-being of man. Both accentuate the belief in a deity who forgives the misdeeds of humans, therefore sharply focusing - as opposed to the above examples - upon their moral/spiritual needs. The first comes at the end of a prayer to the summus rex which is pregnant with philosophical language:

Da veniam, rex summe, tuos persequentibus famulos, et quod tuae benignitatis est proprium, fugientibus ignoscas tui nominis et religionis cultum. (Adv. nat. 1.31.16-9)

An indication that Arnobius as a pagan may have held similar views to this may be assumed in 7.8.15-20, where he argues against a sacrificial theory that offered pardon (venia) in exchange for animal life, which is anti-Porphyrian (v. Ch. VI infra) in tone and content. The availability of the divine venia directly from God to man ("da veniam") presupposes that Arnobius' God is neither far removed from the affairs of man, nor that he does not take an active part in improving his "spiritual" condition. The ultimate Christian precept lying behind this may be Jesus' exhortation to love and pray for one's enemies. In any event, the text portrays a God interested in forgiving the present persecutors of the Church ("famulos"). Dissimilarities existing between Arnobius' use of venia and the first of the Κοραι Αδίκαι (Diog. Laer. 10.139), which states that a god does not show favour (χαρις), are obvious. And the following passage from Lucretius clearly reveals that he would have found the above re-intriganturque vitali, et qui si non esset, nulla profecto res esset quae aliquod nominem substantiamque portaret." The 'pater rerum' in 11. 15f. emphasising divine lordship in "terrena" and "caelestia" may suggest knowledge of the oratio dominica; cf. e.g., Cypr., Quod idola dii non sint 14 (PL, 4.580f.); Or. dom. 10 (PL, 4.526); Op et eleem. (PL, 4.602); and the similar τῶν τῶν πάντων δημιουργῶν καὶ πατέρα of Clem. Alex. Protr. 10.83 (LCL: Butterworth).

112 "Atquin ego rebar deos, si modo rectum est credere quod motibus exagitentur irarum, sine ullis praemissi nullisque mercedibus iras atque animos ponere et peccatoribus delicta donare. Hoc est enim proprium numinum, liberales venias et concessiones habere gratuitas." I give this interpretation on the basis of a comparison of this passage with 1.39 and 3.24. Cf. the "Venerabar" of 1.39.1, and (better) the "Atquin ego rebar" (cf. the same phrase above) of 3.24.6. Both describe religious ideas/practices of his pre-Christian period.
mark of Arnobius (1.31.16-9: p. 138) quite repugnant:

quid enim inmortalibus atque beatis/gratia nostra
queat largirier emolumenti,/ut nostra quicquam
causa gerere adgreendentur? (De rer. nat. 5.165ff.
LCL: Rouse-Smith)

It is to be noted that all the other important Epicureans, viz.
Velleius, 113 Philodemus, 114 and Diogenes of Oenoanda, 115 espouse
the same view.

Although there are other passages in which Arnobius mentions
worship of the Christian God, and some of these suggest an indebtedness
Middle Platonic and Neoplatonic traditions, 116 we shall move
on to the second pericope (4.36.23-7). This contains a reference to
the practice of praying for the dead, 117 and this ecclesiastical custom is at least implied in 2.63.18f., where Arnobius seems to be responding to Porphyry’s question (v. pp. 22ff. supra and Ch. V infra)
about what has happened to all those who have died before the advent of Christ. The fact that Arnobius answers him by affirming the availability of "regia miseratio", that is, the divine King’s mercy, demonstrates two important things. First, as we have already noted above (p. 111), it may point to an existential involvement in the faith, and 4.36.22-7 corroborates this interpretation. But more importantly,

113 De nat. deor. 1.51.xix: "Et quaerere a nobis, Balbe, soletis,
quae vita deorum sit quaque ab iis degatur aetas...Nihil enim agit,
nullis occupationibus est implicatus, nulla opera molitur..." etc.

114 De dis 3.8,20ff., p.26 (Diels). 115 M.F. Smith, "More New
Fragments of Diogenes of Oenoanda", in J. Bollack and A. Lake, Études
sur l’Épicurisme antique. Lille, 1976 (=Cahiers de Philologie I), 279-
318, p.286: NF 39 col. 1: it is ridiculous to think that a god should seek
to have men for fellow-citizens (πρός τῷ καὶ γελοιόν εἶναι θεόν
όντα ζητεῖν συνολείτευτός ἀνθρωποῖς ἔχειν).

116 Cf. 1.26.14f. On summus rex cf. Enn. 5.5.3: νοῦς ἐνεκλεῖθεν ὁ μέγ-
ας; De Is. et Os. 355E: Οσίρις=μέγας βασιλεὺς; Max. Tyr., Diss. 11.5;
Dio Chrys., Or. 2.72 (LCL: Cohoon): μέγιστος βασιλεύς; Porphy., De reg.
an. ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 19.23; COTh, 318f.; important in light of my
statement (p.130 supra) about Arn.’s epithets; cf. on worship: 1.26.18
f.;1.36.2, both noting daily prayers;1.36.45f.: prayer taught by Christ;
2.13.11ff.: hopes given to the Father; on "patrem rerum ac dominum" (2.
13.12: Sab. inserts "deum") cf. Plutarch’s similar κύριος ἡ τότε 
κοιτάζων καὶ 
πατὴρ (De def. or. 426A. LCL: Babbitt); also Max. Tyr., Diss. 11.5; and
Porph., Phil. or. ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 10.23,26f.,30 (the latter from De reg.
an.):"principia"="deus pater et filius".

117 4.36.23-7: "Nam nostra quidem scriptura cur ignibus meruerunt
dari? cur immaniter convenicula dirut? in quibus summus oratur deus...
..adhuc vitam degentibus et resolutis corporum vinctione..." etc. V. p.
111 for the passage’s sociohistorical importance. It also contains (v.
pp.48ff.) a reference to the 1st Edict of Diocletian’s Persecution.
it provides further **prima facie** evidence against an Epicurean identification of the Arnobian High God: an Epicurean would have found ludicrous enough the idea that a deity has mercy at all, especially on the living, but much more so on the dead! Note Epicurus' attitude toward death: τὸ πρεκλωστατον ὅπως τῶν κακῶν ὁ θάνατος οὐθέν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἐπειδὴ περ ὅταν μὲν ἡμεῖς ζοῦμεν, ὁ θάνατος οὐ πάρεστιν· οἶταν δὲ ὁ θάνατος παρῇ, τῶν ἡμῶν οὐκ ἔσομέν (Diog. Laer. 10.125). Lucretius concurs.

**Soteriology: Temporal And Eschatological Benefits.**

There are a significant number of passages that underscore a belief in a deity concerned to satisfy the material and spiritual needs of human beings during their temporal existence. This concept has already surfaced in some of the texts related to worship. "Salvation" in this context often may mean the amelioration of a person's physical or spiritual condition directly resulting from a person's commitment to and dependence upon his deity. It can also frequently denote in the Adv. nat. the preservation and continuation of man's sense of safety or well-being in his world as the result of his religious faith/beliefs. Because a good part of one chapter (VI) analyses the subject, this all too brief definition of temporal salvation must suffice. In any event, this aspect of Arnobius' concept- ion of divinity carries with it a number of implications which argue against the Epicurean theory: the belief in divine providence (already noted in the last section), the divine intervention in man's earthly life, a personalised view of the relationship between God and man, the deity's initiation of beneficial contact with humans (also noted above). It is now necessary to ascertain whether or not these implications are made explicit.

Turning to the physical/material needs of man, the most important text is 3.24.8-17:

Numquid enim rex poli libamine aliquo exambitur aut hostia, ut omnia ista quibus vivitur commoda mortalium gentibus largiatur? Non fervorem genitalem solis

What exactly is the picture of God that Arnobius paints in this passage? Benefits from the natural elements or processes (sun's heat, winds, rains, harvests) are the direct results of the divine volition which indiscriminately works for man's welfare. Of special interest is the mention of harvest which may indicate a continuation of the crop failures noted in Book One (e.g., 1.9; 1.13). Note that the regulation of the natural elements is conceived as being under the direct authority of God for the purposes of satisfying man's material needs. In agreement with this passage is one noted above (p. 136), 1.29.9-25, which again is in direct opposition to Epicurean physics (v. p. 137 supra: cf. De nat. deor. 1.52.xx). Finally, in another passage, also noted above (p. 137), 1.30.1-8, God is portrayed as the great lord of the land, air, water, winds, and clouds. He makes seeds fruitful and sends the rains, again interesting in light of his earlier references to drought (1.9.1f.) and crop failure (1.13, etc.).

A final text needs to be analysed. It is probably Porphyry who lies behind the question in 2.76.1-5 why the Christian God allows his followers to suffer persecutions. Arnobius' answer is that the gods do not deliver their worshippers from the "exitiabiles... fortunae" (2.76.11) and adds:

Sed et nobis in huiusmodi casibus minime auxiliatur deus. Prompta et manifesta causa est. Nihil est enim nobis promissum ad hanc vitam nec in carunculae huius folliculo constitutis opis aliquid sponsum est auxiliique decretum. (2.76.18-21)

Attention should be directed to "casibus" and "promissum", to the general context of the passage and its relation to Arnobius' thought as a whole. The first term ("casibus") conveys the idea of equality of suffering misfortunes among Christians and pagans. The exact conceptual opposite of this idea occurs in 3.24.6-17 (v. pp. 140f. supra):

119 Thus Christ does not offer the one way of salvation (v. Ch. VI infra): Civ. Dei 10.32 (De reg. an.): "Videbat ista Porphyrius et per huius modi persecutiones cito istam viam perituram et propterea non esse ipsam liberandae animae universalem putabat..."
ra). The phrase, "Nihil...promissum...", betrays Arnobius' unfamiliarity with the teaching of the New Testament. Hence the "minas...fortunae (11.21ff.) and the "adscribere infortunio voluptatem" (11.24f.) show that Christians cannot claim immunity from the fatal blows of fortune (i.e., in the persecutions) in the same way that pagans cannot in experiencing shipwrecks, diseases, fires, etc. (Adv. nat. 1.29; 2.45). The former must acquiesce willingly (2.76). A similar belief is found in Plotinus: ζύγωσιν μηδενωσι ουδενωσι cannot be diminished even though τυχή goes against the good man. Arnobius' theodicy precludes making God responsible for the occurrence of evil in the world (2.5). The fine point is: God does nothing bad to man, only that which is good. As we have seen, passages like 1.29.9-25, 1.30.1-8, 3.24.1-17, substantiate this much, and compare the following:

Quia omni vero verissimum est certoque certissimum, nihil rerum a princeps, sicut saepius dictum est, agi fieri statui nisi quod oporteat et conveniat fieri, nisi quod sit plenum et integrum et in suae (et) integritatis perfectione finitum. (2.48.7-11)

He uses the same argument to prove that Christ was deus verus (cf. 1.44; 1.47; 1.49 and the section on "God And Christ" infra). Indeed, he is as determined to show that God is not responsible for evil as he is to demonstrate that he does only what is beneficial for human-kind. It is the latter idea that any Epicurean would have rejected. We may observe that Porphyry's theodicy is similar (viz. Ad Marc. 16f., 21), the main difference being the assignation of evil to the demons. Arnobius never makes clear why evil exists. Compare also Tim. 42E, which we have cited above (p. 133).

Turning to spiritual needs, Arnobius stresses the universal appeal of the salvific benefits of his new religion in 1.55.9-12:

Immo quia haec omnia et ab ipso cernebant geri et ab eius praecognitus, qui per orbem totum missi beneficia patris et munera dei animis hominibusque portabant...

Whether one accepts the P (and Marchesi's) reading, "hominibusque", or the suggested emendation corporibus, the fact is clear that

120 Enn. 1.4.6 (LCL: Armstrong): regardless of great misfortunes (συμφόρατις μεγάλαις) the perfect life must be sought; 1.4.7: the good man lives above misfortunes; cf. 1.4.4f.

God's "munera" and "beneficia" in the form of visible miracles have salvifically benefitted the souls and bodies of humans. "Powers which must be seen to be believed, naturally." Responsibility for their occurrence is given to God. They are typically described as "gifts" ("munera"), but compared with other passages where it is used, munus often means "divine power," "miracle," or "a divine service done on humankind's behalf." In 2.5.27-35 Arnobius refers to the presence of God in the martyrs' minds, without which their inner transformations would not occur. The universal appeal of Christianity (v. infra Ch. VI), divine power immanent among the martyrs - these may contain anti-Porphyrian venom. For Porphyry disqualified the Christian religion as the universal way of the soul's salvation because its God allowed his servants to suffer persecutions.

The act for which man is totally responsible and which initiates what is perhaps best described as the salvific process, is a commitment to God through faith (cf. Adv. nat. 2.8-11). Faith (fides) is conducive to receiving God's mercy in the present life. It elsewhere seems to be understood as a simple mental act of accepting God's gift of salus. Man has the freedom either to accept or reject it, but observe the description of God:

Sortem vitae eligendi nulli est, inquit Plato, deus causa, neque alterius voluntas adscribi potest cui-
quam recte, cum voluntatis libertas in ipsius sit posita potestate qui voluit. An numquid orandus es, ut beneficium salutis ab deo digerere accipere, et tibi asperranni fugientique longissime infundenda in gremium est divinae benivolentiae gratia? (2.64. 14-21)

Here we find a writer whose concept of God is supposed to be Epicurean, speaking of God's favour and kindness of salvation being offered directly from himself ("ab deo") to man as a gift, and using Plato as his basic source! Again, the importance of an initial act of belief is emphasised. As in this case, salus in the Adv. nat. denotes a sense of safety in the world as the result of believing in the Christian religion.

The locus classicus of Arnobius' soteriological understanding occurs in 2.65. Here salus denotes the immortalization of the human soul, but this is contingent upon the acceptance of God's promise that it will actually occur. Temporal initiation of the "salvific process" which culminates in the immortalization of the soul occurs in the moment one believes in the "spem salutis" (2.65.18f.) which only Christ offers as the High God's emissary. Arnobius begins the passage by describing God as powerful ("potens"), merciful ("misericors"), and a preserver ("conservator"); and kindliness ("gratia") and generosity ("liberalitas") characterise his nature (2.65.1-5). Humans are the recipients of such divine largesse, and Arnobius makes explicit that it is God who initiates this beneficial contact with man during his earthly life:

Nolo, inquit, et voluntatem non habeo. Quid ergo criminaris deum tamquam tibi desit opem desideranti ferre? cuius dona et munera non tantum asperneris et fugias, verum inania verba cognomines et iocularibus facetiis prosequiris. (2.65.13-8)

God brings aid to man during his earthly life, through Christ to be sure, yet he foreordained (1.63.16f.: "destinata"; cf. 1.61) and desired (cf. "voluit" infra: next passage) that man might be rescued from corruption (2.64.27f.: "corruptionis dissolutione") specifically and exclusively Through Christ's mission:

Hanc omnipotens imperator esse voluit salutis viam, hanc vitae ut ita dixerim ianuam, per hanc solum est ingressus ad lucem neque alias datum est vel invadere ceteris omnibus clausis atque inexpugnabili arce munitis. (2.65.36-40)

One important observation is that these concepts which depict a God
whose deliberate plan decisively to intervene within human history reveal a High God concerned about, and certainly not indifferent towards, earthly affairs. Christ is conceived as if he were some pagan tutelary deity of immortality whose mission to earth has been commissioned by the almighty celestial emperor. Epicureans believed that gods did not concern themselves either positively or negatively with the affairs of human beings. 129

Turning to eschatology, God is responsible for the immortalization of the human soul which, in its present condition, is midway between life and death, possessing a media qualitas (2.35.15). 130 One searches in vain through the Adv. nat. for details about the place to which the immortalized souls go in the hereafter. Arnobius can only speak of an "aulam dominicam," yet even here he appears to be using a term of his adversaries. 131 And again one finds the familiar terms used to describe temporal salus: the "gift" (munus) and favour (beneficium) of the summus princeps make the souls long-lived (longaevus). 132 These passages, compared with (e.g.) 2.63.18f. and 4.36.23-7, together depict an all-powerful deity who transcends spatio-temporal restrictions: he is the lord of man's past, present, and future. Note that 2.36 is indebted to Plato (Tim. 41A-B): all things, gods and human souls included, are dependent upon the divine will for their existence. 133 He resoundingly drives this point home in 2.35.8-14:

\[
\text{Est enim quod obstare eius voluntatibus possit, aut quod esse voluerit, non necessario sequitur ut fiat? An numquid nostris ex divisionibus colligemus, quid aut fieri possit aut non possit, nec rationes considerabilis nostras tam esse mortales sumus nos ipsi et nullius apud principem nominis?}
\]

Because he is omnipotent and immortal, only God can make the human souls eternal. 134

129 Epicurus ap. Diog. Laer. 10.139; Velleius ap. Cic., De nat. deor. 1.56.xx; Philodemus, De piet. 2, col.106, p.124 (Gomperz); Lucretius, De rer. nat. 1.44-9; Diog. Oen., Fr. 29 (Chilton).
130 Cf. 2.62.26-9;2.53.9f.; on 2.62.14f., cf. Burger, op. cit., 2: "Der höchste Gott allein kann der verganglichen menschlichen Seele die Unsterblichkeit schenken."
131 2.33.18ff.: "Vos in aulam dominicam tamquam in propriam sedem remeaturos vos sponte nullo prohibente praesumitis...".
132 2.32.2-5. Possession of salvific knowledge makes this possible.
133 2.2.17ff.;2.35f.;cf.1.28.9-12. 134 2.62.14-8: "Servare animas
But one should ask: salvation from what? To phrase it differently, how does one's acceptance of the High God's munus salutis ameliorate one's existence? What qualitative difference does it make in respect of one's daily life? What is it about being human, living in the world, from which man needs to be delivered? Leaving other considerations aside (e.g., the moral ones: 1.63.23-35; 1.27.6f., 9-15, 16-22) momentarily (vide Ch. 6 infra), we may note that Arnobius takes it for granted that the fear of death is one universal human malady which the High God's gift, if accepted, can annihilate because it bestows immunity from corruption upon the soul:

Ergo cum haec ita sint, non absone neque inaniter credimus, mediae qualitatis esse animas hominum utpote ab rebus non principalibus editas, iuri subjectas mortis, parvarum et labilium virium: perpetuitate donari, (si) spem muneris tanti deum ad principem conferant, cui soli potestas est tali corruptione exclusa largiri. (2.53.1-7) 135

It is on account of these fears (metus) of death that Christians surrender themselves to deus liberator (2.32.11f.).136 In the next chapter he gives the equation, mors=animarum interitus, for which he expresses fear.137 But interitus does not mean the dissolution of the atomic constituents immediately at death, as Epicureans thought. Arnobius explicitly states that, though not of eternal duration, punishment in a burning hell, supervised by (what appear to be) monsters who toss the condemned souls in, await those who know not God.138

These were the very kinds of superstitious ideas that Epicureans criticised. Epicurus was thought to have come to save human beings from such erroneous beliefs. Note that the second of the Kópriai

135 See 2.65 for his Christocentric soteriology and Ch. 6 infra.

136 2.32.10ff.: "Quid est quod a vobis tamquam bruti et stolidi iudicemur, si propter hos metus liberatori dedidimus et mancipavimus nos deo?"

137 2.33.1f.: "Mortis nobis cum proponatur metus id est animarum interitus, quid?"

138 2.14.27-34: "Haec est hominis mors vera, haec nihil residuum faciens...cum animae nescientes deum per longissimi temporis cruciatum consumentur igni fero, in quem illas iacent quidam crudeler saevi et ante Christum incogniti et ab solo sciente detecti."
Δόξα affirms the great difference between the beliefs of Arnobius and Epicurus: ὁ θάνατος οὐδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς· τὸ γὰρ διαλεθὲν ἀναστήτηται· τὸ δ’ ἀναστήτου ὦδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς. 139 In his Epistle To Menoeceus, Epicurus opines that he who fears death is foolish. 140 The wise neither deprecate life nor fear death: ὁ δὲ σοφὸς οὐτε παραίτεται τὸ γῆν οὐτε φοβεῖται τὸ μὴ γῆν. 141 According to Epicurean atomic theory, the human being simply disintegrated at death. Hence the total rejection by Epicureans of any belief in life after death. One example suffices: Diogenes of Oenoanda's vituperation of the Empedoclean doctrine of metempsychosis (μεταβαίνειν τὰς ψυχὰς ἐκ σώματων εἰς σώματα). 142 Even more detested and ludicrous was the idea that the soul would suffer punishment in some type of hell (e.g., Acheron) after death (contrast Adv. nat. 2.14, referring to "Plato idem vester" and Phae. 112A-114A, and 2.53). 143 As affirmed by Lucretius, it was from such superstitious beliefs that Epicurus was thought capable of delivering his disciples. 144

Knowledge Of God: Innate And Salvific.

Another aspect of Arnobius' concept of God and his relation to the world deals with epistemology. It is important to note that the African professor distinguishes between man's innate knowledge that God exists, which everyone possesses, and a salvific knowledge which man acquires as the result of his acceptance of the Christian religion as being the one true way of salvation. A constant tension is discernible in his thought on the subject: while he stresses that, to a certain extent, God is mysterious and unknowable, yet it is only one's knowledge of God that saves one from destruction. The deity's unknowability is frequently couched in the kind of apophatic terminology that characterises a good number of Christian writings.


143 Diog. Laer. 10.126f.; De nat. deor. I.45.xvii; 85.xxxi; Lucretius, De rer. nat. 3.37-93: a reference to Acheron. 144 E.g., De rer. nat. 1.102-35; 2.45f.; 3.830-1094; 6.1208-12; cf. 5.1-54.
from the East\textsuperscript{145} and the West,\textsuperscript{146} and Gnostic\textsuperscript{147} and pagan\textsuperscript{148} ones as well.

The prayer of thanksgiving and adoration addressed to the rex summus (Adv. nat. 1.31) is pregnant with such apophatic designations. God is described as being invisible and never understood by nature.\textsuperscript{149} Whether human lips can fully pronounce his worth is doubtful.\textsuperscript{150} He is unbegotten (1.9: "ingenitus").\textsuperscript{151} Arnobius is afraid to ascribe to God virtues like steadfast ("constantem"), virtuous ("frugi"), wise ("sapientem"), honourable ("probum"), etc.\textsuperscript{152} He wonders who can say that God knows, understands, or provides anything.\textsuperscript{153} Accentuating the inability of human speech to describe anything about the divine nature, Arnobius reaches a powerful climax in 3.19.14-21:

Quicquid de deo dixeris, quicquid tacitae mentis cogitazione conceperis, in humanum transilit et corrumpitur sensum, nec habeat propriae significations notam quod nostris dicitur verbis atque ad negotia humana compositis. Unus est hominis intellectus de dei natura certissimus, si scias et sentias nihil de illo posse mortali oratione depromi.

Man's language is designed to describe human affairs, but not God's

\textsuperscript{145} Arist. Apol. 1; Athenag., Suppl. pro Christ. 10; J. Martyr, 1 Ap. 10 and 25; Theoph., Ad Autol. 1.3; and later, e.g. Greg. Nys., Vit. Moy. (passim); and esp. Dion. Ps.-Areop. (c.A.D. 500): Περὶ θεῖων Ὀνομάτων and Περὶ Νοητικῆς Θεολογίας, whose concept of an absolutely transcendent God approached agnosticism.

\textsuperscript{146} Tert., Ap.17.2;2.3; M. Felix, Oct.18.8f.; Cypr., Quod idola dī non sìnt (PL 4.576f.); Lact., Epit. div. inst. 53.2: cf. Van der Putten, op. cit. (1970), 135; Kroll, RM 71, 1916, 327; Iren., Adv. haer. 3.18.1 (SC 210-1: Doutrejean-Rousseau): yet the concept of the ἄνακτοςκακίωςκοι of all things in Christ guarded against a too apophatic understanding: cf. 4.38.1;3.16.6; and Augustine's threefold manner of conceiving God by affirmation, negation, and eminence ap. Solil. 1.1.4.

\textsuperscript{147} NHL: I,3.1, p.38 (Gosp. Tr.); cf. I,3.38, p.47; I,3.40; I,5.52f., p.56 (Tripart. Trac.); esp. I,5.54, p.56: "Not one of the names which are conceived, spoken, seen, or grasped, not one of them, applies to him."; cf. I,5.54f., p.57; II,1.3, p.100 (Apoc. Jn.); V,3.24, p.243 (1st Apoc. Jam.), etc.

\textsuperscript{148} Plot., Enn. 5.3.13; cf. 3.9.9: τὸ πρῶτον ἐκκείνα ὕποκειται who has no self-consciousness, nor can it be said that he lives or thinks. Such predicates convey dimunition and defect; cf. Porph., Comm. in Parmen. (142A), Fr X.29-35, ap. Hadot (1968), p.125.

\textsuperscript{149} 1.31.2f.: "ο ipse invisus et nullis umquam comprehense naturis".

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 3f. \textsuperscript{151} Cf. Clem. Alex., Protr. 6.59: ἀγέννητον.

\textsuperscript{152} Adv. nat. 3.19.5f. \textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 6ff.
nature. The passage (3.19) betrays a number of general conceptual parallels with the Platonic tradition. Note Plato's remark: οὐδεις ὁνομαζεται ἄρα οὐδεις λέγεται οὐδεις δοζεύεται οὐδεις γιγνώσκεται οὐδεις τι τῶν ὑμνων αὐτοῦ αἰσθάνεται. 154 What one makes of "quis immo aliquid nosse, quis intelleger" of Adv. nat. 3.19.7, is dependent upon "aliquid". If it means "anything" of the world of becoming, thereby restricting the knowledge which God possesses to the world of being, then Plato may have inspired Arnobius here: Αρ' αὖν οὐδεὶς τε αὖ ἐστιν ο θεὸς τὰ παρ᾽ ἐμίν γιγνώσκειν αὑτὴν ἐπιστημὴν ἐκ χων; 155 Plato gives a negative answer due to the restriction noted. 156 If "aliquid" refers to self-knowledge, a passage like Enn. 3.9.8f. may be the source. Here Plotinus describes the One as being ἐπίστευσαν ὑμνον, without consciousness, one who does not think. 157 Which way the river flowed, however, is unknown. Yet both Arnobius and Plotinus emphasise man's inability to describe the indescribable. We may compare the former's "scias et sentias nihil de illo posse mortali oratione deprimi" (3.19.20f.) with Enn. 5.5.6:

Its definition in fact could be only 'the indefinable'...we are in agony of a true expression; we are talking of the untellable; we name, only to indicate for our own use as best we may. (Trans.: MacKenna-Page)

Turning back to the prayer in Adv. nat. 1.31, Arnobius affirms that no shape can represent God, an important statement in light of his attack upon the anthropomorphic gods in Books 3-5: "quem nulla deliniat forma corporalis" (1.10) nor outline of body. Compare the God of Porphyry described as τὸν οὐκομαίον ψόσιν (De abst. 1.57.3; cf. 2.37.1; Adv. nat. 3.12.14-9) and Adv. nat. 3.17.3-5:

Si veram vultis audire sententiam, aut nullam habet deus formam, aut si informatus est aliqua, ea quae sit profecto nescimus. (Cf. J. Martyr, 1 Ap.9: ἄπτοιον δεῖμαν καὶ ψόσιον χων [sc. θεὸς])

Plotinus' soul went to the First God μὴ μορφήν ἰδεῖν ἐκ χων (Vit. Plot. 23). In Enn. 5.5.6 the One is ἀνείδεσιν and an ἀνείδος ἐν ἐδοκ in 6.7.33. 158 Arnobius further describes God as unlimited in nature and magnitude ("qualitatis expers, quantitatis" 11.11f.). Similar remarks

154 Parmen. 142.12A (LCL: Fowler). 155 Ibid., 134D. 156 Ibid., E.
157 Cf. Enn. 5.4.1;5.5.13;6.7.38;6.8.15;6.9.4;6.9.6.
158 As in Adv. nat. 1.31 and 3.19, Plot. states that we must make every denial and no assertion about the Absolute Good (5.5.13).
occur in 7.25.29-31: "O deorum magnitudo mirabilis, o nullis hominum comprehensa, nullis intellecta naturis"; and 7.33.29: "et illa vis praestans neque ullis hominum comprehensa naturis"; and 2.62.17 f.: "nullius temporis circumscriptione finitus." He is "sine situ motu et habitu, de quo nihil dici et exprimi mortalium potis est significatione verborum" (Adv. nat. 1.31.12ff.). According to the present writer, Kroll rightly compared Enn. 5.5.9f. and 6.9.6 with the first clause of the latter.\footnote{159} One should add to this Porphyry's First God described as ἀκίνητος (De abst. 2.37.1). God's unknowability and incomprehensibility are again underscored: "Non est mirum, si ignoraris: maioris est admirationis, si sciaris" (1.31.19f.). With this and Adv. nat. 3.19.14-21 \cite{supra}, p.148), cf. Porphyry: τὸν ἐὰν μᾶς ὡς ἑαυτὸν ἀμήχανον εἶναι καταλαβεῖν σὺν ὑπ' ὧν ἢ ἕκ λόγου ἄλλῳ σοφεῖν;\footnote{160} and an Arnobian passage that may describe the possibility of a mystical experience of the knowledge of God, probably presupposing a (pre-Christian?) private act of meditation:

qui ut intellegaris tacendum est atque, ut per umbram te possit errans investigare suspicio, nihil est omnino muttiendum. (1.31.14ff.)

And this coheres with the statement that it is dangerous to try to demonstrate the existence of God by human argument alone (Adv. nat. 1.32).

Nature is instrumental in helping man to confirm the presence of his knowledge that God exists, an idea that appears in several passages of the Adv. nat.\footnote{161} and in varying degrees in Tertullian,\footnote{162} Cyprian,\footnote{163} Eusebius,\footnote{164} and Clement of Alexandria.\footnote{165} Although later Stoics such as Balbus formulated a similar doctrine\footnote{166} the unique reference to the ἐμφατικῆς of Chrysippus\footnote{167} (ap. Plu-Art. cit., 325f. Comm. in Parmen., X fol.92X.14-6, ap. Hadot (1968), 96f.\footnote{161} E.g., 1.33;2.3.\footnote{162} Ap.17.4ff.\footnote{163} Quod idola dii non sint 9 (PL 4.577).\footnote{164} PE 2.6.\footnote{165} Protr. 2.21;4.59.\footnote{166} De nat. deor. 2.12f.iv: "Itaque inter omnes omnium gentium summa constat; omnibus enim inнатum est et in animo quasi insculptum esse deos." The "innatum" here= "natural" and not "inborn": note the "informatas deorum esse notiones of the next 1. and Cleanthes' 4 reasons for knowing that the gods exist which follow.

\footnote{167}"There is no other 'evidence' in the Old Stoic writers for a theory of any kind of 'inborn' belief: their philosophy needs no such beliefs and should not be saddled with them." J.M. Rist, Stoic Philosophy. Cambridge, 1969, 134.
tarch) into which some have read too much, would appear to disqualify the members of the early Stoa as possible sources of influence upon Arnobius' thinking. 168 The main text is Adv. nat. 1.33, a passage which Copleston probably had in mind when he asserted that according to Arnobius, all ideas have an experiential origin except that of God. 169 Yet he did not note the distinction between innate knowledge of God's existence and salvific knowledge that culminates in the soul's immortalization. In respect of the former, Cyprian may indeed have inspired Arnobius: "Nam et vulgus in multis Deum naturaliter confitetur, cum mens et anima sui auctoris et principis admonetur. Dici frequenter audimus, o Deus...", etc. 170 Equally possible is Tertullian. 171 Compare Adv. nat. 2.3.1-7: "Da puerum iudicem et haec omnia..., quem esse omnes naturaliter scimus, sive cum exclamamus o deus...". 172 There are other possibilities.

One may rightfully pose the question: is Arnobius describing the Epicurean concept of πρόληψις in 1.33? A comparison of a statement of Velleius with Adv. nat. 1.33.1-6 will begin to answer the question: 173

Velleius ap. Cic., De nat. 1.43.xvi.

Solus enim vidit (sc. Epicurus) primum esse deos, quod in omnium animus eorum notionem impressisset ipsa natura. Quae est enim gens aut quod genus hominum, quod non habeat sine doctrina anticipationem quandam deorum? quam appellat πρόληψις Epicurus, id est antecipat animo rei quandam informationem, sine qua nec intellegi quicquam


Quisquamne est hominum, qui non cum istius principis notione diem primae nativitatis intraverit? cui non sit ingenitum, non adfixum, immo ipsius paene in genitalibus materia non impressum, non insitum esse regem ac dominum cunctorum quae cum moderatorem?


170 See p.150, n.163 supra. LeB, 286, suggests Tert., Ap. 17.5f. Cypr. may provide a better possibility.

171 E.g., De test. an. (see Quasten 2, 264f.) and preceding note.

172 Cf. Rapisarda (1945), 120, who gives Tert., De test. an. as a possible source.

173 McBr, 283, n.137, has referred to this passage without any further analysis. Mulvey, op. cit., 66, argues that Arnobius 1.33 demon-
nec quaerit nec disputari possit.

General parallels of a literary and conceptual nature are obvious. Arnobius gives "notione...pressum", and Velleius has "notionem impressisset". The former's "insitum" corresponds to Velleius' "insitas". Compare the rhetor's "Quisquamne est hominum...", etc., with the Epicurean's "Quae est enim gens aut quod genus hominum... deorum?", and a later statement: "de quo autem omnium natura consensit." Knowledge serves the basic purpose in both: "non insitum esse regem..." (Arnobius); and "...esse deos, quod in omnium...impressisset ipsa natura", and (later) "esse igitur deos confitendum est" (Velleius). Beyond this the analogy begins to break down, however. Epicurus' Epistle To Menoeceus enables one to disengage the polemical and apologetical aspects of Velleius' argument from the true doctrine of his master's προληψις: θεοὶ μὲν γὰρ εἰσίν. ἐναργὴς δὲ ἐστὶν αὐτῶν ἡ γνῶσις: οἴκους δ' αὐτοῦς (οἱ) πολλοὶ νομίζουσιν, εἰς ἐστὶν' οὐ γὰρ φυλάσσουσιν αὐτοῦς οἰκίς νοοῦσιν. Thus Epicurus made a sharp distinction between ή κοινή τοῦ θεοῦ νόσις and that which the πολλοὶ νομίζουσιν about God. This means that there was no universal innate knowledge of God's existence. Second, there is no hard evidence to suggest that the Epicurean προληψις τῶν θεῶν was implanted (inborn) at the moment of one's birth, which is exactly what Arnobius states in Adv. nat. 1.33, but rather "eine Voraussetzung für das Untersuchen, Diskutieren und Denken". According to Kleve, the προ in προληψις possesses a logical, not a chronological, meaning. The definition in Diogenes Laertius 10.33 (cf. 10.124) that a προληψις is a recollection of an idea previously made clear, makes sense in light of this.

Neoplatonic philosophy most probably influenced Arnobius' concept of the innate knowledge of God's existence. Notwithstanding similar ideas espoused by Plotinus and Iamblichus, Porphyry

strates Epicurean influence.


Enn. 4.7.15 speaks of the soul that sees images of its primal state deeply impressed upon it.

De myst. 1.3.714f.: man has a γνώσις ἐμφυτος vested in his soul
affirms the belief in man’s innate concepts of God (τὰς ἐμφύτους ἐννοιας)\textsuperscript{180} They function as aids in one’s flight to God.\textsuperscript{181} God has imprinted his own image in the intellect: ἐννοιας ὑπὸ τῆς ἑνεκοινωσάμενου ἀγαλλούντα (τοῦ Θεοῦ).\textsuperscript{182} That knowledge of God is imprinted at one’s birth seems to be the gist of another passage in The Epistle To Marcella. The intellect, so says Porphyry, knows the law of God because it finds it already imprinted within itself: Νῦν δὲ αὐτοῦ μόνος γινώσκει μεταξεῖ της ἑρευναν καὶ πετυμμένον ἐν αὐτῷ ἑκατοσκει.\textsuperscript{183} The body of the intellect is the rational soul which causes the latter to recognise the concepts in the soul which it has inspired and imprinted in it by the truth of the divine law.\textsuperscript{184} It is this divine image impressed upon the soul of the sage who honours God only through wisdom, about which Porphyry is probably speaking when he refers to a προέννοιαν of the One in his Commentary on Parmenides.\textsuperscript{185} Yet although both Arnobius and Porphyry agree about man’s knowledge of God being innate, one main difference between them is that the latter understands the concepts as directly related to the salvific process: Ὅδ’ θεὸς ὑπὸ μὲν τοῦ νοοῦ σωτηρίας ἕνεκα ταῖς λογικαῖς πνευμὰς κατὰ τὰς ἐννοιας διετάχθη, δὴ ἀληθεύει δὲ τῶν ἐν αὐτῶν πεπραγμένων ἐσφραγισκεῖ.\textsuperscript{186}

Arnobius describes God as "unum et simplex" (Adv. nat. 1.62.3f.). With the latter term, compare Porphyry’s διπλοστερός.\textsuperscript{187} His αὐτοκερα-

τατος\textsuperscript{188} may be implied in Adv. nat. 1.23.4-7, 1.27.12ff., and 2.64.25-8,\textsuperscript{189} where he stresses God's need of nothing. We may also compare

by nature, on which see Smith (A.), op. cit., (1974), 85.

\textsuperscript{180} Ad Marc. 10: they help to distinguish between that which saves and what is being saved (κατασκευασάντων αὐτὶ τοῦ σφιξότος καὶ σφιξομένου).

\textsuperscript{181} Vit. Plot. 23 (LCL: Armstrong): Plot. often raised himself εἰς τὸν πρωτότο καὶ ἐπέκεινα θεὸν ταῖς ἐννοιαῖς.

\textsuperscript{182} Ad Marc. 11: the divine image impressed upon the soul of the sage who honours God only through wisdom.

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid., 26. \textsuperscript{184} Ibid. \textsuperscript{185} Comm. in Parmen. II. fol. 91v ap. Hadot (1968), 71, n.2, concerns a προέννοιαν of the One, which Hadot accepts rather than προβεννοιαν because of parallels with M. Vict. (i.e., praeintelligentia, praenoscentia) in Adv. Ar. 4.19.4 and 1.33.4.


\textsuperscript{187} De abst. 1.57.3. \textsuperscript{188} Ibid. \textsuperscript{189} "Neque enim necessaria nostra illi salus est, ut condendii aliquid dispendiive patiatur...".
with these passages a couple of Porphyrian statements: θεὸς μὲν γὰρ δεῖ τινα σοφὸν (Ad Marc. 11) and χρῄζει οὐδενὸς τῶν ἐξωθεν. (De abst. 2.37.1). God's true being escapes all imagination according to Arnobius. His essential nature remains thus a true mystery, yet one must form an image ("auras") of God who is subsumed in the unfathomable depths of exalted divinity. Not ignoring the Epicurean belief in the quasi-anthropomorphic forms of the gods, which contradicts this passage, another problem arises with Arnobius' delegating to man the formation (affingere: cf. Adv. nat. 2.60.26) of the aura dei during what appears to be an act of personal meditation. According to Epicurean theology (v. Rist, 141f.), the very fine compounds of atoms which emit images of the gods could very well be passively received by humans whether awake or asleep.

Glimpses of Arnobius' apophatic theology can be seen occasionally when he is writing about Christ's revelation of God: "deus monstravit quid sit, quis, quantus et qualis: qui profundas eius atque inenarrabiles altitudines...docuit." Yet even the power which worked in Christ himself, though divine, was "incognitae potestatis." This picture of an exalted divinity who transcends all spatio-temporal predications provides perhaps the best example of apophatic theology of ante-Nicene Latin Christian literature. Some have suggested that Platonism influenced Arnobius' concept of God. The most recent analysis of the influence of Platonism upon the Adversus nationes has made a similar conclusion: "la sua idea di Dio
sembra infatti essenzialmente di derivazione platonica." For the moment, we may agree with this Platonic interpretation specifically in respect of Arnobius' apophatic understanding of God.

In addition to a belief in a deity who is transcendent, mysterious, and almost totally unknowable, one also finds in the Adv. nat. an emphasis upon the necessity to acquire knowledge of God in order to be delivered from death. But how can the concept of an unknowable God be compatible with, indeed how can it logically relate to, that of salvific knowledge? When Arnobius says that God is unknowable, he seems to be saying that this is true in respect of man's attempt to acquire knowledge of God's being and nature, and how he relates himself to humankind, outside of the revelation of Christ (Adv. nat. 2.7.7-12). God is, at least to a certain extent, knowable, and that which he allows man to know about himself is conducive to his attaining to incorruption.

A couple of passages illustrate the manner in which one acquires this knowledge. The first one is 2.14.22-6:

Sunt enim mediae qualitatis, sicut Christo auctore compertum est, et interire quae possint deum si ignoraverint, vitae et ab exitio liberari, si ad eius se minas atque indulgentias adplicarint, et quod ignorant est pateat.

The doctrine of the media qualitas of the soul has thus been given by Christ. Arnobius has been referring to Plato in the passage, a man not far from the truth whom his opponents follow (cf. 2.14.3f.: "Quid Plato idem vester"), to show the hypocrisy of ridiculing the Christian belief in the punishment of human souls in the afterlife (Phae. 113D-114C). Souls are neither mortal nor immortal. They perish - Arnobius does not espouse the idea of an eternal hell - if they do not know God (Adv. nat. 2.14.24: "deum si ignoraverint"). Yet they will be liberated to live if they devote themselves to the divine "minas atque indulgentias". Apparently this means that the acceptance of Christ's revelation as truth manifests what is otherwise unknown about the way in which the immortalization of the soul...

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198 Amata, op. cit., (1984), App., 137-44, is an Italian translation of a paper given at the Ninth International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 3 September, 1983. The quote comes from p.55. I warmly thank Professor Amata for giving me several copies of his works on Arnobius during my visit with him in Rome in September 1985.

199 Cf. 1.8;2.14;2.36;2.52 for other compliments to Plato; "Plato ille divinus" in 2.36.7 corresponds to ὁ θεῖος Πλάτων in Plot., Enn.
occurs. In other words, by accepting the eschatological promises of Christ, one’s ignorance of the true God and his plan for man’s salvation is eradicated. Rejecting them will eventually cause the soul’s death. Note also Adv. nat. 2.72.18-24:

Non ergo quod sequimur novum est, sed nos sero addidicimus sequi oporteat (ac) colere aut ubinam conveniret speram salutis adfigere et salutaria subsidia conlocare. Nondum enim adfulserat qui viam monstraret errantibus et caligine in altissima constitutis cognitionis lumen inmitteret et ignoranceis discuteret caecitatem.

The metaphors of light and darkness are used to distinguish between those who have salvific knowledge from those who do not. The equations lumen=cognitio dei=salus animae and caligo=ignoratio dei=mors animae (i.e., caecitas) appear to have been inspired by Clement of Alexandria, Protr. 11.88:

Both the "cognitionis lumen" and the "salutaria subsidia" of Adv. nat. 2.72 (supra p.155) refer to the statement made earlier that he has learned what to follow ("sequi"), obviously meaning what one should follow in Christ. 200 He makes this clear in 2.11.13-9:

Ac nos quidem in illo securi haec sumus: opera ills undique potentissimae virtutes, quas

3.5.1 and Porph., Ad Marc. 10.

200 For the historical development of the doctrine of salvation conceived as following Christ see Pelikan, 1, 141-5.
"Salvific assistances" are the same kind of divine powers which were at work in the miracles of Christ. As MacMullen has recently shown, belief in these miracles was frequently a chief factor that led to Christian conversions in the pre-Constantinian period. Thus when Arnobius says that he follows Christ because of his miracles, he means that he has accepted as truth what has been written and spoken about Christ's great acts in man's history (cf. Adv. nat. 1.44; 1.54-9), yet he is convinced of their contemporary occurrences. Theophanies of Christ still occur; his name scares away malignant spirits; and he makes ineffective the works of soothsayers, fortune-tellers, and magicians (1.46.29-35). It was apparently quite easy for Arnobius to take the historical correlation a step further and accept as truth the munus immortalitatis, the miracle par excellence, especially since he claims having seen the divine powers at work in his own day. And there is no reason why one should not take his word for it.

The same powers at work in Christ's ministry (1.45-54) and in contemporary Roman North Africa, would be the same that would immortalise his soul in the future. Note his only definition of scire: "nisi scire est illud quod ipse tu videris aut cognoveris animo continere..." (2.51.16ff.), which is applicable to what has just been explained: knowledge of God is the preservation in one's mind of what one has seen or learned about his miraculous powers effective in humankind.

The initial act which distinguishes one as being among those who will be incorruptible is an intellectual assent to and belief in Christ: "Vos Platoni, vos Cronio, vos Numenio vel cui libuerit creditis: nos crdimus et adquiescimus Christo" (Adv. nat. 2.11.4ff.). He describes a subjective act of belief, based upon such objective criteria as miracles (supra, p.156) and the rapid expansion of Christianity (1.55; 2.5; 2.12). We should not take the latter as an observ-

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ation derived from personal experience and not having been inspired by the polemics of his adversaries. Indeed, below (Ch. 6) we shall observe that Porphyry's anti-Christian propaganda, published before the outbreak of the Great Persecution and directly aimed at Christian soteriology, was the main inspiration of Arnobius' position here. The pagans must believe in (credere: often to be translated, "to be trusting to") Christ or expect punishment for a certain period in a burning hell, after which they will be destroyed.\textsuperscript{203} They are encouraged to have faith (fides).\textsuperscript{204} Six heated chapters are devoted to a demonstration of the superiority of Christian credulitas (Adv. nat. 2.6-11) to philosophical speculation.\textsuperscript{205} He similarly uses spes,\textsuperscript{206} spes salutis,\textsuperscript{207} and percipere\textsuperscript{208} to designate the mental act that initiates possession of salvific knowledge.\textsuperscript{209} Only Christ can save the human souls from death (2.65): Books One and Two both end with an exhortation to the pagans to believe (1.65; 2.74).\textsuperscript{210} We shall note that Arnobius appears to be responding to the Contra Christianos of Porphyry (Fr 1), where the Neoplatonist criticises Christians for their unaccountable faith (v. Ch. 6).

Religious paganism\textsuperscript{211} is absolutely devoid of any eschatological benefits. Knowledge of salvation is conferred only by Christ.\textsuperscript{212} Again, the proof that this is credible is based upon eye-witness accounts of Christ's miracles, passed down in written form, confirmed, he says, by a skeptical humanity's acceptance of them as true.\textsuperscript{213} Indeed, these are the major criteria determining the veracity of other (i.e., non-Christian) ancient religious documents. An example is the healings which Aelius Aristides claims to have experienced from Asclepius. The important hermeneutical principle is one of equal acceptance of the descriptions of subjective experiences which appeared to be real to those writing about them.

\textsuperscript{203} 2.5.4-7. \textsuperscript{204} Ibid., 7-10. \textsuperscript{205} This is Arnobius' evidence for the truth of Christianity: against Porph. ap. Eus., PE 1.1 (Harn. CC Fr 1). See Ch. 6 \textit{infra}.

\textsuperscript{206} 1.65.35-42; 2.53.1-7. \textsuperscript{207} 2.66.21-5; cf. 1.31.23f. \textsuperscript{208} 2.66.7f.

\textsuperscript{209} Cf. 2.14. \textsuperscript{210} I thus do not agree entirely with McCracken's remark that his purpose was "to impress the pagans with their own guilt, rather than to win them to Christianity...".

\textsuperscript{211} And to a great extent "philosophical" also, yet in relation to Plato see pp. 155f., n. 199, \textit{supra}.

\textsuperscript{212} 1.63.5f.; 2.72.23f. \textsuperscript{213} E.g., 1.53f.; cf. 1.38; 1.40.1-5; 1.47; 1.48.11ff.; 1.65.39f.; 2.9.1-4; 2.11; 2.51.16. For the soteriological implications of his position v. Ch. 6 \textit{infra}.
Christianity and the mendacity of paganism: the former is based upon witnesses ("testibus"), the latter upon opinions ("opinionibus": 1.57.23). Arnobius frequently uses cognitio to denote an "objective perception" of the divine knowledge that Christ has revealed (cf. e.g., 1.63.5; 2.32.6; 2.51.21,24; 2.72.23). The most important text is 2.32.1-10, where he describes cognitio dei as a glutinum for the binding of incohesive elements, which Fortin has suggested is the conflation of Phae. 83E and Tim. 41A-D. In addition to the metaphor of "glue," Fortin has noted that "nail" (clavus: Adv. nat. 2.13.32) also appears in Porphyry to designate sensual bondage. After a detailed analysis of possible influences upon Arnobius' terminology, his conclusion is noteworthy:

Since the metaphors of the glue and the nail are both foreign to Plotinus but known to have been employed in combination by Porphyry, one may legitimately infer that Arnobius' source is more directly Porphyrian than Plotinian.

But the objective perception mentioned in 2.32 (cognitio) entails a process of growth in one's subjective knowledge of God, "si modo illum (sc. Deum) temptent ac meditentur adgnoscere" (2.32.5). This kind of knowledge results from the individual's meditation upon God. He refers to such meditation in the prayer to the High God in 1.31. 14f.: "qui ut intellegaris tacendum est atque, ut per umbram te pos-sit errans investigare suspicio, nihil est omnino muttiendum." Again, it is contemplation upon God whose being escapes imagination which Arnobius describes in 2.60. A departure from the world, a total flight to the deity with all one's heart and mind, and an effort to form thereby a divine image, disclose themselves as the salient features of Arnobius' mystical quest for a subjective knowledge of the High God. This is the maxima scientia that man is capable of possessing.

214 Cf. 1.54.6-17. 215 E.L. Fortin, "The Viri Novi of Arnobius and the Conflict Between Faith and Reason in the Early Christian Centuries", in David Neiman and Margaret Schatkin, eds., The Heritage of the Early Church. OCA 195. Rome, 1973, 197-226, pp.218f.; other metaphors similarly used are "chains" and "knot" (p.219, n.89).

216 Ibid., 219. 217 Adv. nat. 2.60.30ff.: "...quem (sc. Deum) satis sit scire ut nihil alium noveris, sisque veram et maximam scientiam cosecutus in dei rerum capitis (et) cognitione defixus."

218 Ibid., with which contrast his lengthy criticism of pagan philosophical epistemology in Adv. nat. 2.1-59.
This knowledge has been made possible by the revelation of Christ. He spoke by the command of deus princeps, knowing that man is blind and cannot understand (comprehendere) any truth set before him.\textsuperscript{219} This he says just before describing his mystical quest for cognitio dei, thus making it an integral part of Christ's teaching. In the following chapter (2.61) Arnobius explicitly informs his adversaries that they have to acquire a dei principis notio or suffer punishment for a period of time in the hereafter.\textsuperscript{220} Notio is best translated "conception" rather than "knowledge" (cf. McCr, l.c.) for a number of reasons. First, a major theme of Books Three through Seven (esp. 3-5) is that paganism is solidly based upon misconceptions of the gods. More will be said about this below (Section III of this Ch. and Ch. 5 infra). For the moment it is necessary only to indicate that résumés of the ideal characteristics of divinity are given in various passages (e.g., 1.18; 4.28; 6.2; 7.35f.), and with these one should compare the notio dei which Arnobius develops principally in Books One and Two. Thus in 2.61 the gist of his argument is that pagans must acquire the correct conception of God.

This interpretation is supported by an analytical comparison of the revealed knowledge of God brought about by Christ and the nature of the pagans' knowledge of things both divine and human. Reference has already been made to the remark that it was Christ who taught by the High God's command that man cannot understand a truth even when it is placed before his eyes (2.61). In 1.38 Arnobius similarly but more thoroughly develops this position by presenting Christ as if he were a great philosopher possessing superhuman knowledge. One benefit for man is that he has been led from errors to the truth.\textsuperscript{221}

\textsuperscript{219} 2.60.13ff.: "cum mortalium sciret (sc. Christus) caecam esse naturam neque posse comprehendere veritatem positarum nec ante oculos rerum..."; cf. 1.38.37-40, where Christ the revealer of scientific knowledge "animantia monstravit informia nos esse, vanis opinionibus fidere, nihil comprehensum habere, nihil scire et quae nostros sita sunt ante oculos non videre...".

\textsuperscript{220} 2.61.13-7: "Res vestra in ancipiti sita est, salus dico animarum vestrarum, et nisi vos adplicatis dei principis notioni, a corporalibus vinculis exsolutos expectat mors saeva, non repentinam adferens extinctionem sed per tractum temporis cruciabilis poenae acerbitate consumens."

\textsuperscript{221} 1.38f.
Christ has revealed to man God's nature. He has brought the High God's powers to earth and healed the souls and bodies of many with them. And with what can only be described as scientific certainly he says, "For we know (sc. "scitur": 1.48.11) that Christ,...opened the ears of the deaf, removed blindness from eyes," etc. In the passage which enumerates his pagan practices, Arnobius testifies that Christ the great teacher has led him into the paths of truth, and now he knows all those things for what they really are. That is, Christ has revealed knowledge of the errors of the pagan gods, rites, and rituals.

To contrast this with what Arnobius states about the kind of knowledge the pagans possess, a majority of the seventy-eight chapters of Book Two - the longest in the work - is devoted to demonstrating the futility de facto of his opponents' so-called knowledge. They cannot answer many questions about the natural world. This he drives home often and in many ways. Yet the centrepiece of his epistemological polemics is found in the attack upon the idea that all human beings know God ("novimus": 2.15.15f.). The underlying logic of his position is obviously based upon his definition of knowledge being what man has seen or learned and retained in his mind (supra, p.157). According to these criteria, pagan science is not the result of thorough examination "placed in the light of the clearest truth." The selection of words here, the identity of his opponents in sections of the first two books, and the fact that Arnobius attempts to prove the veracity of Christian belief on the basis of historical events both seen and recorded by reliable eye-witnesses, lead the present writer to suggest that he is responding to Porphyry's rejection of the faith because it lacks the well-examined evidence to support it. Thus when Arnobius claims that pagans do not have the reality of the miracles is brought out by "scitur"; cf. the fine points of his argument vis-à-vis the philosophers' powers in 2.11.

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222 Adv. nat. 1.38.16ff.; 1.47.6-10; 1.49.17-24. 223 in 1.48.11 the reality of the miracles is brought out by "scitur"; cf. the fine points of his argument vis-à-vis the philosophers' powers in 2.11.

224 McCr's trans. 1.48.11-4: "Christus enim scitur aut admota partibus debilitatis manu aut vocis simplicis iussione aures aperuisse surdorum, exturbasse ab oculis caecitates,...".

225 1.39.11f.: "Nunc doctore tanto in vias veritatis inductus omnia ista quae sint scio,...".

226 2.58.19-59. 227 2.51.12ff. 228 See p.158, n.205 supra and Ch. 6 infra.
not know x, he often means that they cannot prove what they are af-
firming about x on the basis of objective criteria. Human desire
to achieve knowledge produces no certianly.

With the exception of some of the ideas of Plato, paganism in
toto, religious and philosophical, offers no knowledge of God. Only Christ has revealed the authentic salvific knowledge of God's
nature, how he relates himself to man, and what man must do to become
incorruptible. Only he has removed the periculum ignorationis (Adv.
nat. 2.2.2: sc. dei prinipis). Such revealed knowledge is centred in
the teaching (1.38f.) and miracles (1.42-54) of Christ, who was sent
to earth by the High God (e.g., 1.42) and is himself deus (1.42-7).
It is therefore the direct result of man's initial act of believing
in the High God's promises, revealed by Christ and based upon the
historical events of his earthly mission.

Creation: The High God And A Christianized Demiurge.

The final aspect of Arnobius' concept of divinity which is related
to God and the world concerns itself with creation. A cardinal tenet
of Book Two, where Arnobius vehemently attacks Neoplatonic psychology,

229 1.53.1ff.; 2.19.1-2ff.: "Quodsi homines pen-
itus aut ipsos se nossent aut intellectum dei suspicionis alicuius ac-
ciperent aura,..."; 2.65; yet note note 2.36.7ff.: "Plato ille divinus
multa de deo digna...dicit..."; 2.52.26f.: "Platonem illum magnum pie
snactequ sapientem,..."; 1.8.19ff.: "Plato ille sublimis apex philosoph-
orum et columna..."; 2.14.8: "homo prudentiae non pravae et examinis iud-
icique..."; ib.15f.: "Nec tamen eius auctoritas plurimum a veritate decli-
nat."; ib.16f.: "vir lenis et benivolae...".

230 2.57; 2.78.1ff. 231 I have agreed with the works of (e.g.) Courcelle, Fortin, Kroll,
Burger, Röhrich, O'Meara, Mulvey, Des Places, Laurenti - and note new
contributions given in the present thesis (esp. Chapters III, V, VI) -
who to varying extents have argued (or suggested) that Arnobius is at-
tacking Neoplatonists in Book Two, some specifically indicating a Porphy-
rian group. The viri novi of 2.15.2f. presents no problem with this in-
terpretation: Plotinus, Enn. 5.1.8 defends against the criticism that
his doctrine is new (v. Fortin, art. cit., 220, n.98); I add to this the
practice of theurgy by Platonists will have seemed a strange, and there-
fore new, kind of Platonism: v. Adv. nat. 1.43; 1.52f.; 2.13.33-6. On cal-

232 Compare Amata's interpretation of viri novi: "L'espressione sembra
comprendere oltre che i seguaci di Platone anche altri più o meno influ-
enzati dalla sua filosofia." (op. cit. (1984), 40, n.150). For a differ-
ent interpretation of the term, accentuating its Porphyrian identity, v.
Chapters V-VI infra.
is that the High God (deus summus, etc.) did not create man. His reasons for taking such a position are straightforward: that being who is immaterial, perfect, and immortal cannot have created such a wretched being as man. Because souls are changeable, fickle, deceitful, a res invidia is responsible for their origin (2.7.10: with reference to Socrates in Phaed. 230A\(^{234}\)). Disparaging his opponents' beliefs, he argues that souls are not immortal, very near to God, divine, wise, learned, perfect (2.15). If the soul were really immaterial (incorporalis: 2.16.6f.), it would not be able to unite with a body. Rejecting the Platonic doctrine of αὐτάνωςικος which maintains that souls came to earth with the memories of former existences, Arnobius posits that wisdom comes only with progressive learning (2.19-25). The soul is not a creation of the High God for other metaphysical reasons: it is not one and simple (cf. Fortin, art. cit., 214, referring to Enn. 4.7.12; note also Enn. 4.7.17); it is capable of suffering (2.27). Indeed, Christ himself has taught that the essential condition of the soul is of a media qualitas (2.32),\(^{235}\) a doctrine which actually is derived from Plato as we shall see (Adv. nat. 2.36), but which Arnobius again attributes to Christ (2.36.21-9).\(^{236}\) Yet it is in three main texts that he develops the main premise of his argument that the High God cannot have created man.

The first is Adv. nat. 2.46.1-11:

Sed procul haec abeat, ut eadem rursus frequentiusque dicamus, tam immannis et scelerata persuasio, ut ille salus rerum deus, omnium virtutum caput, benignitatis et column, atque ut eum laudibus extollamus humanis, sapientissimus, iustus, perfecta omnia faciens et integritatis suae conservantia mensiones aut aliquid fecerit claudum et quod minus esset a recto, aut ulli rei fuerit miseriorum aut discriminum causa, aut ip-

\(^{233}\) Adv. nat. 2.46, esp.11-21: "Minora haec illo sunt et magnitudinis eius destruentia potestatem tantumque est longe, istarum (ut) auctor rerum esse credatur, ut in sacrilegae crimen inpietatis incurrat quisque ab eo conceperit hominem esse pragnatum, rem infelicitem et miseram..." etc.; cf.2.32.1ff.;2.15.1-7;2.72.13-7.

\(^{234}\) V. McCr, 306, n.34, for a discussion of this text.

\(^{235}\) The indeterminate condition of the human soul is one of finitude. Arnobius is not arguing that it is mortal. Rather the essential nature of the soul during its temporal existence is indefinite. It will continue to exist after its life in a human body. Cognitio dei alone immortalises it. Otherwise, after an unspecified period of suffering, it will be destroyed.

\(^{236}\) Cf. 2.44f.
sos actus quibus vita transigitur et celebratur humana ordinaverit, iusserit et ab sua fluere constitutione praeceperit.

The second is Adv. nat. 2.48.1-4, 7-11:

Sic consimiliter hic quoque, cum animas rennuamus dei esse principis prolem, non continuo sequitur, ut explicare debeamus, quonam parente sint editae et causis cuiusmodi procreatae...Quia omni vero verissimum est certoque certissimum, nihil rerum a principe, sicut saepius dictum est, agi fieri statui nisi quod oporteat et conveniat fieri, nisi quod sit plenum et integrum et in suae (et) integralis perfectione finitum.

The third is Adv. nat. 2.52.25-33. Its obvious importance is the disclosure of the philosophical tradition which underlies his thought:

Quid enim putamus habuisse rationis Platonem illum magnum pie sancteque sapientem, cum hominis ficti-nem deo removit a maximo et ad minores nescio quos transtulit cumque eiusdem noluit sinceritatis esse mixturas humani animas generis, cuius animam fecerat universitatis istius, quam quod hominis fabricam indignum esse rebatur deo nec rei flaccidae fictio-nem magnitudini eius et eminentiae convenire?

Syllogistically the argument can be given as follows: God creates only that which is essentially perfect; man is not perfect; therefore, man was not created by God. The central idea of the texts given above does not hinge upon either divine indifference, thus driving a metaphysical wedge between humankind and God according to the first of Epicurus' Κύριοι Άγαι (Diog. Laer. 10.139); or the concept of divine impassibility along the same lines of thought.

Arnobius is developing his argument according to a philosophical principle which holds that the High God can only beget perfection. Hence his intense preoccupation with what appears to him as a Neoplatonic anthropocentric soteriology and the too high exaltation of man which it entails. He attacks this view in Book Two by hammering a metaphysical wedge between the exalted majesty of the High God and the pitifully decrepit animal called man.

237 V. p.162, n.232 supra. 238 Adv. nat. 2.15.4: human souls are believed to be near in rank to the princeps rerum; 2.16.7: if deus princeps created souls, why do they sin after their fall to the earth (i.e., God's immediate creation is perfect); 2.19.10: souls are thought to be equal to the princeps; 2.25.4: souls are believed to exist in the fourth place after deus princeps, a definite Chaldaean concept: v. n.242 infra.
To ascribe to God the creation of man is a blasphemous impiety! The "clinical" psychological experiment is developed in Adv. nat. 2.20-5 to show that the soul did not originate from God. The following commentary has as its main objective to disprove the Platonic doctrine of ψυχή. An infant is put into a place dug out ("tellure in effossa locus": 2.20.6f.) in the ground. He should have no contact with anyone except his nurse, who should not speak a word to him. After he reaches the age of forty, let him be taken from his controlled environment. If it is true that souls are divine, immortal, and fly directly from God learned, then one should ask him, so Arnobius challenges his opponents, who he is, where he came from, what a napkin is, etc. (2.22f.). This introduces a sustained criticism of the Platonic doctrine of ψυχή (2.24-7). It is remarkable in this context that Arnobius explicitly mentions a Chaldaean theological concept, viz. that the soul is in fourth place after the High God and the twin intellects (2.25.1-6). Its identity was noted by Bousset and Kroll early this century. It was Courcelle and Lewy, however, who established its association with Platonism, and the former more specifically with a Porphyrian-inspired Neoplatonic group existing in North Africa in the late third/early fourth centuries A.D. Also note that since Fortin has interpreted the opponents whom Arnobius calls viri novi (2.15.2f.) as applying "remarkably well not to the Platonists in general but to Plotinus, Porphyry, and their immediate disciples," it is perhaps not surprising to find Neoplatonic passages that may have inspired Arnobius' psychological experiment.

239 Adv. nat. 2.46.3. 240 Ibid., 2.25-8. 241 W. Bousset, "Zur Dämmonologie des späteren Antike", AfR 18, 1915, 141. 242 Art. cit. (1916), 354f. 243 P. Courcelle, "Les Sages de Porphyre et les Viri Noui d'Arno"be", REL 31, 1953, 257-71, pp.269f. 244 COT, 324, n44.; cf. Festugière, Mem. Lagrange (1940), p.108; O'Meara (1959), 146; Des Places, ANRW II.17.4, 2313. 245 V. n.244 and Section II of this chapter. 246 Fortin, art. cit., 220. He sees Arnobius' transposition of the metaphor "wine of wisdom" (2.8.3: meracum sapientiae), p.219, describing his opponents, as deriving indirectly from Phae. 79C. Yet a closer parallel exists between Adv. nat. 2.8.3 and Plot., Enn. 5.8.10f., where we find that those drunken with the heavenly vision (="wine") see divinity within, become pure, and remain very near to God (τός την ζωήν αυτής; cf. Adv. nat. 2.15.4f.: "domino rerum...gradu proximas dignitatis"; 2.15.1-7;2.62.2. Other similarities with Neoplatonism are:
One possibility is Enn. 5.1.1. A child, so writes Plotinus, taken away young from its home and brought up at a distance will fail in its knowledge of its father and of itself. Likewise, the souls fallen to earth no longer discern their own divinity. The soul must therefore recall (ἀναμνήσκων) to itself its race (γενο-νομ) and worth (ἀξίας). These very ideas form the heart of Arnobius' attack in 2.20-8. Observe also that Porphyry in his De antro nympharum, following closely the Pythagoreans (Ch. 3), Plato (Ch. 3), Numenius and Cronius (Ch. 10), states that they believed that the cavern (Ch. 3: σπήλαιον; Ch. 10: ἀντρον) was a symbol of the world in Homer (Od. 13). Porphyry continues by giving an allegorical interpretation of Od. 13. The nymphs signify all souls descending into the world of generation (Ch.4). Before this he refers to Cronius (Ch. 1) who found it admirable that the cave has two entrances, one for the descent of the souls from the sublunary sphere, the other for the ascent of the gods. He then goes on to discuss the essential immortality of human souls (Ch. 11: τὸ οὖν ζωοόνωμι), a main concept that Arnobius' experiment tries to disprove. Souls experience a loss of memory of divine concerns during their descent to the corporeal realm (De ant. nymph. 12), and with this one should compare Arnobius' adversary in 2.26.10: "Ex oppositu corporis amittit (sc. anima) repetentiam priorum." Similar concepts are expressed in the De abstinentia. In order that it may return to its proper realm (τὰ οἰκεῖα), says Porphyry, the soul only a few are virtuous (Adv. nat. 2.49f.; Porph., De reg. an. ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 10.29); all souls are from one source (Adv. nat. 2.15.13; Enn. 4.7.19); the body is conceived as a form (Adv. nat. 1.6.13f.; 1.60.1f.; 65.37; 2.39.34; 40.14; 77.15; Enn. 1.8.4); the metaphor of the winged soul (Adv. nat. 2.33.11-4; Enn. 1.3.1; 5.3.4; 6.9.9); the body=shadow (Adv. nat. 2.77.15; Enn. 3.2.15); things occur for the good of the all and not for the good of the individual (Adv. nat. 1.12.11-4; Enn. 4.4.39); the concept of the transmigration of human souls (Adv. nat. 2.16.44-50; Enn. 3.2.12; 3.4.2f.; cf. Porph., De reg. an. ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 10.30).

247 The worth of man: 2.20.2: "cuius sit pretii homo"; his (divine) race: 2.21.4f.: "Platonica licet aut Pythagorea progenie aut horum alicuius,..."; rejection of ἀναμνήσκων: 2.24-8; failing of the knowledge of one's divinity: 2.27f.; divinity and immortality of the human soul: 2.20.2f.; 2.25.1ff.; 2.26.1f.

248 Indeed, this is his main concern in 2.14-53. V. 2.22.1-4: "Ut, quoniam creditum est animas divinas a deo immortales esse et ad hominum corpora disciplinas cum omnibus advolare,...".

249 De abst. 1.30.3 (Budé: Bouffartigue).
must abandon that which made it a stranger to its race (ἄποτιθεσθαι πᾶν εἰς τι προσάκηκεν ἄλλῳ φύλῳ). It must relinquish influence of the mortal nature (De abst. 1.30.4: οὖς ἤνης φύσεως) which was responsible for its descent (κατάβασις) in order to remember (ἀναμνήσθαι) the eternal essence (αἰωνίου οὐσίας). With Adv. nat. 2.26.10f. (supra, p. 166), compare Eusebius' attributing the similar idea to Porphyry that souls in the sublunar region are characterised by forgetfulness of the divine. A final important detail is Porphyry's reference to, and obvious extensive use of, Plato (De ant. nymph. 3, 13), Pythagoras (Ch. 3), Numenius (Chs. 4, 10, 16), and Cronius (Ch. 1 bis; Ch. 10 with Numenius) in the De antro nympharum. It is significant that Arnobius identifies the viri novi as followers of Plato, Cronius, and Numenius in Adv. nat. 2.11.4f.; and in addition to Mercury, Plato and Pythagoras in 2.13.8f.

Equally rejected are his opponents' beliefs that either souls come of their own desire (Adv. nat. 2.44.1), originating from deus rex (2.51.13), or that God sent them to earth in order that they might learn evil in the world. These statements may represent attacks upon the Plotinian and Porphyrian explanations of the

250 V. n.248 supra. 251 PE 3.11. 252 De ant. nymph. 3: οἱ Πυθαγορεόταται μετὰ τούτους Μέλανες. One recalls that both Porphyry and Iamblichus wrote a Πυθαγορεότατα. V. n.254 infra. 253 Numenius and Cronius (v. following note) are among the authors whom Porphyry most frequently cites. V. J. Bidez, Vie de Porphyre. Ghent, 1913, 13. Eus., PE 14.5, reveals that Numenius closely associated the followers of Plato and Pythagoras. 254 Note carefully that Porphyry, Vit. Plot. 14, places Cronius and Numenius in the same list with Platonists although they were actually Neopythagoreans. 255 V. Fortin, art. cit., 201 and n.24, for Mercury's place in the Platonic and Neoplatonic traditions. 256 Adv. nat. 2.39-43, esp. 2.39.10-3: "Idcirco animas misit, ut quae fuerant simplices et bonitatis nuper innoxiae, simulare in hominibus discerent, dissimulare mentiri circumscribere fallere..." etc. 257 An excellent analysis of Plotinian texts related to the descent of the soul can be found in J.M. Rist, Plotinus: The Road to Reality. Cambridge, 1967, 112-29. Cf. Enn. 1.1.12; 2.3.10; 4.8.1; 4.8. 4f. 258 Porph., De reg. an. ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 10.30: "Dicit (sc. Porphyrius) etiam ad hoc Deum animam mundo dedisse, ut materiae cognoscens mala ad Patrem recurret nec aliando iam talium polluta
descent of the soul, respectively. Nor will Arnobius accept the doctrine that God sent the souls to perfect the creation of the universe (Adv. nat. 2.37.16ff.), an idea found in Iamblichian theology which Festugière and Hadot associate with the adversary in Adv. nat. 2.37. For according to Stobaeus (1.49.39), Iamblichus in his Περὶ Βυχῆς referred to some Platonists who taught that souls are sent by the gods eis τελείωσιν τοῦ παντὸς. This comparison may be unnecessary, however, because Plato depicts the High God addressing the ὦν ἑων that if the three mortal classes of beings remaining to be created are not generated, heaven will be imperfect: τοῦτων δὲ μὴ γενομένων οὐρανὸς ἄτελής ἔσται. (Tim. 41B). Yet admittedly Arnobius' "universitatis haec summa" corresponds better to Iamblichus' τοῦ παντὸς than to Plato's οὐρανὸς.

God the fons rerum begets only that which is good and perfect. Man is neither, therefore God has not created man. This much is clear, and now it is necessary to identify the underlying tradition(s) related to Arnobius' ideas of creation. As noted (p. 164 supra), in Adv. nat. 2.52.25–33 Arnobius refers to Tim. 41B-D, where the "great" Plato, as he calls him, removes the creation of man from the High God (deus maximus) and gives it to some kind of lesser gods. In Adv. nat. 2.36.7–12 the Timaeus is named, and Arnobius refers to its author as "Plato ille divinus". His argument is that if God created the souls they would be perfect, immortal, and divine. Tim. 41C undoubtedly is his source. God delegates to the ὦν ἑων the creation of the remaining three classes of mortal beings (i.e., those of air, land, and sea) after he himself has created the gods of the celestial sphere (Tim. 38C–D; 39B–C). This


259 "Ad consummam molas huius integritatem partem aliquam conferunt, et nisi fuerint additi, imperfecta et clauda est universitas haec summa." (Marchesi marks this as a question. I follow Oehler and McCracken (328, n.241), who make it a statement.)


262 Adv. nat. 2.2.12–19; cf. 1.28.36ff; 1.34.12ff.; 2.45.19ff.; 2.48.22.

263 Cf. 2.35.12ff.; 2.47.13ff.; 2.16.7; 2.44; 2.46; 2.56; 2.58.
is necessary because if God made them, they would be equal to the gods, that is, they would be immortal (Tim. 41C: δι' ἐμοὶ δὲ ταῦτα γενόμενα καὶ θεοὶ μετασχόντα θεοὶ· ἵνα δεῖ θεοὶ).

Yet if the Platonic myth which appears in Timaeus inspired Arnobius' concept of creation, one should be able to take the analysis further. Note first that all existent beings derive their life from the divine volition, for Arnobius refers to the Christians "qui dedidimus nos deo, cuius nutu et arbitrio omne quod est constant et in essentiae suae perpetuitate defixum est?" (1.28.10ff.). Nutus is used several times to denote the will of the High God, and it similarly appears in Greek and other Latin texts. The rhetor here makes the High God at least indirectly responsible for the existence of everything. He is the father of creation (Adv. nat. 2.13.12), which recalls the great μαήρ of Tim. 37C. In the prayer to the High God (Adv. nat. 1.31), the divinity is described as "fundamentum cunctorum quae cumque sunt" (11.8f.). Prima causa designates him in the same prayer, and the term seems to denote the first cause of an emanational theory of the origin of all existent things. The term is similarly used by Plotinus and Porphyry. Whether the causae which flow from God (Adv. nat. 1.29.15f.) and sustain and animate all earthly existence, are to be considered as individual hypostatic metaphysical entities in themselves, is not clear. But the primary source would appear to be the Timaeus, especially the text which makes a sharp distinction between the primary and secondary causes: Ταῦτ' οὖν πάντ' ἐστι τῶν ζωοτήτων, αὖθις θεὸς ὑπηρετοῦσι χρῆται τὴν τοῦ ἀρίστου κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἕκαστον ἀποτελεῖν (Tim. 46C-D).

Found in the epithetically pregnant text (princeps: bis; caput, E.g., Adv. nat. 1.28.10f.; 2.54.6ff.; 7.50.36f.; 4.31.3 (Jupiter). Nutus is used several times to denote the will of the High God, and it similarly appears in Greek and other Latin texts. The rhetor here makes the High God at least indirectly responsible for the existence of everything. He is the father of creation (Adv. nat. 2.13.12), which recalls the great μαήρ of Tim. 37C. In the prayer to the High God (Adv. nat. 1.31), the divinity is described as "fundamentum cunctorum quae cumque sunt" (11.8f.). Prima causa designates him in the same prayer, and the term seems to denote the first cause of an emanational theory of the origin of all existent things. The term is similarly used by Plotinus and Porphyry. Whether the causae which flow from God (Adv. nat. 1.29.15f.) and sustain and animate all earthly existence, are to be considered as individual hypostatic metaphysical entities in themselves, is not clear. But the primary source would appear to be the Timaeus, especially the text which makes a sharp distinction between the primary and secondary causes: Ταῦτ' οὖν πάντ' ἐστι τῶν ζωοτήτων, αὖθις θεὸς ὑπηρετοῦσι χρῆται τὴν τοῦ ἀρίστου κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἕκαστον ἀποτελεῖν (Tim. 46C-D).

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264 E.g., Adv. nat. 1.28.10f.; 2.54.6ff.; 7.50.36f.; 4.31.3 (Jupiter).

265 Porph., Theos. 35, COTH, 26. E.g., Cypr., De bono pat. 4 (PL 4.624); Balbus ap. Cic., De nat. deor. 2.4.ii.

266 Enn. 2.3.6: αἰτίαν πρότεινυ. Ep. An. (Taylor, p.12). On Adv. nat. 1.31.7, Le Nourry (PL 4.483) explains the "contradiction" between 1.31 and 2.45 as zeal to make a polemical point. Micka, op. cit., 46f., attributes it to his idea of divine aloofness from any contact with all creatures, one of the most inaccurate interpretations of Arnobius ever given. This is superficial because it ignores the fine points of, and the tension inherent in, the neophyte's concept of God. Micka does not support his argument with any exegesis of ancient texts. V. conclusions to this chapter and Ch. V infra.
fons, pater, conditor) which Hadot convincingly argued is greatly indebted to the De regressu animae, the "perpetuarum fundator rerum" (Adv. nat. 2.2.15) is not identical to the "invisibilium procreator" (1.31.1), although the "perpetuarum" most probably include "invisibilium". The reason is that the High God of Tim. 36E-37A creates the visible and invisible celestial phenomena, which are eternal (cf. Tim. 40B-C). He generates the lesser deities as well (Ibid., 40Cf.), a concept to which Arnobius refers frequently.

Note also that according to Arnobius, the supreme deity created the moon: "Luna cum apud vos dea sit, non similiter scire curatis genitor eius et fabricator quis sit?" (1.29.24f.). Le Bonniec apparently takes "fabricator" to mean "demiurge". Yet the general and immediate contexts of the passage support the interpretation proposed herein: every line of Adv. nat. 1.29 discusses the High God and his relationship to the world. Since he is depicted as the opifex solis in the same text, the same conclusion holds true in respect of the sun's creation. The creation of the earth is also attributed to the High God in Adv. nat. 1.38.19ff. Conceptually corresponding with each of these ideas is Tim. 38C-D: God creates the sun, moon, and the five other stars. Plato refers to them elsewhere as an ὁμάνικος θεὸς γένος (Tim. 39E-40A), thereby confirming their eternity. In light of this one should compare the perpetuarum conditor rerum of Adv. nat. 2.2.16 with the "rerum (visibilium et) invisibilium procreator" of 1.31.1f., and the "maginarum et invisibilium rerum sator et conditor, procreator" of 2.45.2f. Balbus uses sator similarly, but the formula is mundus=

271 LeB, 272. 272 Fabricator in Adv. nat. 2.63.13 (as also auctor in 2.63.11) and 2.7.22-demiurgic creator. The term is thus used interchangeably for the Christian High God and the Platonic demiurge in the Adversus nationes. Cf. M. Capella, De nupt. phil. et merc. 7. 733: fabricator=demiurge.
273 Adv. nat. 1.29.23f. 274 Ibid., 1.38.19ff.: "qui (sc. Chris- tus) quo auctore, quo patre mundus iste sit constitutus et condi-
tus...".
275 I accept Marchesi's emendation, "visibilium et", supported by the fact that the High God has created the sun and moon (Adv. nat. 1.29.23ff.): against the Marcionite speculations of Scheidweiler and Sirna. Yet the former still has followers, the most notable recent one being LeB, 79f.
sator and not deus. It is doubtful that Stoic pantheism is the tradition tat supplied Arnobius with this doctrine. Thus one would be well-advised to reject as incorrect, as Burger has done, the guesswork of Scheidweiler and Sirna who contend that Arnobius holds a Marcionite view of creation. One could equally explain the salient features of such a view as deriving from Manichaeism (dualism; asceticism; "rejection," confused with ignorance, of the O.T.; etc.). Both of these scholars have ignored the conversion passages of Adv. nat. 1.39 and 3.24, which of course do not support their theories.

If Arnobius follows the Timaeus in relation to the part that the supreme deity played in creating the universe, one might expect to find in the Adversus nationes the idea of a demiurgic creator of human beings. The main text which establishes just such a concept is Adv. nat. 2.36.22-9:

accipite sero ac discite ab eo qui novit et protulit in medium Christo, non esse animas regis maximi filias nec ab eo quemadmodum dicitur generatas coepisse se nosse atque in sui nominis essentia praedicari, sed alterum quemquam genitorem his esse, dignitatis et potentiae gradibus satis plurimis ab imperatore diiunctum, eius tamen ex aula et eminenti nobilim sublimitate natalium.

In the first three quarters of the same chapter he argues, using the Tim. again, that Plato taught a conditional immortality which the gods possess. Then the above passage appears which attributes another Platonic teaching from the same treatise to Christ! In order to make sense of the Arnobian demiurge, perhaps one should first take note of Schulze's acute remark:

Es erscheint ihm eben nicht ausreichend, dass die Welt durch den Missbrauch der menschlichen Freiheit in der status malorum gekommen sei. 281

Yet it is this concept of human free will, ostensibly in 2.64f. where Arnobius accentuates the individual's ability to accept or

\[ \text{276 I.e., in the Arnobian sense of deus.} \quad \text{277 De nat. deor.} \quad \text{2.86.xxxiv: "Omnium autem rerum quae natura administrantur... sator... est mundus...".} \quad \text{278 Op. cit., 20-5.} \quad \text{279 F. Scheidweiler, "Arnobius und der Marcionitismus", ZNW 45, 1954, 42-67.} \quad \text{280 F.G. Sirna, "Arnobio e l'eresia marcionita di Patrizio", VC 18, 1964, 37-50. Cf. Leb, 79.} \quad \text{281 E.F. Schulze, Das Uebel in der Welt nach der Lehre des Arnobius. Diss., Jena, 1896, 33.} \]
reject the minus salutis, which inferentially may elucidate his admittedly equivocal ideas of the demiurge. The text above makes it clear that the High God did not create the souls. A "quempiam genitorem" is responsible. The "quempiam" here should be compared with "ad minores nescio quos" of 2.52.25-8, which has been quoted above (p. 164), and both point to the problems which Plato left unresolved in the Tim. concerning the specific identities of the demiurge and of the lesser gods. Thus in the second text wherein Arnobius attributes to Christ the teaching of fabricator hominis, Adv. nat. 2.63.12f., he is again ambiguous as to the exact identity of the fabricator, which coheres with 2.48.1-5 where he affirms that it is not necessary to explain who created man. The fact is that he undoubtedly could not reveal the exact identity because he is using the myth found in the Timaeus.

There are a number of passages which appear to contradict themselves when compared with some of those noted above. It is first necessary to discover whether the Arnobian demiurgic creator fits the Platonic model found in Tim., that is, what beings have been created by him. In Adv. nat. 2.16.28 an indefinite auctor has fashioned humans into sexes like the animals. The source is apparently Tim. 42A. In Adv. nat. 3.8.14-9 he makes a similar statement, but the term is conditor. A speaking ox occurs in the rhetorical suasoria of 7.9 and asks: "nonne primordiis isdem eadem et me genuit informavitque natura?" (11.24f.) which may presuppose the creation of the three kinds of mortal beings in Tim. 41B. Appearing in Adv. nat. 7.35.23f. is the auctor who, Arnobius affirms, desires that humans procreate, an idea which was most probably derived from various passages in the Timaeus. But what can one make of the statement that it is unknown by what source and how souls were begotten (Adv. nat. 2.47)? Also, he believes that one need not explain what parent created man (2.48); the causes are unknown that produced souls (2.51). He asks who are the souls' parents (2.56). One does not know who the souls' creator is (2.58). Christ taught not to inquire about these matters (2.61). Micka argued that these

283 For this rhetorical device v. Ch. 2, pp.93f., supra.
284 E.g., Tim. 90E-91C.
passages directly contradict others like 2.36, where Arnobius seems to be describing a creator familiar to him. But in all probability the apparent tension derives from the ambiguous identities of the demiurge and of the lesser gods which Plato left unresolved in the Timaeus. The "quempiam genitorem" of Adv. nat. 2.36.26 and the reference to the "minores (sc. deos) nescio quos" of 2.52.28, both of which follow Tim. 41, would support the conclusion that Arnobius is an heir to this problem of identity, passed down through the Middle Platonic tradition. The present writer is inclined to agree with Kroll that Arnobius espouses a basis Platonic doctrine of creation. Thus Schulze's comment about the Missbrauch (p. 171 supra) might be inferentially pushed back to the creator of the souls (auctor, conditor, etc.), who himself, like his creations, has free will as the result of an emanational conception of existent things. Arnobius nowhere identifies the creator(s) of the demiurge.

II. God And Christ.

The second main category of Arnobius' concept of God manifests itself as the relationship of God to Christ. Two preliminary considerations must be made. First, in the Adv. nat. a discussion—often it is only a few brief remarks—of God's relationship to Christ does not entail a theological exposition of how the Father and Son are ontologically related. Precisely how the divinity of each is interrelated was not a problem that Arnobius set out to expound in writing his work, if indeed he even thought in these terms at all. It is extremely doubtful that he was able to express himself on such a mature level of theological reflection. Suffice it to say that such a discussion usually deals with Christ's revelation of God and of his mission to the world as the great celestial emperor's emissary. Second, the present analysis will restrict itself only to those texts which discuss the relationship between God and Christ. There are many passages which relate to the soteriological significance of Christ without a reference to the High God, and Chapter VI below focuses directly upon the person and work of Christ.
of Christ as a separate subject.

Several texts provide the occasion for Arnobius to discuss what appeared to him as the most important features of the revelation of the only true God. A few concentrate upon the revelation of the nature of God in the works and ministry of Christ. It is in attempting to show his adversaries the nature of a true God that Arnobius uses as his first court of appeal the kindliness of Christ's deeds which he did on behalf of humanity. An Epicurean would have disagreed with the basic premise of this definition, as we have seen. Indeed, the phrase, "ex operum benignitate quid esset deus verus iam addiscerent suspicari" (Adv. nat. 1.47.9f.) is incompatible with the Epicurean belief that a god did not have any negotium with human beings. Arnobius attempts to prove that Christ was divine because his great deeds aided man. As noted above, Epicureans believed that gods showed no favour (χάρις) whatsoever towards humans. They neither harmed them by expressing anger towards them nor helped them by grace. They did not care at all to help man either in this world or in "the world to come." There was no world to come.

The same basic concept is driven home with precision in Adv. nat. 1.38. In this chapter Arnobius is using a well-known rhetorical device called the panegyric of the gods (laus deorum = aretalogy), which was used in Roman oratorical practice from the Republican period. Arnobius' immediate influence appears to have been Quintilian. The Institutio oratoria 3.4-9 gives the form of the laus deorum. First, the majesty of the god's nature is to be praised in general terms. Adv. nat. 1.38.1-5 fits this description. Next,

Adv. nat. 1.47.6-10: "Quae quidem ab eo gesta sunt et factitata, non ut se vana ostentatione iactaret...sed...ex operum benignitate quid esset deus verus iam addiscerent suspicari."

V. Section I passim, supra.


V. e.g., pp.133-40 supra. One could equally praise men, animals, or inanimate objects as well. Cf. Quint., Inst. 3.7.6 (LCL: Butler).

A study of the influence of the Roman rhetorical tradition would admirably repay itself. Mulvey, op. cit., 14-25, is the only one who has noted parallels between Quint. and Arn. with any detail.

Inst. 3.7.7: "Verum in deis generaliter primum maiestatem ipsius eorum naturae venerabimur...".
one should praise the special power which each deity possesses and
the discoveries whereby he or she has benefitted humanity. Quintilian and Arnobius both name Minerva, Hercules, and Ceres as specific examples in respect of this rule. Quintilian suggests also that one should commemorate the exploits of the gods as antiquity has handed them down. It is not surprising that Arnobius follows exactly Quintilian's suggested order. He accentuates the power and the discoveries of Christ in most of Adv. nat. 1.38, and his great exploits in 1.45-8. One may go further and partly explain Arnobius' account of Christ's powers and discoveries which is embellished with non-biblical statements and which is apparently fictitious in places, as being inspired by the basic motive which Quintilian gives for the laus deorum: "Sed proprium laudis est res amplificare et ornare" (Inst. 3.7.6). The orator could apparently not only be pardoned for stretching the historical "facts" to make his point, but also be expected to do so if he was worthy of his profession.

One of the more beneficial acts of Christ on behalf of humanity was to show ("monstravit") what a true God is, his greatness, character, depths, and indescribable profundity. The anti-Porphyrian purpose of this statement is analysed in Chapter V. For the moment another passage that conveys a similar message to those we have already noted is Adv. nat. 1.44.1-7:

Atquin constitit Christum sine ullis administris rerum, sine ullius ritus observatione vel lege omnium illa quae fecit nominis sui possibilitate fen-

295 Inst. 3.7.7: "deinde proprio vicuiusque et inventa, quae utile aliquid hominibus attulerint."
296 Adv. nat. 1.38.5-11; Quint., Inst. 3.7.6f.
297 Inst. 3.7.8: "Tum si qua ab iis acta vetustas tradidit, commemoranda."
298 Christ taught "cur luna semper in motu, isdemne quis creditur an aliis causis lucem semper atque obscuritatem resumen, animalium origo quae sit, rationes quas habent semina,..." etc. (1.38.24-7). Cf. Adv. nat. 2.73.29-7.
299 For Lucretian parallels in Arnobius 1.38 v. McCr, 287, n.176; Hagendahl (1958), 12-47. I discuss its anti-Porphyrian significance in Ch. V infra.
300 Adv. nat. 1.38.16ff.: "deus monstravit quid sit, quis, quantus et qualis: qui profundas eius atque inenarrabiles altitudines, .."
cisse et quod proprium consentaneum dignum deo fuerat vero, nihil nocens aut noxium sed opiferum, sed auxiliatibus plenum nobis potestatis munificae liberalitate donasse.

The phrase, "sine ullis adminiculis rerum" is of course inaccurate and betrays, if not Arnobius' ignorance of the New Testament, at least his lack of a firm knowledge of its contents. Again, a basic definition of the nature of divinity contradicts Epicurean theology. For the last phrase reveals the basic ideas upon which his concept of God hinges: a true God does no harm to humans, but only what can help them. These characteristics inherent in a true God Christ has revealed. Arnobius is essentially saying that a concern to help humanity (cf. Adv. nat. 1.45-8) is the sine quan non of his understanding of the nature of a deus verus, and Christ has revealed this nature in his miracles which have so enormously improved the lives of human beings. He unequivocally accentuates, for the same reason, the indiscriminate bestowal through Christ of the High God's aid upon man during adversity in Adv. nat. 1.49.17-24:

Atquin Christus aequaliter bonis malisque subvenit nec repulsus ab hoc quisquam est (qui) rebus qui auxilium duris contra impetum postulabat injuriisque fortuane. Hoc est enim proprium dei veri potentiaeque regalis, benignitatem suam negare nulli nec reputare quis mereatur aut minime, eum naturalis infirmitas peccatorem hominem faciat, non voluntatis et iudicationis electio.

He makes a very similar remark in 3.24.8-17, with which one should contrast De nat. deor. 1.52.xx. Christ has revealed to mankind the nature of deus verus, viz. that of a God who is very much concerned to bring aid to humans when they are in trouble.

Several texts stress a subordinationist understanding of the relationship between God and Christ. Thus Arnobius affirms that

301 For a different view v.: E. Gareau, "Le fondement de la vraie religion d'après Arnobe", CahEA 11, 1980, 23-23, pp.14-7: Adv. nat. 1.27.6f. and Mt. 6.7-13, Lk. 11.1-4 (p.14, n.1); 2.2.13ff. and Jn. 17.3 (p.16); 2.2.14 alludes to oratio dominica (p.16); 2.2.14f. alludes to Acts 17.24 (p.16, n.4); 2.2.16f. alludes to Acts 17.25,28 and 1 Tim. 16.13 (p.17, n.5). I would agree with J.D. Madden, "Jesus as Epicurus: Arnobius of Sicca's Borrowings from Lucretius", CCC 2, 1981, 215-222, p.222, that Arn. was not ignorant of the N.T.

302 Cf. G. Brunner, "Arnobius ein Zeuge gegen das Weihnachtsfest?", JflW 13, 1933, 173-81, p.175: "Alle Gott als solchem zukommenden Attribute müssen auch auf Christus zutreffen." He also argues
Christ spoke in human form by the command of the High God. As a number of scholars have suggested, Porphyry's (or a Porphyrian-inspired) criticism of Christ's recent advent receives a rather detailed response from Arnobius. As noted above (pp. 139f.), the fact that Arnobius answers him by professing the availability of regia miseratio for those who died before the advent (Adv. nat. 2.63.18f.) demonstrates an espousal of an idea which is basically incompatible with an Epicurean conception of divinity. In the first section of this chapter one has seen a picture of the Arnobian High God whose powers are omnipotent and unchallenged, and whose nature is mysterious and transcendent. The need for a mediator between this celestial emperor and man, an idea whose origin goes quite far back into Greek religious history, was perhaps never so clearly and adroitly expostulated with ante-Nicene pagan critics of Christianity as it is in Books One and Two of the Adversus nationes. Discarding the name of Christ is tantamount to being bereft of the High God's mercy (Adv. nat. 2.12.29-39). Christ is the mediator of God's indulgentia principalis (2.64.3-7; cf. 2.65.13-8). Christ came so recently - he is responding to the pagan belief that their religious customs are true because they are more ancient than those of Christianity - to bring the High God's

that God and Christ in Arnobius are both eternal and almighty (p.175). Yet in respect of the latter, there is a subordinationist tendency that Brunner does not analyse.

303 Adv. nat. 2.60.12f.: "dei principis iussione loquens sub hominis forma,...".


305 Diog. Laer. 10.139; Velleius ap. Cic., De nat. deor. 1.45.xvii: "illa sententia est ab Epicuro, quod beatum aeternumque sit...neque ira neque gratia teneri..."; De rer. nat. 1.44-9; 2.646-51; 2.1090-1104; 4.1233-9; 5.76-90; 5.110-234; 6.379-422.


salvation perhaps when men began to be weaker (Adv. nat. 2.75.22f.). If not, only the great Father knows (2.74.23f.). Indeed, the centerpiece of his polemical argument related to Christ, in addition to attempting to prove his divinity (v. Ch. V infra), is his insistence that Christ has brought God’s munus salutis to humans. It was God who sent Christ for the greatest of purposes. He has given to Christ the office of granting immortality to the souls as a trust and commission. Arnobius seems to understand Christ’s main work as an offering to men of God’s eschatological deliverance. Indeed, as is shown by his use of the pagan epithet sospitator solely to describe Christ as “saviour” (Adv. nat. 1.53.11; 2.74.2,17; 2.75.2) in the Adv. nat., Arnobius has apparently looked upon him as if he were a pagan tutelary deity of immortality. Christians are no more, he declares, than worshippers of the divine rex under Christ the magister.

In one such sospitator text Arnobius refers to the ignorance of the principes mundi and the dii magni about the implications of the true saviour’s mission to earth. Although there is a possibility that this statement represents a veiled allusion to the policies of the Tetrarchy against the Christians, the present writer suggests that Arnobius is here striking a vital nerve of Chaldaean astrophysical soteriology. The text is Adv. nat. 1.53.9-16:

Deus ille (sc. Christus) sublimis fuit, deus radice ab intima deus ab incognitis regnis et ab omnium principe deo sospitator est missus, quem neque sol ipse neque uilla, si sentiunt, sidera, non rectores, non principes mundi, non denique dii magni, aut qui fingentes se deos genus omne mortalium territant, unde aut qui fuerit potuerunt noscere vel suspicari: et merito.

We have already noted a number of passages in the Adv. nat. which

308 Adv. nat. 2.60;2.65.23-8: "Ut enim dii certi certas apud vos habent tutelas licentias potestates neque eorum ab aliquo id quod eius non sit potestatis ac licentiae postulatis, ita unus pontificium Christi est dare animis salutem et spiritum perpetuitatis adponere."

309 I.42.8-12. 310 2.65.20-3. 311 Cf. Mulvey, op. cit., 122.

312 V. LeB, 357, for discussion and references to earlier works on the term.

reveal a distinct Chaldaean influence.\textsuperscript{314} The above passage, however, has not been identified as such. We may begin by noting that the use of princeps, the divine epithet most frequently used by Arnobius (v. p. 128, nn. 52f. supra), who he understands as existing in "unknown realms" ("incognitis regnis"), would appear to correspond to the Chaldaean $\varphi \chi \eta$, who is the transcendent divine Father existing above the spheres of the stars.\textsuperscript{315} Another text appears to have the principal Chaldaean deity in mind: in Adv. nat. 1.38.16-18, Christ is said to have shown to mankind God's depth ("profundas"). According to Chaldaean theology, the planetary gods were thought to meditate upon the "Paternal Depth."\textsuperscript{316} Note the following fragment of a Chaldaean hymn, which Lewy suggests was addressed to the planetary gods: οφ τον $\delta \pi \rho \kappa \sigma \mu \nu$ $\pi \alpha \tau \iota \kappa \iota \delta$ $\upsilon \theta \delta$ $\iota$ $\tau$ $\nu$ $\sigma\nu\nu$.\textsuperscript{317} "Depth" in this system of religious thought "is applied here to the Pleroma of the intelligible world, called 'paternal', because the Supreme God is Himself the noetic All."\textsuperscript{318} Proclus' $\Upsilon \varphi \rho \kappa \sigma \mu \nu$ may be the technical (and less ambiguous) term which Arnobius, being an outsider to the Chaldaean religion, has attempted to communicate with his phrase, "ab incognitis regnis". Noteworthy also is the use of deruptus in Adv. nat. 1.38.14, viz. the assertion that Christ has brought man back from the "precipices"; and the Chaldaean term $\kappa \rho \mu \nu\varsigma$ used to designate Hades/Tartarus.\textsuperscript{319} We shall analyse in greater detail the soteriological implications of the polemical argument of Adv. nat. 1.38 in Chapter V. For the moment it has been necessary to observe the existence of texts in the Adv. nat. other than the one under analysis (1.53.9-16), which betray a distinct Chaldaean influence.

Turning to the other terms in Adv. nat. 1.53.9-16, we may first observe that Arnobius' reference to "sol" should be compared with the Chaldaean idea that the sun's rays draw the initiate's soul upwards during theurgical rites.\textsuperscript{320} It is obvious from this that the sun played an important soteriological part in Chaldaean theology. Solar rays brought about the mystic illumination of those initiated into the Chaldaean mysteries.\textsuperscript{321} The initiate lay on the ground

\textsuperscript{314} V. pp.134; 164, n.238; 165 and nn.241-5 supra.
\textsuperscript{315} Des Places, OC no.13, p.69 (=Psellus, Comm. 1145D); COTh, 161.
\textsuperscript{316} COTh, 161. \textsuperscript{317} OC no.18; COTh, 159, n.351=Proc., In Crat. 57.25.
\textsuperscript{318} COTh, 160. \textsuperscript{319} Ibid., 213f. \textsuperscript{320} Ibid., 149f. \textsuperscript{321} Ibid., 45.
and the priest conjured up his soul, after which the initiate marched toward the light. He then inhaled the light's divine substance, and the ray was then thought to draw up his soul and unite him "with the centre of cosmic harmony." For conceptual similarities to Arnobius' "sol," "sidera," "rectores," and "principes mundi," compare the κοσμαγοι of Chaldaean theology, who were thought to be the leaders of the concentric celestial circles: the Empyrean (outer intelligible world); Ethereal (zone of the stars and the planets); and Hylic (sublunar region including the earth). There is an apparent allusion to these circles in Adv. nat. 2.16.1f.: "Ac dum ad corpora labimur et properamus humana, ex mundanis circulis secuntur nos causae,...". Synesius' κοσμαγοι νωτος ἀποτρόπαιοι may correspond with Arnobius' "sidera". According to this interpretation, "mundi" would denote "celestial sphere." A soteriological attack has been suggested, and the basis of this is Lewy's interpretation of Psellus' οἱ εἰπὶ μαγείαν τρεῖ πατερὲς soteriologically: the world's rulers participated in theurgical elevation (cf. Adv. nat. 1.43 and Porph., Ep. An.) Also note that κοσμαγοι was interchangeably used with the term αἰχαί, and we have observed that the latter parallels "principes" in Adv. nat. 1.53.9-16. Arnobius appears to be alluding to the practice of theurgy in 2.13.33-6:

Quid illi sibi volunt secretarum artium ritus, quibus adfamini nescio quas potestates, ut sint vobis placidae neque ad sedes remeantibus patrias obstaculam impediionis opponant?

Compare also Adv. nat. 2.62.1-6:

Neque illud obrepat aut spe vobis aeria blandiatur, quod ab sciolis nonnullis et plurimum sibi adrogantibus dicitur, deo esse se gnatos nec fati obnoxios legibus, si vitam restrictius egerint, aulam sibi eius patere, ac post hominis functionem prohibente se nullo tamquam in sedem referri patritam...

The Chaldaean belief that the initiated were liberated from the ominous power of fate, to which Arnobius is referring, will be analysed in Chapter V. His use of "aulam" specifically designating the place to which the souls go after death corresponds linguistically and conceptually with Chaldaean eschatology. A later compatriot of Arnobius who came under the influence of both Neoplatonic and Chaldaean...
an thought, Synesius, could himself speak of the αὐλαὶ τῶν ἑαυτῶν to which the disembodied souls were thought to ascend.\footnote{Note Des Places' fragment of a Chaldaean text: ...ὑποκέκλιται σπαγμὸς ἀρχής αὐλῶν.\footnote{Compare Adv. nat. 2.33.18ff.: "Vos in aulam dominicam tamquam in propriam sedem remeatur vos sponte nullo prohibente praesumitis." The term "aulam" is similarly used in Adv. nat. 2.37.5. In light of the immortalization and ascent of the soul, it is to be noted that since Porphyry first brought the Chaldæan Oracles from obscurity and came under their influence, \footnote{Finally, the mention of "rulers" in 1.53.13 ("rectores") would appear to be an allusion to the Chaldæan belief that there was one ruler (ἄρχων) to each celestial concentric circle (supra, p. 180) and signifying Aion, the sun, and the moon.} it is not surprising that his three purificatory "principia" derived from the Oracles, most probably directly relate to Arnobius' "principes" of 1.53.13.\footnote{Finally, the mention of "rulers" in 1.53.13 ("rectores") would appear to be an allusion to the Chaldæan belief that there was one ruler (ἄрχων) to each celestial concentric circle (supra, p. 180) and signifying Aion, the sun, and the moon.} \footnote{Similarly the "dii magni" of Adv. nat. 1.53.14, may represent the "Great Father" (COTH, 76) of Chaldæan theology, who was conceived as an absolutely transcendent being. He did not have any direct contact with external things or beings, ruling solely through his intellect and his will (δουλη).\footnote{There followed after him Hecate-Psyche and Aion. These are the "Great Gods" to Hym. 3.37,709;4.292: COTH, 33, n.92.\footnote{Cf. Dam., Dub. et sol. 2.88.8.} COTH, 7ff., esp.7: "The Chaldæan Oracles were brought to the notice of the Neoplatonists (to whom we owe all the information we possess upon this subject) by Porphyry."\footnote{Cf. Dam., Dub. et sol. 2.217.5 ap. COTH, 140, n.275. Dam. postdates Arnobius (as do others who have been cited). The logic of this method is similar to Fortin's, art. cit., 204: if viri novi (Adv. nat. 2.15.2f.) represent an ascendent group, "one would normally expect to find more numerous and more accurate parallels in the literature of the following rather than the preceding centuries." COTH, 137-57.} One is again reminded of Porphyry's three purificatory "principia" found in De Civitate Dei 10.23.\footnote{It is not mere coincidence that Adv. nat. 1.38, a text which also betrays Chaldæan influence (v. p. 179 supra), contains a statement that Christ has brought back man, who was blind and "without any leader" (1.14: "sine ullo rectore"), from the "precipices" (v. p. 179 supra). It is not mere coincidence that Adv. nat. 1.38, a text which also betrays Chaldæan influence (v. p. 179 supra), contains a statement that Christ has brought back man, who was blind and "without any leader" (1.14: "sine ullo rectore"), from the "precipices" (v. p. 179 supra).} Finally, the mention of "rulers" in 1.53.13 ("rectores") would appear to be an allusion to the Chaldæan belief that there was one ruler (ἄρχων) to each celestial concentric circle (supra, p. 180) and signifying Aion, the sun, and the moon. 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There followed after him Hecate-Psyche and Aion. These are the "Great Gods" to
whom Arnobius is apparently referring in the text, and in contrast to whom he places the Christian princeps, who has sent Christ the sospitator from the unknown realms of the celestial spheres. Noteworthy also are the two intermediaries of the transcendent Chaldaean High God, his intellect (πνεύμα του θεού) and his will (Βουλή), the latter two corresponding to the "mentes geminas" of Adv. nat. 2.25.4f. The complete text is 2.25.2-6: "Hae-cine est anima docta illa quam dicitis, immortalis perfecta divina, post deum principem rerum et post mentes geminas locum optinens quartum et afluenus ex crateribus vivis?" Note his use of princeps rerum in the passage, an obvious indication that the term is directly from the vocabulary of his Chaldaean opponents; and the fact that princeps - and he can also use princeps rerum - is Arnobius' favourite divine epithet.333 The best interpretation of this use of a pagan divine epithet to describe the Christian High God in the Adv. nat. is that Arnobius is probably speaking in the language of his opponents, rather than that he is consciously Christianizing a pagan theological term. Before leaving Adv. nat. 2.25.2-6, we should note that Des Places has observed a parallel between Arnobius' "afluenus ex crateribus vivis" and Proclus' informing us of the Chaldaean πταίους κρατῆσας.334 Finally, we recall (p. 179 supra) a correspondence between Proclus' locating the Chaldaean deity in the ὑπέρκροσον and Arnobius' assertion that Christ came "ab incognitis regnis" (Adv. nat. 1.53.10f.), having been sent by the divine princeps as saviour. To this we should add Porphyry's statement, which is in accordance with Chaldaean theology and originally appeared in his Περὶ Τὸς Ἐκ Αὐγήνων Φιλοσοφίας,335 that the Great Father (πατὴρ μέγας) exists ὑπερουργοῦν κύριος; and Arnobius' "Deum principem,...,summitatem omnium summorum obtinentem..." (Adv. nat. 1.25.16ff.).

It is now necessary to make a final observation concerning the existence of Chaldaean influence in the Adversus nationes. We have already referred (p. 168, n.261 supra) to Dodds' statement that there is a correspondence between Iamblichus' αὐτίσκοι in De myst. 177.7ff. and Arnobius' mention of the "antitheos" in Adv. nat. 177.7ff.

333 V. p.128, nn.52f. supra. 334 OC, p.31; Fr. 42, p.77=Por-
clus, In Parm. 769.8-12.
335 COTh. 18=Theos. No.13, Buresch, 97. We shall analyse the rejection of Christ's divinity by Porphyry found in this work, and how it profoundly influenced Arn.'s polemics, in Ch. V infra.
4.12.10. The complete text is 4.12.9-16:

Si magi, haruspicum fratres, suis in accitionibus memorant antitheos saepius obrepere pro accitis, esse autem hos quosdam materiis ex cras-sioribus spiritus, qui deos se fingant nesciosque mendaciis et simulationibus ludant, cur non ratione non dispari credamus hie quoque subice-re se alos pro eis qui non sunt, ut et vestras opinationes firment et sibi hostias caedi alien-is sub nominibus gaudeant?

It is significant that in the next chapter (4.13.8) the "Chaldaeos" are enumerated in a list of authorities whom Arnobius mentions as being respectable theologians of his pagan opponents. And one should not overlook his mention of Julian "the Theurgist," who was the author of the Αὐγία δι' ἑπόν (=the "Chaldaean Oracles" quoted by the Neoplatonists: COTH, 5), in Adv. nat. I.52.5 (Cf. OC, p.32.). With the text cited above compare Adv. nat. 1.53.14f. (The complete text is quoted on p. 178 supra): "aut qui fingentes se deos genus omne mortalium territant,...". In both passages the concept of spirits (i.e., "demons" in the bad sense of the word) who deceivingly represent themselves as gods corresponds with the same idea found in Chaldaean/Neoplatonic theological texts. According to Chaldaean thought, the "theurgists protected themselves by an ascetic life against the pernicious influence of these demons, called the 'anti-gods', who were driven away by their action,...".336 For examples of Neoplatonic thought, we may give Iamblichus (COTH, 285, n.102): δαίμονας πονηρούς...,οὐ δὲ καὶ καλούσιν ἀντιθέους (De myst. 3.31: COTH, 285, n.102). Because we have identified a significant number of texts in the Adv. nat. which betray a Porphyrian influence, we should not ignore this Neoplatonist's similar concepts. These appear in his De abstinentia 2.37-43 (Cf. COTH, 285, n.100). One other important observation, which we shall analyse in greater detail in Ch. V, is that the main text that we have been studying (Adv. nat. 1.53.9-16, p. 178 supra), appears after a lengthy counter-attack of Porphyry's rejection of the divinity of Christ (v. Ch. V infra). It appears from this (pp. 178-83 inclusive) that the texts studied above represent a sharp critique of Chaldaean soteriology which is definitely not without its Porphyrian elements.

We may now turn once again to Arnobius' subordinationist understanding of Christ. This understanding invariably manifests itself as 336 COTH, 284.
a subordination of Christ to the High God in accordance with hierarchical position rather than divine essence. Nowhere in the Adv. nat. does Arnobius give his readers the impression that Christ as deus is regarded as being in any way essentially different from the great deus who has sent him to earth. Also, one should not conclude that Christ's powers as a predominantly saving and healing deity are limited because his earthly mission is restricted specifically to the dual purpose of bringing temporal and eschatological salus to mankind. Let us look at some of the ways in which Arnobius, an educated pagan, has attempted to make his new ideas about Christ intelligible. In accordance with the concept of eschatological deliverance, we find not infrequently the affirmation that the Great King has sent Christ as a "custos animarum" (Adv. nat. 1.64.33f.; cf. also 2.63; 2.65.35f.). Emphasising temporal soteriology, he asserts that Christ alone summons all human beings to God's mercy (2.64.1-7). He has brought the High God's blessings to souls and bodies (1.55.9-15). By revealing the true religion, Christ has brought to humankind salvific knowledge of God (e.g., 2.2). Christ has shown that transformation of the "media qualitas animae" can occur because he has performed many miracles (e.g., 1.65; 2.34), for which God is ultimately responsible (e.g., 2.35). His incarnation has preserved, without impairing, the power and direction of the Most High King (1.60). All things and beings are subordinated to the sublime majesty and power of the celestial emperor. As Van der Putten has noted, "In zijn (sc. Arnobius') godsbegrip staat Gods verhevenheid centraal."337 And Christ has the unique responsibility of bringing to humankind the gifts and the knowledge of this exalted God.

III. God And The Gods.

As in the case of many facets of Arnobiana, a consensus has not been reached concerning the exact meaning of Arnobius' beliefs about the relationship between the High God and the gods. Some have suggested that he concedes a hypothetical or extremely doubtful existence to the gods.338 Others believe that he affirms their existence solely for

polemical purposes. Concluding that Arnobius' God is Platonic, Burger has more recently argued that according to the Adversus nationes the gods are not created by God, "sondern aus ihm emanierter." McDonald, Le Bonniec, and Siniscalco have maintained that he did believe in the existence of inferior deities. Amata's recent analysis of Arnobius' concept of God contains a different conclusion:

...il concetto di Deus Summus in Arnobio è assoluto, cioè Dio è Sommo non in quanto è al di sopra di altri esseri, di qualunque natura e grandezza essi siano, ma perché 'bonorum omnium solus caput et fons est, perpetuarum pater fundator et conditor rerum, a quo omnia terrena cunctaque caelestia animantur motu irriganturque vitali, et qui si non esset, nulla profecto res esset quae aliquod nomen substantiamque portaret';

The Sicilian scholar has interpreted the concept of absolute divine pre-eminence in a chronological rather than an ontological sense. But the concept does not necessarily preclude a hierarchical understanding of the divine world. As we can deduce from the Chaldaean influence upon his conception of deity, when Arnobius speaks of the "High God" (summus deus, rex, princeps, etc.), he appears to be expressing himself in quite literal terms. The highest deity of the divine world, according to the Arnobian understanding of it, exists at the highest summit (Adv. nat. 1.25.16ff.: p.182 supra) of the celestial spheres which he calls the "unknown realms" (v. p. 182 supra: Adv. nat. 1.53.10f.). McDonald has rightly concluded that Arnobius "seems to picture the God Supreme as president of a graduated pantheon" (p. 79). Of these proposed interpretations of Arnobius' understanding of the way that the High God relates himself to other deities - accepting the argument that he does believe in their existence - Le Bonniec's analysis (though not made in great detail)

339 Le Nourry, Diss. praev. (PL 5.399); Leckelt, Über das Arnobius Schrift: Adversus Nationes. Progr. Neisse, 1884, 3-19, p.9; Marchesi, "Questioni", p.1016; Micka, op. cit., p.43, n.10; McCr, 33.
341 Art. cit., 79.
342 LeB, 75.
343 DPAC I, col.378. I assume that Siniscalco identifies these "dii" as those of the myths. Cf. Monceaux 3, 268; Moricca 1, 612.
is the most convincing. First, certain divine epithets which Arnobius uses imply the existence of subordinated deities. Second, noting Rapisarda's Achilles heel in arguing that Arnobius never contradicts the Christian conception of divine unity, he asserts: "Je croirais plutôt qu'Arnobe, encore à demi-païen, est resté impregné de notions philosophiques acquises avant sa conversion." Although he did not sharply focus upon the fine points implied in these statements, Le Bonniec's position has much to commend it, as will become apparent. Finally, we should note that in a recent article van der Putten has concluded that "in practice" there is one God according to Arnobius, but he allows the possibility that gods exist, provided that they fit the ideal image. With the exception of Le Bonniec, those aforementioned scholars who maintain that Arnobius believed in the existence of the gods have not really clarified what Arnobius defines as "gods," and the criteria which allow one to disengage polemics from personal views. Obviously inherent in this criticism is the possibility that the Adv. nat. conveys a very fine distinction between the "gods" of pagan religious literature and the divine beings of a philosophical tradition whose salient features have already disclosed themselves in this study as Platonic. If there is a pre-Christian philosophical stratum discernible in certain sections of the Adv. nat., as Le Bonniec supposes, one may go further and suggest that it is necessary to make just such a disengagement of criticism of the gods of the myths from a basic Platonic stratum underlying certain philosophically pregnant passages.

A number of possible obstacles to this method of approach will have to be kept in mind. First, in any "Christian" concept found in the Adversus nationes it may be possible to find a pagan religious or philosophical idea informing Arnobius' thought. This does not necessarily mean that he had any intention to paganize or Platonize any facet of his new religion. It would be best to explain what is happening in psychological/experiential terms: Arnobius is a former member of the pagan intelligentsia who has recently been converted to Christianity, and he is attempting to make his new religion intell-
igible. And he was not receiving catechetical instruction. In accordance with this interpretation, we may conclude that Arnobius had as little intention consciously to paganize Christianity, as he did to Christianize paganism. The historical significance of the *Adversus nationes* lies chiefly in the fact that it gives its readers a relatively clear picture of an educated pagan of the upper classes in North Africa, making Christian beliefs practicable. Hence one should expect to find a certain amount of tension inherent in an uninstructed neophyte's newly-acquired religious Weltanschauung. Also, in converting from one set of religious beliefs to another in antiquity, one would expect to discover some kind of common conceptual ground existing between the two to make the transition possible; and something lacking in the old views which the new ones were thought to supply. Otherwise, making such a transition would not offer any benefits, especially during the Diocletianic Persecution! One would expect to discover in the *Adv. nat.* evidence of a confluence of pagan religious and philosophical concepts with those of Christianity. This confluence seems to have been the result of Arnobius' efforts to make sense of his new religion by a process which may be termed analogical thinking. Two of the many examples that one could give are *Adv. nat.* 1.62, where he compares the death of Christ's body but not his divine nature to that of the Sibyl who is filled with the power of Apollo; and 2.65, where Christ's peculiar office of granting the munus salutis is comparable to Liber's ability to provide a vintage and other necessities. Whether this whole process can be termed a confluence of several views which perhaps superficially did not appear contradictory to a recent outsider to the faith, or a conflict of opposing views, depends to a great extent upon whether one places Arnobius on the scale whose two extremes are "orthodox" (e.g., Rapisarda) and "heretical" (e.g., Scheidweiler and Sirna), or refuses to make such inaccurate generalizations at all. Yet perhaps only for the sake of convenience would the appellation "heterodox" be suitable. In the case of the "orthodox" approach (Rapisarda), one becomes eventually frustrated for attempting to make theological sense of an historical document which was never intended to make a theological statement. One usually is involved, therefore, in an hermeneutical exercise whose main interpretative method is an eisegesis of select Arnobian texts one's own predetermined

argument. Other problems which this approach produces can be seen in the attempts to define Arnobius' theological position according to formulations which either postdated him, or of which it cannot be ascertained that he was even aware. A literary and historical approach sensitive to definable classifications of the layers of Arnobius' perception of the High God's relation to the gods is the method of approach proposed herein.

There is overwhelming evidence to support Le Bonniec's suggestion that there is a pre-Christian philosophical stratum of ideas which has informed Arnobius' thought vis-à-vis the relationship between God and the gods. The main text is Adv. nat. 2.36.1-12:

Sed immortales perhibentur dii esse. Non ergo natura, sed voluntate dei patris ac munere. Quo igitur pacto immortalitatis largitus est donum dis (die) certa prolatis, et animas hoc pacto dignabitur immortalitate donare, quamvis eas mors saeva posse videatur extingueret et ad nihilum redactas inremare abhille. Plato ille divinus multa de deo digna nec commulia sentiens multitudini in eo sermone ac libro cui nomen Timaeus scribitur deos dicit et mundum corruptibilis esse natura neque esse omnino dissolutionis expertes, sed voluntate dei regis ac principis vinctone in perpetua contineri.

Not only is Arnobius unequivocal about the philosopher who has influenced him here — he even uses a Neoplatonic term of endearment to describe Plato — he does something unusual for his style of argumentation by naming the work from which his ideas are derived: Tim. 41B is meant (Adv. nat. 2.36.7-12). The "dii" here correspond exactly with the θεοί θεὸν whom the demiurge addresses in Tim. 41A-D, who are not totally immortal or indissoluble (δὲ λαμβάνοι μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ οὐδὲ Μαρτυριοὶ τὸ πάμπαν: Tim. 41B). We have seen that the same treatise furnished the underlying concepts of Arnobius' understanding of creation (v. pp.162-73 supra) and has also served as the basis for his concept of the media qualitas animae, as he explicitly acknowledges in Adv. nat. 2.36.16-29. Hence he can also affirm a media qualitas deorum whose conditional immortality is dependent upon the voluntas

350 V. p.155, n.199 supra. 351 2.36.16-20: "Ergo si res ita nec aliud convenit vel existimare vel credere, quid animas admiramini mediae dicoi qualitatis a nobis, cum numinibus ipsis dicoi Plato medias esse naturas, sed continum et inoccidum vitam principali benivolentia subrogari?" It is interesting to note that the divine voluntas is conceived in a number of texts as if it were a particular intermediary of the great and transcendent God. A very similar concept existed in Chaldaean theology (v. COTh, 78-83).
Arnobius appears to be making the same concept clear in 2.35.14-20:

Et tamen, o isti, qui mediae qualitatis animas esse non creditis et in medio limite vitae atque interitus contineri, nonne omnes omnino, quos esse opinatio suspicatur, dii angeli daemones aut nomine quocumque sunt alio, qualitatis et ipsi sunt mediae et in ambiguae sortis condicione nutabiles?

As Festugière has observed, the reference to "dii angeli daemones" parallels Porphyry's discussion in De reg. an. ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 10.9, of those beings in relation to theurgical purifications, rather than Cornelius Labeo ap. Civ. Dei 9.19. Arnobius refers to the same concept in 1.28.38-42 and 1.34.12ff. Sometimes he vacillates between affirming that God made the gods and simply remarking that they are unbegotten.

Arnobius will not allow the faintest possibility that the gods have births as the result of sexual intercourse, because this would allow some element of truth to be found in pagan religious literature. This is only one idea which he attacks with all the sarcasm imaginable in Books 3-5, where he develops a lengthy attack upon the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic depictions of the gods found in the pagan myths. It is these deities whose existence he rejects in toto. Observe his inclusion of the "gods" in Christian worship of the deus summus in the passage heavily indebted to Porphyry (v. p. 170 supra):

Subiciunt enim haec: si vobis divina res cordi est, cur alios nobiscum neque deos colitis neque adoratis nec cum vestris gentibus communia sacra miscetis et religionum coniungitis ritus? Possumus interim dicere: ad cultum divinitatis obendum satis est nobis deus primus, deus, inquam, primus, pater rerum ac dominus, constitutor moderatorem eunctorum, in hoc

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352 Mem. Lagrange, 113, n.1. 353 Adv. nat. 1.28.38-42: "At enim esse creduntur immortales perpetui et nullius uumquam participes finis. Ergo istud munus dei patris et donum est, ut infinita meruerint idem esse per saecula, cum sint labiles solubilesque natura."; cf. 1.34.12f.: "Non enim ipsa per se sunt sed ex eius perpetuitate perpetua et infinita semper continuacione procedunt."

354 V. the following for texts conveying the concept of created gods: 1.28.37-42;2.35f.; for unbegotten gods v.: 2.35.21; both ideas appear in 2.35.20-30; cf. 7.35.11-8: "At vero nos contra, si modo dui certi sunt habentque huius nominis auctoritatem potentiam dignitatem, aut ingenitos esse censemus - hoc enim religiosum est credere - aut si habent nativitatis exordium, dei summi est scire, quibus eos rationibus fecerit aut saecula quanta sint, ex quo eis attribuit
omne quod colendum est colimus, quod adorari convenit adoramus, quod obsequium venerationis exposcit venerationibus promemur. (Adv. nat. 3.2.4-13)

Taking this text in isolation, one might be justified in concluding that Arnobius is indeed including the dii nationum in the worship of the High God, at least indirectly. The conclusion would appear to receive further support from Adv. nat. 3.3.6-10, where he explicitly states that the gods, whoever they might be, receive homage, though not by name, when Christians worship their divine king, provided that they derive their existence from him. Yet as Arnobius develops his argument, it becomes quite clear that the existence of the mythical gods is rejected:

Invitare nos forsitan ad istorum numinum potuissetis cultum, si non ipsi vos prii opinium turrpium foeditate talia de illis configeretis quae non modo il-lorum polessuent dignitatem sed minime illos esse qualitatibus conprobaretis adiunctis. (Adv. nat. 3.6. 11-6)

Further evidence that Arnobius makes a sharp distinction between the gods of the myths and those deities that he understands according to the Timaeus, evolves from his explication of a deus verus. A divine being must essentially be like the High God to be called a true god. Metaphysically a true god would have to be eternal (e.g., Adv. nat. 1.28; 1.34; 2.36.1-12); immortal (e.g., 2.16); unbegotten (ingenitus: e.g., 1.31.9); incorporeal (incorporalis: e.g., 7.28.39ff.; cf. 2.16.6f.; 7.3.29ff.); and consequently he must not be anthropomorphic or anthropopathic (e.g., Books 3-5). As we have already noted, the sine qua non of Arnobius' understanding of a deus verus is that the deity should cause no harm whatsoever to humans and should always be predisposed to bring them material or spiritual aid (cf. Adv. nat. 2.55.27-34; and the argument related to the "munera Christi" of 1.45-8; v. pp. 140-7 and 176f. supra). We have also seen (pp. 162-73 supra) in the section on creation that Arnobius, following Plato, believes that the High God (ap. Plato: Δηκιωμόδε) only begets perfection, i.e., whatever being he creates is essentially divine like himself: ἡ ἐμοὶ ἀντανακλά συνεργόμενα καὶ βίου μετασχόντα θεοῦ ἱδαξεί' ἀν' (Tim. 41C). Although he concentrates upon the media qualitas deorum, perpetuitatem sui numinis inchoare.

355 "... si sunt progenies regia et principali oriuntur e capite, etiam si nullos accipient nominatim a nobis cultus, intellegunt se
this concept is implied in Adv. nat. 2.35.14-20 (v. p. 189 supra), and here as in Plato, the essential immortality and divinity of the θεοὶ θεῶν is dependent upon the will of the High God. Arnobius makes this explicit in 7.2.1-13. After his pagan adversary asks who the "dii veri" (1.1) are, he answers that they must be like the "dominus rerum est atque omnipotens ipse" (11.10f.). But does this definition mean ipso facto that Arnobius excludes the deities of the pagan myths?

One can answer in the affirmative by summarily referring to the presence of six résumés of Arnobius' argument concerning the true nature, and therefore the non-existence of the gods of the myths. He devotes first the whole of Adv. nat. 1.28 to demonstrating that the anthropopathic gods of paganism do not possess any quality of divinitas. Whatever being that behaves in this manner perishes. In Adv. nat. 3.12.13-22, after a ruthless vituperation of the anthropomorphic concepts of deity found in the myths in 3.1-11, Arnobius concludes that gods who possess these kinds of characteristics are mortal (1.19: "mortales esse"). Returning to the anthropopathic theme in the fourth Book, his third résumé (Adv. nat. 4.27f.) gives the same conclusion, viz.: "Mortalia sunt enim quaecumque narratis" (Adv. nat. 4.28.30f.). Indeed, the pagan gods of the myths are "falsis opinionibus constitutos" (Adv. nat. 4.9.1). His fourth résumé appears in 6.2, and his conclusion is that any being given to emotions is subject to the laws of mortality (11.25ff.). Finally, he makes the same point in 7.4.1-13, focusing upon voluptas and tristitia: a being expressing either emotion only proves its mortality. As is shown in Chapter V below, especially in respect of voluptas, Arnobius' concept of deity does not at all cohere with Epicurean theology. The final résumé occurs in Adv. nat. 7.35-36.13, and the all too familiar conclusion is: "nos huiusmodi motus alienos existimamus ab his (sc. diis) esse; sunt enim ferocium generum et mortalitatis obeuntium functiones" (11.10-3). The pagan gods of the myths (Books 3-5), who receive veneration in the temples (Adv. nat. 6.1-8) where they are thought to dwell in images (6.9-27) and accept sacrifices (Book 7), do not exist. These résumés, therefore, form a basic literary structure with which Arnobius develops the motif of his attack
upon paganism (Books 3-7).

The basis of his attack reveals itself as the author's fondness for developing the major themes of his argument against the pagans in accordance with a method of literary retortion. This is apparent in Adv. nat. 1.57, where a distinction is made between the basis of Christian literature and that of the pagans. Reliable eye-witnesses characterise the former and opinions the latter. In all of the Adv. nat., the best example of the belief that misconceptions of the gods derive directly from the religious literature of Graeco-Roman paganism, appears in 4.18.12-27:

Et qui fieri potis est remotis magisteriis litterarum? quid est enim quod dici de immortalibus diis possit, quod non ex hominum (di) scriptis ad humanas pervenerit notiones? aut quicquam vos ipsi de illorum ritibus potestis caerimoniiisque narrare, quod relationem in litteras non sit et scriptorum commentariis publicatum? Aut si ponderis existimatis nullius haec esse, aboleantur omnes libri quos de diis habetis compositos theologorum, pontificum, nonnullorum etiam philosophiae deductorum; quinimum potius fingamus ab exordio mundi nullum aliquando mortalium commentum esse diis quicquam: experiri volumus et cupimus scire, an muttire, an hiscere deorum in mentione possitis, an concipere eos mente quos in animis vestris nullius scripti informaverit notio.

Even the theological raison d'être of the pagan cults (i.e., "ritibus...caerimoniiisque") is grounded in mendacity (cf. also esp. Adv. nat. 5.14.1-22). By using this retortive method, Arnobius can turn the tables against those pagans who ridicule the literature of the Christians. Hence the pagan stories about the gods have caused their expulsion from mankind, a retortion of a similar pagan criticism of Christianity found in Adv. nat. 1.1. It is because of their conceptions of the gods that pagans can be called atheists, a retortion of charges against Christianity occurring in several passages. Pagan religious literature offers no consensus about the gods, only uncertainty and conflicting opinions. Roman abstract de-
ties do not exist. Obviously the latter refers to the di veri because in Adv. nat. 3.29-35, he has been developing the argument that those divinities of the Graeco-Roman myths do not exist, and here he bases his conclusions upon an exegesis of the meaning of the gods' names. They are false, he alleges, because they are the products of false opinions. Instead of expecting Christians to worship such deities as Lateranus, Pertunda, Mutunus, etc., pagans should be careful to consider worshipping those deities who have the surest title to existence, provided that they do exist.

Undeniably there is a pre-Christian stratum inherent in Arnobius' understanding of the High God's relationship to "gods." This layer of his thinking constitutes a residue of concepts which he held while still a pagan, and it is indebted to Platonism. One may go further and observe that the discernible tension in this neophyte's thought discloses itself as entailing a confluence of philosophical ideas and those of his new religion. To say that they apparently did not seem contradictory to Arnobius is not to conclude, however, that he consciously attempted to Platonize Christianity. When he speaks with some certainty about the existence of di veri, we should understand him to be referring to those deities who must be like the High God who has granted to them a conditional immortality (Adv. nat. 2.35f. and Tim. 41C). Mythical divinities, those worshipped in the pagan temples, commented upon by pagan theologians, etc., do not exist because their anthropomorphic and anthropopathic natures prove their mortality (1.18; 3.12.13-22; 4.27f.; 6.2; 7.4.1-13; 7.35f-36.13). We shall observe in Chapter V that this argument about the mortality of the deities is developed as a response to Porphyry's rejection of the Christian belief in the deity of Christ.

of Arnobius' polemical argument related both to the pagan understanding of deity, and his response to the pagan objections to Christian beliefs of deity found in such propaganda. V. Chapters V-VI infra.

361 Ibid. 4.1f. 362 Ibid., 3.36.6-13. 363 Ibid., 4.7.9-12: "Quodsi minime vos admovent ad intellectum veritatis res ipsae, nec ex ipsis saltem potestis nominibus noscere inanissimae superstitionis figumenta haec esse et falsorum imaginationes deorum?"; cf. 4.9.1-4: "Quid ergo, inquitis, hos deos nusquam esse gentium iudicatis et falsis opinationibus constituotos? Non istud nos soli, sed veritas ipsa dicit et ratio et illae communis qui est cunctis in mortalibus sensus."; and 4.37 in toto.

364 Ibid., 4.11.1-14.
Those passages which convey some hesitancy about the existence of gods should not be understood as referring to those gods found in the literature of Graeco-Roman religious paganism, but to those conceived according to Arnobius' reading in Platonic philosophy. One could speculate that such hesitancy may have derived from a growing awareness on Arnobius' part of what the ecclesiastical establishment in North Africa considered to be an acceptable conception of deity. And his Platonic ideas might have helped to bridge the metaphysical gap which separated the pagan deities from the High God and his mediator Christ. We shall analyse the ways that Arnobius' Platonic conception of deity also helped him to develop his counter-attack of Porphyry's criticism of Christian concepts of deity (Chapters V-VI infra). Nevertheless, Arnobius may easily have rejected the existence of the mythical gods in toto as an intellectual pagan, and Platonism may have prevented him from a total rejection of polytheism. This latter suggestion does not necessarily contradict our interpretation of his "pre-conversion" texts (Adv. nat. 1.39 and 3.24) as confirming that Arnobius was a "practicing polytheist" before his decision to become a Christian. An ideal image of the gods, inspired partly by Tim. 41 (i.e., the gods must essentially be like the God who has allowed them to exist), and partly by his understanding of Christ's revelation of the nature of a deus verus, is thus presented to the pagans to show them that the entirety of their religious beliefs and practices originates from misconceptions of deity. This image, it must be emphasised, is "ideal" in the sense of an idea far superior to the concepts of deity which are espoused by the members of the pagan religious establishment, and which is founded upon and derived from their religious literature (i.e., the myths). Their gods, therefore, do not exist. Yet the ideal image according to Arnobius' own religious beliefs supports the interpretation proposed herein, viz. that he did believe in the existence of lesser deities, subordinate to the High God, essentially like him both in respect of their individual natures and their relationship to humans. According to these features of his understanding of the relationship between God and the gods, making the complete transition from his own existential involvement in religious and philosophical paganism to Christianity undoubtedly only necessitated a name-change to "angels".

A list is found in LeB, 74, n.4.
Conclusions.

One who would give a general configuration of the very basic constituents of Arnobius' conception of deity would have to recognise a strong monotheistic tendency embodying a High God to whom all other deities are subordinated. Platonism is the philosophy which has partly influenced this facet of his thinking. An analysis of some of the practical religious influences requires a separate chapter (Chapter IV). This conceptual nucleus of heavenly king ruling over lesser gods was common to the religious beliefs of the empire, and it therefore comes as no surprize that it was easily transmitted during Arnobius' initial phase of conversion to accommodate Christian ideas of "High God and mediator". The underlying presupposition of this whole interpretation lies in the fact that there is no convincing evidence that Arnobius was a catechumen when he was writing the Adv. nat., and sufficient evidence that he was not. It then becomes logical to define his understanding of High God, mediator, the gods, their relationship to each other and to humankind, as representing a stratification of concepts. The texts which we have analysed in this study provide the historian of religious thought under the late Roman Empire a unique "art gallery" containing a number of fascinating portraits of an educated, former member of the pagan upper classes, in the process of transforming the entire conceptual basis of one religious worldview, in order to replace it for that of another. We have seen that Platonism played a significant part in helping Arnobius to realise this conceptualization. In the final two chapters below, we shall observe how he similarly used Platonic concepts to develop his counter-attack, using a method of literary retortion, upon pagan concepts of deity.

Hence the reason for "conceptions" in the title of this chapter: Arnobius is actually and existentially involved in a process of conceiving deity in what has appeared to him as a Christian understanding of the High God, and his relationship to the world of man, to Christ,


and to the gods. Expressing it in historical terms, the latest layer of Arnobius' thought related to the concepts of deity which he accepted as his own, reveals a Christianized High God who acts through one mediator, Christ. No other deities except these two should receive veneration. A clarification is necessary as to why a separate subsection was given above (pp. 131-40) on experiencing the deity in worship. The reason was to demonstrate that the idea of a personal deity manifests itself most frequently in those texts where Arnobius discusses acts of Christian worship, especially prayer offered to the High God. And we are fortunate to have in Adv. nat. 1.31 a prayer full of philosophical concepts accentuating a mysterious and transcendent divine being, at the end of which Arnobius rather clumsily (and all too conspicuously) attempts to pour new wine into his old wine skins by asking God to forgive his enemies! Another distinctly Christian feature is Christ's revelation of salvific knowledge to all who desire to receive it - and not to a select few as in Gnosticism - by an act of trust, a concept which most probably derives from Clement of Alexandria. "Salvation," whether it may be temporal or eschatological, comes only through Christ. He has presented to humankind the only authentic revelation of the nature of deus verus. Those who know not God when they die will receive punishment over a period of time, after which they will perish. All pagan gods of the myths and the cults are false. They do not exist. Finally, there is no qualitative difference between the historical and the contemporary munera dei in Christo. Both prove the authenticity of the claim that truth is obtainable only through the Christian religion.

Ingredients of a Platonic stratum can be described as follows: all things and beings are dependent upon the divine will for their existence and sustenance; the concept of divine providence (e.g., Adv. nat. 1.29f.; 3.24) maintaining that God is predisposed to help man but does not cause him any harm, disclosing a number of Porphyrian parallels (e.g., Adv. nat. 2.55; 6.2; cf. for Porphyry pp. 123, 134, 142 supra); an apophatic understanding of the High God, emphasising a deity who is transcendent, mysterious, and almost totally unknowable, suggesting Neoplatonic influence; the concept of an innate knowledge of the existence of the High God, suggesting Porphyrian influence; the creation of man by a demiurgic creator, and the gods by the High God; and the idea that any divine essence must by nature
be like the High God. Platonism has served to help Arnobius to fill the great metaphysical gap existing between the mythical gods of religious paganism and what he has understood as the High God of the Christians. It has provided him with a number of philosophical ideas that were undoubtedly accepted as personal beliefs while he was a pagan, which gave him a more intellectually credible conception of deity than religious paganism was able to offer, and it helped him successfully to make the complete break with paganism. Platonism was not able to furnish him with the belief in a personal divine being who takes the initiative to satisfy the individual human's material and spiritual needs. As noted above (p. 196), this idea of deity undoubtedly derives from his own existential/intellectual involvement in the Christian cult. It is not a simplistic historical generalization to conclude that Arnobius appears to have lived during an age when the individual, regardless of his/her social class, was seeking a personalized deity from whom he/she could experience genuinely personal, often tangible, benefits in the world in which they lived. Proof of this appears in Adv. nat. 1.49, where Arnobius acknowledges the thousands of pagan believers who fill the shrines because they are praying that the gods— he gives Asclepius as the best example, perhaps with Aelius Aristides in mind— heal their physical diseases. This also helps to explain Arnobius' emphasis upon the physical healings of Christ (e.g. Adv. nat. 42-54 passim). But we are here entering an area which a later chapter analyses in detail (v. Ch. VI).

Turning to possible evidence that may help to prove the occurrence of an Epicurean layer of thought in Arnobius' conception of the High God and his relationship to man's world, Christ, and the gods, one is met with just the opposite. As a pagan and a Christian Arnobius believed in divine providence (e.g., Adv. nat. 3.24; cf. 1.29f. for Christian views). We shall observe how this specific aspect of his understanding of deity was made practicable in the context of the conflict between Christianity and the Saturn cult in Roman North Africa, in the following chapter. It is necessary presently to note that Arnobius does indeed reject the idea, as we have just mentioned above, that a god can and (when necessary) does cause harm or injury to human beings, but he equally affirms (e.g., Adv. nat. 2.55) the belief that a deus verus does good to them. It is
the presence of the latter concept in the *Adversus nationes*, which decisively counts against an Epicurean identification of Arnobius' conception of God. His belief in a God who is concerned to help man spiritually and materially is in direct opposition to the first of Epicurus' *Kυριαι Ασθενεια*. And his understanding of a deity who sends the rain, sunshine, harvests, etc. (e.g., Adv. nat. 1.29f.; 3.24), contradicts Epicurean physical theories which divorced the regulation of the natural and celestial elements from any divine control and supervision. Arnobius also rejects the anthropomorphic depictions of the gods. Epicureans did reject the belief that a god could express anger, and Arnobius does indeed concur. But his concept of divine impassibility includes any emotional expression. The rejection of *voluptas* in this context in Adv. nat. 7.4, again counts against the Epicurean view that the gods, existing in the *intermundia*, experienced *voluptas* in perfect bliss. More will be said about this in Chapter V. Finally, Arnobius' whole attitude towards the human experience of death, and ideas related to it, supports the conclusion that we have often given above. For example, he expresses a genuine fear of death. It is apparent that he believed in the survival of the human soul beyond the grave even during his pagan period. And we may similarly conclude in respect of Arnobius' belief that the soul will suffer some kind of punishment (albeit temporary) in the hereafter. All these concepts provide evidence for the proposed interpretation. We may legitimately conclude that although there undoubtedly were Epicureans who lived at Sicca Veneria, there are no grounds for admitting Arnobius to their ranks, restricting our judgments to his conception of the High God.

368 ILT 1614b: "Artorius Philosophus Epicureus Pius vixit annis XXXII. HSE."
Religion And The Agrarian Life In North Africa: Historical Considerations.

North African Neolithic sites dating c. 3000 B.C. have disclosed that the inhabitants knew how to use a simple plough and hoe. Crops cultivated were of a wide variety: spelt, peas, grapes, dates, almonds, figs, etc. It is significant that the most ancient ex-voto stelae, excavated at Carthage (dating c. the end of the sixth century B.C.), depict dolphins which symbolise the superior waters, humidity, and then, of course, fertility. Other stelae found in the same city possessed engravings of ploughs. At Utica's Punic level (six metres below the Roman level) one gigantic sarcophagus contained a gold ring portraying an enthroned Ba'al (?) that holds a sceptre crowned with an ear of wheat. More than forty Neopunic (i.e., first century B.C. to the first century A.D.) dedicatory monuments unearthed at Khamissa (Thubursicu Numidarum), Algeria, had etchings of such agricultural symbols as ears of grain and bunches of grapes. Tanit's sign drawn on a bust of the sun, flanked by two cornucopiae and pomegranates, appears on three ex-voto stelae originating c. one kilometre NE of Médéïna (Althiburos), Tunisia. And we can be certain that it was not simply for aesthetic purposes alone that Caesar had a series of coins minted, the obverse of which pictured ...

1 I should like to thank the following for giving me permission to make photo-copies of the illustrations found in Saturne Africain Histoire and Saturne Africain Monuments (I-II): Professor Marcel Leglay of the Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV); the Edition E. de Boccard of Paris (SAH); and the Librairie Ernest Flammarion of Paris (SAM I-II).

2 NASS, 3. 3 Ibid. 4 A Majoubi, "Découvertes archéologiques dans la région de Béja. Pierres funéraires et stèles votives dédiées à Saturne trouvées à Kef Rechga et aux environs de Béja", RTRSS 12, 1975, 15-44, p.28, n.19.

5 HAAN 4, 13f., n.5. 6 NASS, 7 and fig. I.2. 7 SAM 1, 373, nos. 36ff.;45f.

8 Ibid., nos. 16, 24, 26ff., 31, 39, 41, 43, 48ff. 9 J. Toutain, "Note sur quelques stèles votives des environs de Médéïna (Tunisie)", BACTH 1919, 101-5 (nos. 4ff.). Cf. also SAM 1, 295f. Gsell's first chapter to volume of his HAAN remains a classic source on the history of agriculture in N. Africa.
Ceres' head crowned with a wreath of corn.\textsuperscript{10}

Turning to the imperial period, the connection between religious belief and a life sustained by working on the land proliferates. The two apparently were always intertwined in N. Africa, whether we speak in reference to the Punic, Neopunic, or Roman periods. The cult of the grain goddesses, the Ceres, appears to have been significant for the emergence of Carthage as an administrative area which included the rich grain fields of the upper Bagradas.\textsuperscript{11} The close relationship between North African religious beliefs and the agrarian life was indeed ubiquitous: artistically painted in the mosaic pavements of one's home; reverently dedicated in the rural chapels of farms in the proconsular province; engraved upon domestic furniture; symbolised in the images of the gods; found at


\textsuperscript{11} Fishwick-Shaw, art. cit., 376 (40-39 B.C.): holders of Ceres priesthood were in later years drawn from the E and W side of the fossa regia.

\textsuperscript{12} V. T. Précheur-Canonge, La vie rurale en Afrique d'après les mosaïques. Tunis, 1962, PUT 6. Carthage: p.8, no.19 (Terra Mater); p.8, no.21 (Bacchus); El Djem (Thysdrus): p.9, no.23 (Venus, 4 seasons, basket with grain and fruits);Dougga (Thugga): p.9, no.27 (genie, cornucopia, sickle, grain); Lambèse (Lambaese): p.10, no.29 (Bacchus and 4 seasons); etc.; cf. Jocelyn M.C. Toynbee, "Mosaic", OCD, 700f.

\textsuperscript{13} N. Fericchiou, "Remarques sur la colonisation en Proconsulaire, au cours du premier siècle après J.C.", CahTun 1980, 9-55, p.31: at Fundus Tapp...(Jenan ez Zaytouna) an inscription to Mercury by its proprietors; p.33: temple of Caelestis dedicated by a possessor on the fundus at Hr.-bel Azeiz (1st century A.D.).

\textsuperscript{14} M. Simon, "Un document du syncrétisme religieuse dans l'Afrique romaine", CRAI 1978, 500-24, p.501 and fig. 1: bearded man on a lamp; lower body is a menorah; dove pecks at a bunch of grapes; cf. C. Bourgeois, "Neptune et le dauphin à Mactar", BAC 1973, n.s.9, 17-23, p.19: Neptune lamp from Sousse (Hadrumetum) at the Bardo.

\textsuperscript{15} A. Mahjoubi, "Découvertes archéologiques dans la région de Béja", CahTun 7, 1959, 481-7, p.484, photo no.4: statue of Mercury (patron deity of e.g., Sabratha, Lepcis Minor, Thysdrus); the Mercurial scorpion-fertility of the wheat granary of Rome according to M. Deonna, "Mercure et le Scorpion", Lat 17, 1958, 52-66, 249-61, esp. p.487: "Le Mercure africain est donc avant tout un dieu protecteur de l'agriculture."; for the African Neptune who differs from his Graeco-Roman counterpart (i.e., cultic sites concentrated on the high plateaux of Tunisia and around Constantine) v.: P. Pettinengin, "Inscriptions de la région de Milev", MEFR, 1967, 165-205 (esp. map between pp.200f.); Bourgeois, art. cit.; and the following note.
aqueducts and springs, often directly related to the cult of Neptune; and even solemnly depicted on mausolea. A visitor at the baths in a Roman city would undoubtedly not fail to recall Neptune's association with water - springs, rivers, fountains, etc. as, for example, at Mactar, Tunisia, which has the best preserved baths of Roman North Africa. And his religious sentiments might have been acutely felt if there had been any hint that water for his livelihood, the crops, might soon be in short supply. So much we see in Adv. nat. 1.30.8-17 and other pertinent texts. These few examples from the thousands that can be given from literary, archaeological, and epigraphical sources, must suffice. The gist is, quite simply, that salus deorum, conceived as human experience of the divine largesse, often in North Africa presupposed a sense of safety in the world as the result of material, equatable with agrarian, well-being. So the gods were asked to protect the crops upon which the lives of many were at stake in this area of the Roman Empire which, together with Egypt, formed the imperial granary. It made perfect sense to acquire supernatural help for a good harvest. It is not surprising that one of the most highly acclaimed agricultural works of antiquity was written by the Carthaginian Mago (3rd century

V. I. T. 293 Gafsa (Capea): "Neptuno et Nimphis sacrvm CN Ivnivs ...aquaeductum fontemque sva pecunia fecit et dedicavit...". Neptune in Roman N. Africa was venerated as a god of springs, fountains, rivers, etc. A dossier of CIL 8 inscriptions with translations and analyses appears in: S. ben Baaziz, Le culte de Neptune dans l'Afrique romaine. Bordeaux III, 1973 (unpublished Master's thesis).


Cf. Pettimengin, art. cit., 19: Neptune stela at Mactar (Mactaris) depicts the god seated with a trident in his left hand; p.18, fig.1: a huge statue of the god with a dolphin; and p.22: Neptune is given his distinct African description as "moins une divinite marine qu'un dieu des eaux...".


For the main texts in the Adversus nationes related either solely to agriculture, or to the close connection between religious belief and the agrarian life, which we have been noting, v. p.76, n.84 supra.
Illustration No. 1
Pompéi. Peinture : Kronos-Saturne.
(SAH PL VIII)
B.C.) in twenty-eight books. And it is equally not surprising that the altar dedicated to the gens Augusta found in 1916 on the Byrsa Hill depicts what we have graphically encountered many times: on it is found a cornucopia, pine cone, pomegranate, an ear of wheat, grapes, and Apollo, Roma, a winged Victory, and the Penates. These and many more symbols represented a widespread belief, documented in the form of thousands of stelae originating in all the North African provinces, from Tripolitana to the Mauretianias, in the gods' ability to provide agricultural stability, and therefore to make humans secure and happy in their world. And one perhaps is not far from a modern parallel by giving as an example the practice of the Blessing of the Fleets held annually at various locations on the Gulf Coast of the United States.

Illustration No.2. Saturn stela from Ain-Tounga (SAM 1, PL V, no.5).


The agrarian deity par excellence in Roman North Africa was Saturn. Of the c. 3,000 dedicatory monuments found pertaining to the Saturn cult, more than sixty per cent derive from Africa Proconsularis (i.e., including Byzacena), more than Numidia and the Mauretianias combined. On many stelae the majestic deity is depicted sometimes standing, sometimes sitting, almost invariably appearing in the top register, often holding a sickle (v. ill. no. 1, p. 202 supra). The latter

21Pliny, HN 28.22; HAAN 4, 4-8; NASS, 21. Ten bks. discussed viticulture; ten horse-rearing; four beekeeping, etc.
22NASS, 46f.
23E.g., in Biloxi, Mississippi and Bayou La Batre, Alabama: the local Catholic bishop prays that the fishermen's nets will be filled; tens of thousands gather; there are bands, parades, seafood feasts, parties, dances, religious masses (not as well-attended as the latter two), etc.
24SAM 1: 1352 monuments from Africa Proconsularis; SAM 2: 597 from Numidia; 247 from the Mauretianias.
25V. the photographs of stelae in SAM 1-2; cf. the following proconsular strongholds of the cult: Ain-Tounga (Thignica): 339 monuments (SAM 1, 125-202, esp. p.159, no.131, PL V, fig.3=CIL 8.14934; 2 sickles
is recognised as a Saturnian symbol also by such classical authors as, e.g., Virgil, 26 Ausonius, 27 and Macrobius; 28 and the Christians Cyprian, 29 Augustine, 30 and Arnobius. 31 Often the sickle or the pine cone completely replaces the deity, as at Ain-Tounga (Thignica), Tunisia, which was in a rich agricultural region and represented a Saturn stronghold in the proconsular province (v. ill. 2, p. 203 supra). 32 The god's lordship over agrarian life is frequently represented by such symbols as bunches of grapes, 33 pomegranates, 34 the pine cone, 35 etc. 36 In the temple of Apollo at Hammam-Daradji (Bulla Regia), Tunisia, there was a statue of Saturn which stressed the deity's ability to provide for the agrarian needs of humans: in his hand the sculptor carved a cornucopia full of fruits. 37 On farms both great (i.e., the imperial estates) and small throughout the North African provinces Saturn was worshipped as the dominus of the land, who blessed the crops, who was venerated as deus frugifer, who made the harvests plentiful. 38 His was the national cult of replace Saturn: p.164, no.149=CIL 8.14958; p.173, no.178=CIL 8.14980 and PL V, fig.4); Djebel bou-Kournein: 209 stelae (SAM 1, 32-73 many fragments ; Khamissa (Thubursicu Numidarum): 135 items (SAM 1, 365-85); Numidia: Lambése (Lambæsis), 159 (SAM 2, 80-113); Tingad (Thamugadi), 136 (SAM 2, 125-36); Djemila (Cuicul), 59 (SAM 2, 201-37); the Mauretanias: Tizziart-Taksebt (Iomnium), 50 (SAM 2, 301f).


28 Sat. 1.7.25;1.8.9 (Willis); for the general agrarian connection: Virg., Aen. 8.319 (the "Golden Age" of Saturn); 6.794;4.6;6.41;1.569 (Italy=the "Fields of Saturn"); Georg. 2.173; Macr., Sat. 1.10.19; Dion. Hal., Ant. rom. 1.36.1;1.38.1; cf. also CPER 3, 19f.; SAH, 142-6.

29 Quod idola dii non sint, 2. 30 Civ. Dei 7.19. 31 16.12.5ff.

32 SAM 1, 188, no.236=CIL 8.15039. 33 Ibid., e.g., p.135, no.26; 151, no.82=CIL 8.15171; 154, no.114 (Ain-Tounga-Thignica).

34 Ibid., e.g., 131-53 passim (Ain-Tounga). 35 Ibid., e.g., 130-50, passim (Ain-Tounga); cf. p.357, no.53 (Hr.-El-Hamacha): six pine cones represent Saturn.

36 V. SAH, 188-207. 37 A. Merlin, Le temple d'Apollon à Bulla Regia, Paris, 1908, 12f. and PL IV.1; cf. SAM 1, 270, no.1.

38 ILT 767.g-n, Drâ-el-Gamra (Gori), Tunisia, an agricultural domain; small clans worshipped Saturn in the chapel at Bir-Derbal (SAM 1, 287f.; 25 miles NW of SV); J. Peyras, "Le fundus aufidianus: étude d'un grand domaine romain de la région de Mateur", AntAfr 9, 1975, 181-222: the small rural village, Lalla Mabrouka, on this farm had a temple with an inscription to Saturn engraved between its columns (p.194, fig.4); A. Mahjoubi, "Stèles a Saturne d'el-Afareg", CahTun 15, 1967, 147-56, p.147: stelae found at the ancient farm Berni at el-Afareg, some of which have a ladder engraved on them which symbolize the victory over the difficulties of life, and that of death.


North Africa. He was the chief agrarian deity of Roman North Africa (V. ill. no. 3 this page). 39

Before ending this introduction it is necessary briefly to investigate the agrarian situation contemporaneous with Arnobius, before beginning an analysis of relevant texts of the Adv. nat. which possibly provide evidence for a conflict between the cult of Saturn and Christianity. We may begin by observing that it was probably during the reign of Probus (A.D. 276-282) that an intense working of the land in viticulture can be dated. For example, the conductor of the Fundus Aufidianus, during the second half of the third century, planted a pomarium, new vines ("vin(eas) novellas"), and many olive trees ("plurimas oleas instituit") 40 on this ager deseratus, which was no doubt abandoned, as Peyras has suggested, because of over taxation or perhaps drought. 41 A rather intricate system of small hydraulic works spread out like a spider's web throughout the fertile fields to irrigate this domain. 42 And one can imagine how horrifyingly paralysing a lengthy drought might have been to the whole complex, how many lives it adversely affected, and how many pagans might have begun to look for scapegoats (i.e., the Christians), only to be defended by Tertullian, 43 Cyprian, 44 and, of course, Arnobius. 45 And it was there on that same fundus, perhaps after a hard day out in the field, in an out-of-the-way village called Lalla Mabrouka, that a certain C.C. Verecundus went to the Saturn temple between whose columns was engraved a falk arboraria (or visitoria), and accomplished his sacred vow to Saturn, the lord of the land. 46 It is the same kind of symbol to which Arnobius refers.

39 Cf. SAH, 120-4. 40 Peyras, art. cit., 216. 41 Ibid., 198 and 205. The domain covered 4.5 Km. SW to NE, and 3.5 Km. NW to SE.

42 Ibid., 196. 43 Cf. Ap. 40.2; Ad nat. 1.9.2. 44 Ad Demetr. 10.

as instilling fear in the devotees of the god: "Falx messoria scilicet, quae est attributa Saturno" (Adv. nat. 6.25.5f.). Further east of Africa proconsularis, Tripolitanian milestones from the hinterland have been discovered, which indicate that agricultural production was at its peak between the Severan Dynasty and the Tetrarchy; this was probably the case in respect of the proconsular province. Frend has observed that due to intense economic activity which occurred after the middle of the third century A.D., "oil fabrics replaced civic buildings." By the beginning of the fourth century, Numidian shrines where Saturn once supremely reigned in many agricultural villages appear to have been gradually replaced by Christian churches. And one indeed wonders what was the significance of the church at Kh. Bahrarous which formed a part of an agricultural complex. Although the picture is by no means clear and further archaeological study is necessary, it would appear safe to suggest that a resurgence of the rural economy and the concomitant belief that the gods had granted safety to the whole enterprise, might partly explain, at least in its early years, the description of the Diocletianic Age in North Africa as being a saeculum felicissimum or florentissimum. And it appears that the Christian assimilation of pagan agrarian symbols and concepts had already begun before Arnobius took pen in hand late in A.D. 302.


49 W.H.C. Frend, "A Note on Religion and Life in a Numidian Village in the Later Roman Empire", BACTH n.s., fasc. 17B, 1984, 261-71, p.264. I kindly thank Professor Frend for drawing my attention to (and sending me a copy of) this article.

50 Ibid. Frend found a dedication to Saturn depicted as the sun-god at Bir Younken. V. the following note.

51 Ibid., 267; cf. p.264: by the 4th century the main edifices of Romano-Berber villages in Numidia were olive presses, granaries, and churches.

52 Cf. P. Leveau, "L'agricola de Biha Bilta. A propos d'une inscription recemment decouverte dans la region de Mateur", CahTun 26, 1978, 7-13, p.7: "...la vie rurale dans l'antiquité rest encore mal connue."

53 ILAlg 1, 441, Béja (Vaga), A.D. 296-300. 54 ILT 461, Haïdra (Ammaedara).

55 Yacoub, art. cit., 335: crater, vine, Dionysian agricultural symbols from mosaics utilised to represent Christian ideas; 339f.:
Religious Belief And The Agrarian Life: Evidence Derived From The Adversus Nationes.

In Book One of the Adversus nationes, one meets the same kind of agrarian-related accusations aimed at the Christian religion as one finds in some of the works of Tertullian and Cyprian. The difference is that in Arnobius they appear early in his work, and the author pays particularly serious attention to them at various places throughout the seven books. It would appear that he is therefore describing real events which were occurring in North Africa during the period in which he was writing the treatise. Let us investigate the credibility of this assumption. According to the present writer, McCracken has rightly put on the lips of a pagan the following charges brought against the Christians:

Sed pestilentias, inquiunt, et siccitates, bella frugum inopiam locustas mures et grandines resque alias noxias, quibus negotia incursantur humana, dii nobis important iniuris vestris atque offensionibus exasperati. (Adv. nat. 1.3.6-10)

This diatribe continues in 1.3.26f.: "Penuria, inquit, frugum et angustiae frumentariae artius nos habent"; 1.3.35f.: "Casus frequen-tissimi grandinis accidunt atque adterunt cuncta"; 1.3.39f.: "Difficiles pluviae sata faciunt emori et sterilitatatem indicunt terris"; 1.3.42f.: "Pestilentiae contagia urunt genus humanum"; 1.3.46f.: "Ab locustis, a muribus genus omne accidunt atque adroditur frugum"; and 1.3.49ff.: "Terrarum validissimis motibus tremefactae nutant usque ad periculum civitates."

We may first observe that Adv. nat. 1.3.6-10 represents only a synopsis of what follows. Most of the specific examples which Arnobius gives are agrarian-related: the lack of agricultural produce; hail storms, hard rains, and mice ruin crops. Wars, diseases, and earthquakes are also enumerated. Are these accusations made in response to real events, or should we interpret them merely as rhetorical exaggerations? Another important question is: how can one square the hail and the hard rains (Adv. nat. 1.3.35f.; 1.3.39f.) with the pagan's mention of the occurrence of droughts (1.3.6)? This depictions of the four seasons; cf. Frend, art. cit. (1984), 265: rosette design found above a door of the Kh.-Bahrarous church, which was close to an olive press; and id., "Donatist Church", Chapter 6, pp.76-86.
latter question may appear to contain contradictory elements, but we have seen that Adv. nat. 1.16.12-6 mentions the occurrence of droughts and full harvests during the same year in North Africa. But one is nonetheless justified in asking which, if indeed any, of these accusations apply to Arnobius' *Sitz im Leben*. Liebeschuetz has suggested that Arnobius' remark about the occurrence of wars and the plague appears to refer to historically more remote events, and "only famine seems to be treated as a contemporary problem. It might be concluded that in Africa the Great Persecution took place against a background of food shortage." Yet in looking closely at the accusations in Adv. nat. 1.3, the cause of the problem could be variously interpreted as the destruction of crops by (1) hard rains and hail; (2) mice and locusts; (3) droughts; (4) a combination of 1 and 2, or (5) 2 and 3; or (6) all represent contemporary regional hardships in North Africa.

While not ignoring the good possibility of number six, we should note that in light of Adv. nat. 1.16.12-16, as we read further in the work, it becomes obvious that the crisis to which Arnobius pays the most attention is drought. Notable for its contradiction with the statements about raining made earlier (v. p. 207 *supra*: 2nd paragraph), is Adv. nat. 1.9.1f.: "Non pluit, inquit, caelum et frumentorum inopia nescio qua laboramus". And Arnobius may be at least implying that a drought is destroying the crops in 1.19.4-8:

Quid est enim tam iniustum, quam in aliis irasci et alios laedere (sc. *dii*), de hominibus conqueri et innoxia dilacerare frumenta, Christianum nomen odisse et dispensis omnibus suos labefactare cultores?

We may make a similar suggestion about 1.21.1-4, where he refers to the possibility that the gods may prevent the rains from falling upon the farms of the Christians. In Adv. nat. 2.37.21-4 Arnobius asks whether, in the absence of men, the rains will fall upon the earth to bring relief during droughty seasons. He later wonders whether God sent the human souls to earth only to lose because of drought everything for which they have laboured in subduing it (2.40.9-10).
He again brings the subject up in 2.74.7-10:

Cur post messes arefactas atque extincta frumenta nonnumquam decidant pluviae, quas rebus oportuit in-
columibus labi et temporis opportunitatibus minis-
trari?

He had made a similar statement in 1.13.1f. Then in 3.11.9-12 reference is made to the gods who "cotidie" (1.12) are inflicting the lands with evil. The next Book contains an allusion to the evils which grow stronger on a daily basis (Adv. nat. 4.11.8-14), the evils, i.e., which the pagans mention. Enumerating the characteristics of true deities in Adv. nat. 6.2, Arnobius includes therein that they should not burn up the crops with droughts. And it is logical to find him criticising the pagans for praying to images for, among other things, "messes optimas feracissimasque vindemias" (6.16.7f.).

Finally, a major section of the last Book (7.1-38) ends with a defense — again put by McCracken on the lips of the enemy — of what one with some justification could call a general description of pagan Heils-
geschichte: the _ira deorum_ has often in history caused droughts and crop failures.

These references to what appears to be the contemporary agrarian predicament make good sense when we recall that Sicca Veneria was situated in a fertile area of the Mejerda valley. There were also a number of farming communities on the outskirts of the city. Hence the acutely obvious human dependence upon the divine for the supply of rain in Adv. nat. 1.30.8-17; and the reference to pagan and Christian ownership of flocks of sheep, olive vineyards, and the production of honey, olive oil, and wine.

,...vim facerent terris, ut non sua sufficerent gramina, sed imperatas exstollerent fruges, et cum sanguinem totum in subigenda tellure fudisset, robigine grandine siccitate spem laboris amitterent...

"Christianorum, inquiunt, causa mala omnia diserunt et inter-
itus comparatur ab superis frugibus."

...miserarum omnium causa vos estis, vos deos impellitis, vos excitatis infestare omnibus malis terras et nova quaeque cotidie struere...

"Atquin videte,...,ne dum talia confingitis monstra talia atque molimini, deos ofENDERitis certissimos,..., nec propter aliam causam mala ista quae dicitis ferveant et cotidianis accessionibus insolescent."

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Arnobius' Concept Of Divine Providence: A Basic Cyprianic Influence.

One of the most important texts of the Adv. nat. for the present enquiry appears in Book Three, which we have already used to demonstrate that the Arnobian God is not Epicurean (v. pp. 136 and 140f. supra). A few introductory remarks are necessary. It was observed in the last chapter that in a number of passages, Arnobius depicts God as the great lord of nature who governs either the natural elements (e.g., the sun, rain, wind), or such agrarian processes as the fertility of seeds and the fecundity of harvests. This aspect of his conception of deity has not received any thorough analysis. For example, Micka could not fit a passages like Adv. nat. 1.27, where Arnobius urges that prayer to God is beneficial in this life, in with his biased argument. He totally ignored 3.24.6-17, a text which conveys an indisputable concept of divine providence, accentuating the deity's providing humankind's agrarian/agricultural needs. Indeed, such texts that appear to convey even a hint concerning divine providence were too simplistically identified as "inconsistent" with his (Micka's) interpretation of Arnobius' conception of deity being Epicurean. Micka did acknowledge, however, that Arnobius "rises above" his pagan outlook, which means his Epicurean notion of an aloof deity, and sometimes admits a providence directing the life of man. The main texts which he used to support this contention were Adv. nat. 1.29-31. Yet he interpreted 2.27-45 as Arnobius' "last deduction" on the subject, viz. that evils hold sway and God is unconcerned about and completely indifferent to the needs of man. It would appear quite reasonable, therefore, to conclude that according to Micka, Adv. nat. 2.46 is the definitive and genuine Arnobian position taken on the subject of divine providence: "He (sc. Arnobius) denied all providence, at least as far as man is concerned." But in accordance with Micka's method of interpretation based upon the sequence in which a given idea occurs in the Adversus nationes, could not one be justified to conclude that 3.24.8-17 "retracts"

69 Ibid., 162.
70 Ibid., 163.
To use Micka's language, Adv. nat. 3.24.8-17 would represent Arnobius' "last deduction" on the subject of divine providence. Suffice it to say that Micka was insensitive to source and tradition criticism: he has explained away or naively ignored those strata of thought that might otherwise invalidate the major premises of his argument. McDonald did not mention this concept in his article. Although he did not analyse Adv. nat. 3.24.8-17 and did not deal with divine providence, nevertheless Amata's argument that Arnobius was not an Epicurean, provides indirect support to the interpretation found in the present analysis because the Sicilian scholar has identified some Arnobian concepts which do not cohere with Epicurean notions of deity. Scheidweiler asserts that Arnobius was "unclear in his system." This view is presumptuous because Arnobius never gives his readers the impression that he had formulated any "system." Van der Putten refers to Arnobius' struggles to make sense of his new religion as he makes the transition from paganism. Notable is N.H. Baynes' insistence upon the total absence of an idea of divine providence in the Adv. nat. Finally, in that part of his thesis which he submitted to the University of Heidelberg (1970), in which he discussed Arnobius' theological position related to God, Burger came to an impasse in trying to make sense of the passage under consideration (Adv. nat. 3.24.6-17): "Was der höchste Gott mit dem Wetter zu tun hat, da er mit der Regierung dieser Welt, in der es so viel Schlechtes gibt, nichts zu schaffen haben darf, wenn es nicht sein Gutsein beeinträchtigen soll, hat Arnobius offenbar nicht überlegt." And neither McCracken nor Le Bonniec has helped to solve the problem.

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71 V. Chs. III and V for critical analysis of Micka's argument.
72 Cf. op. cit. (1984), e.g., 66: "Né il dio ozioso degli Epicurei può accostarsi al Dio ineffabile di Arnobio." Cf. his Appendix, pp.137-44, esp. p.144 (to be compared with the quote appearing on p.185 supra).
75 CAH XII, 652.
77 V. his analysis of Adv. nat. 3.24, on p.211, nn.118-22.
78 H. Le Bonniec, "Arnobe témoin et juge des cultes païens", BAGB 1974, 201-22, p.204, agrees with Monceaux (3, 267f.), who argues that
A major difficulty in attempting to identify the sources and/or influences of a particular idea found in the Adv. nat., and the further complex problem of ascertaining the reason(s) for which Arnobius uses it at all, often have been due to the acceptance by scholars of Jerome's locating Arnobius in Sicca Veneria, but then totally ignoring the very rich religious history (pagan and Christian) of North Africa. Classical scholars try to track down literary influences derived from Arnobius' "textbook" learning. Those interested in his Christian ideas have landed upon planets far far away, heretic-hunting, defending a non-existent orthodoxy, and so forth. Yet one area in Arnobiana which still presents itself as virgin territory is the problem related to the Christian ideas of Arnobius. Although a number of scholars have noted literary and conceptual parallels existing between Arnobius and such Christian writers as (e.g.) Tertullian, M. Felix, Clement of Alexandria, and Lactantius, with the exception of similar polemical statements in their works, it appears that the possibility of the existence of parallel texts in Cyprian and Arnobius has not been critically investigated. Yet there is evidence which establishes that the great martyr-bishop and champion of North African catholicism has both literally and - most importantly - conceptually influenced Arnobius' conception of divine providence. Coming again to our principal text, we may first observe that a clear and indisputable picture of divine providence directly related to agrarian blessings appears in Adv. nat. 3.24.8-17, and with this we should compare a text derived from the martyr-bishop's De bono patientiae. Since this Cyprianic work is known to have been indebted to Tertullian's De patientia in a literary and conceptual sense, it would be prudent to make a comparison of the three relevant texts taken from each writer:

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<td>Nobis exercendae patientiae auctoritatem non adfectatio humana</td>
<td>super bonos et malos aeequaliter facit diem nasci et lumine solis</td>
<td>Numquid rex poli libamine aliquo ex- ambitur aut hostia,</td>
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Arnobius refuses God "le rôle de Providence et toute intervention dans la creation de l'homme." Cf. LeB, 76; and Rapisarda, op. cit. (1945), 126, n.1.

79 V. n.73 supra. 80 Rapisarda (1945).
caninae aequanimitatis stupore formata, sed uiuae ac caelestis disciplinae divinae dispos- itio delegat deum ipsum ostendens patientiae exemplum, iam primum qui florem lucis huius super iustos et iunustos aequaliter spargit, qui temporum officia elementorum seruitia totius geniturae tributa dignis simul et indignis patitum occurrere,... oboriri, et cum im- bribus terras rigat, nemo a beneficiis eius excluditur quos minus iustis simil- iter et iunustis in- discreetas pluuias largiatur! Videmus inseparabili aequal- itate patientiae nocentibus et innoxios, religiosis et im- iis, gratias agenti- bus et ingratis Dei nutu tempora obse- qui, elementa famul- ari, spirare ventos, fontes fluere, gran- descere copias mes- ium, fructus mites- cere uinearum, eubi- erare pomis arbusta, nemora frondescere, prata florecer.


Underlined words denote general, very similar, or exact parallels occurring in all three works. We should first observe that Arnobius has already begun Book Three with a reference - and it is not the only one found in the work 81 - to his Christian predecessors. Also, throughout the same Book there is mention made of the continuing drought and subsequent famine to which anti-Christian propagandists pay so much attention in Book One. 82 It is not surprizing to find a poignant vituperation of numerous agrarian deities in Book Three, and Saturn's heading a syncretistis list in 3.6. Famine appears to to be in progress ("cotidie") in 3.11.9-12 (v. pp. 207f. supra). Agrarian deities are described as failing the pagans in 3.23. Then comes the affirmation that the Christian "King of heaven" indiscriminately blesses the harvests, sends the rains - and cf. here Adv. nat. 1.30.8-17 - and winds. For some reason Arnobius has inserted the statement that God favours neither Christians nor pagans in his position as the lord of the harvests and heavens. More about this will

81 Certainly the "veris auctoribus" (4.13.7) whom Arnobius classi- fies as supporting his views of deity (4.13.7f.: "sed ne nobis fidem habere nolitis"), are put in contradistinction to the Egyptians et al. I interpret him here to be referring to the same Christian prede- cessors as he does in 3.1.1-6.

82 V. p. 76, n. 84 supra for the important passages in the Adv. nat. related to the agrarian life; and the analysis in this section.
be said below. He continues in the same book by referring to Saturn as the planter of the vine and the bearer of the pruning hook (3.29.30-4). He next criticises Minerva, the discoverer of the olive (3.31.9: "inventrix oleae"); the Great Mother who is the earth (3.32.9ff.); Ceres who is synonymous with "salutarium seminum frugen" (3.32.11ff.); and Proserpina who signifies the crowing of crops (3.33.4-10). Finally, in 3.36.6-13 his method of retortion serves him well: if it is true that the gods become angry, the pagans are responsible for oppressed human affairs because they deny that the gods exist in nature! Although the anthropomorphic theme serves as the basis of his argument in Book Three, these examples provide indisputable evidence that he had as a subsidiary motive the development of a fine critique upon a number of high-ranking North African agrarian deities. The main underlying reason for such criticism is explicable in light of contemporary agrarian hardships. He thus writes from a conviction derived to a great extent from experience. It appears that Cyprian has supplied him only with the basic theological ammunition with which to fire his guns, and something which every convert to a new ideology finds inspirational, viz. the relying upon an eminent authority in his newly accepted way of life.

One more introductory remark is necessary before we analyse the three texts above. This is that the same kinds of ideas related to religious belief and the agrarian/agricultural life manifest themselves in many North African Christian texts. A few examples will suffice. Tertullian asserted that God controlled "fulgora" and "tonitura" (Ad Scap. 2). A solar eclipse occurred at Utica, he claimed, due to the pagan mistreatment of Christians: therefore pagans lack rains and harvests because of God's displeasure (Ibid. 3). Yet Christian prayers and fastings make the droughts simply disappear (Ibid. 4). And the same kind of prayers for the fecundity of crops touch God's heart (Ap. 40). Similar to Adv. nat. 1.29.20ff., Tertullian attributes to the pagans the belief that the sun is a god because it makes fruit to ripen (Ad nat. 2.5). And Cyprian places among the "quaecumque sunt carnis incommoda sunt nobis cum humano genere com-

83 3.29.32f.: "vitisatorem falciferum". 84 3.36.9-13: "...si verum esse illos (sc. deos) uspiam atque incalescere irarum flammis, nihil habeant iustius propter quod in vos saeviant quam quod eos negatis subsistere neque uilla esse in parte naturae." A critical study of every pagan deity found in Arnobius is badly needed.
munia" unproductive harvests, famines, clouds without rain, etc. (Mortal. 8: PL 4.587). And many years later Publicola seeks the advice of Augustine as to whether a Christian should eat beans which have been offered to a pagan god (Ep. 46.6).

Although there may be other possible literary and religious influences upon Arnobius to be derived from the same Cyprianic work,85 we are now ready to analyse the three passages noted above (pp. 212f.). Of primary importance is the fact that all three writers develop the same general theme: God's blessings are indiscriminately bestowed upon all human beings. The key word in each text is therefore "aequaliter." Yet a close inspection of Cyprian's method shows that he has expanded upon Tertullian's general "temporum officia", and Arnobius has followed the bishop. With Tertullian's "iustos et inustos" compare Cyprian's "iustis...et...iniustis", and Arnobius' "iustis in-iustis". Tertullian gives accusatives, while Cyprian and Arnobius both have datives. Cyprian and Arnobius have added "bonos et malos" and "bonis malis", respectively. Both similarly do not incorporate Tertullian's "dignis...et indignis". The latter's "Florem lucis hu-i-us...spargit" may have inspired Cyprian's "lumen solis...oboriri", and Arnobius' "fervorem...solis". But Cyprian's "largiatur" has been taken unchanged and has been incorporated in Adv. nat. 3.24.11; the third person singular, present tense of largior (=largiatur) does not appear in any work of Tertullian.87 Cyprian has amplified Tertullian's "totius geniturea tributa...patiatur occurrere" by specifying the deity's agrarian-related largesse.

Indeed, the examples of agrarian blessings are the centrepieces of the theological statements of Cyprian and Arnobius. With the exception of "tempora" (cf. Tertullian's "temporum"), the terms common to both Cyprian and Arnobius, which are absent from Tertullian, are

85 Arnobius' allusion to I Cor. 3.19a in Adv. nat. 2.6.24f., "sapientiam hominis stultitia esse apud deum primum?", might have come from Cypr., De bono pat. 2.29f. (SC: Molager): "Sapiencia enim mundi huius stultitia est apud Deum."; cf. Adv. nat. 1.53.19f.: "universa mundi sunt elementa turbata, tellus mota contremuit"; and Cypr., De bono pat. 7.169: "elementa turbentur, contremescat terra"; Adv. nat. 1.62.6: "Homo quem induerat" (sc. Christus); and Cypr., De bono pat. 6.125: "carnem hominis induere". The latter example supports the Arnobian equation homo=corpus, on which v. p.142, n.121 supra.

86 For the emendation v. McCr, 360, n.121. 87 "Largendi" occurs in De pat. 7.12,13; and "largendo" in 7.13,2: v. G. Claesson, Index Tertullianvs. 3 vols., Paris, 1974-1975, 2, 886.
"pluvias", "ventos", and "messium" (Cyprian) and "fruges" (Arnobius). All three agree that such blessings are dependent upon the divine will: "patiatur occurrere" (Tertullian), "Dei nutu" (Cyprian), and "subministrat" (Arnobius). The use of beneficium by Cyprian ("beneficiis") and Arnobius ("beneficia"), which is again not found in Tertullian, to emphasise the same point that God's blessings are equally available to Christians and non-Christians, is quite significant as well. 88 And we need not emphasise again (v. Ch. III supra) that Epicurus and his disciples would not have agreed with the belief in the controlling of the natural/celestial elements by a deity. If one compares Arnobius' method of literary borrowings from Lucretius, however, 89 the African rhetor has typically condensed his source (i.e., Cyprian), has left him unnamed, and has reworked his source's vocabulary in conformity with his overall argument and literary taste. 90 But the exact parallels are quite striking, and this perhaps bespeaks the high esteem with which the martyr-bishop was held in the early fourth century. It also has an apparently great religious significance, as we shall observe herewith. Finally, both preface their arguments with a reference to pagan religious practices: Cyprian affirms God's patience in tolerating them; Arnobius underscores the discrimination of the gods who favour those who practise them.

It is quite reasonable to conclude that Cyprian's De bono patientiae 4.58-68 is the immediate source of Adv. nat. 3.24.8-17.

88 V. the following subsection infra. 89 The first court of appeal/main authority on Lucretius' (mainly literary) influence upon Arnobius is H. Hagendahl, Latin Fathers and the Classics. A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers. SGLG 6, Göteborg, 1958, 12-47 (=Ch.2 Arn.). Cf. Macrobius' indebtedness to Gellius in the Sat., but the latter is never named: v. R.G. Austin, "Macrobius", OCD, 635.

90 V. Molager's note in the SC edition of De bono pat., pp.249f., who argues that Cyprian is drawing from Ennius in the passage cited (after "famulari"). One cannot say the same about Arnobius. Note that the concept is found in other ante-Nicene writers: Arist., Apol. 4ff.: God rules over earth, water, fire, wind, sun, etc., his argument being that the elements are not gods; cf. Diognetus, 7; Theoph in Ad Autol., affirms that works by which God is known are seasonal rotation, growth of seeds, plants, fruits, rains, etc.; Clem. Alex., in Protr. 4.54ff.;8.66. Regarding religious paganism: "rex poli" of Arn. 3.24.8f. reminds one of "regina caeli" of Apuleius, Met. 11.2 (LCL: Adlington), underscoring celestial lordship and ability to deliver Lucius from cosmic fatalism; cf. Porph. ap. Civ. Dei 19.23; and Apollonius' powers over the elements in Philostr., Vit. Apol. 4.13 (LCL:
The Arnobian High God And Saturn: Conflict And Competition.

Thus there is convincing evidence that the De bono patientiae directly influenced Arnobius in a literary and theological sense. A common source is improbable. This much is sufficiently clear. But worthy of the careful attention of anyone making such a comparison as the one above (i.e., the texts of Tertullian, Cyprian, and Arnobius) is the remark of one of the best twentieth-century historians (including those living now) of ancient pagan religions: "It is a basic rule that the origin of an idea implies nothing definite about its significance within the system in which it has later been embodied." The periods in which Cyprian and Arnobius lived were different. In the former's day Saturn was still king, and the bishop was executed during the Valerianic persecution. In Arnobius' day, Saturn was apparently in decline, and the persecution appears not to have been so severe. Arnobius refers to the "rex poli" who grants to all humans alike, "bonis malis", the (productive) harvests. The use of the Cyprianic text might have been due to an intense conflict, and subsequent competition, with the Saturn cult during, as we have already noted, difficult agricultural times. For it is indisputable that Saturn was revered as "le haut protecteur de l'economie rurale, à l'ensemble de la population." The epigraphic evidence is overwhelming - enough to fill two thick volumes of inscriptions alone and more have been added since Leglay finished SAM 2 in 1966 - which establishes that he was the protector of the harvests in Roman North Africa, the great Lord of the land. His devotees who lived in the rural plains of Numidia and in the wheat-

Conybeare). Finally, rex is used as a divine epithet for Jupiter in Adv. nat. 4.21.7;22.2 (rex mundi); 26.15 (rex mundi); 5.9.23 (id.); cf. van der Putten, op. cit. (1970), 42.


94SAH, 258. 95Ibid., 146. It must be emphasised to the reader that Saturn's lordship was not thought to be restricted to the agrarian life of his devotees. V. SAH, 107-152 for other aspects of his lordship.

96The major development between the death of Cypr. and the Great Persecution in the history of N. African Christianity was the growth of the Church in this area to become its predominant religion. V. W.H.C.
growing region stretching from Carthage and Nabeul (Neapolis) on the east coast, to Orléansville (Castellum Tingitanum) in the west (forming a horizontal cone), worshipped him as the dispensator of crops. 

For example, an ex-voto stela from Ksar-Toual-Zouameul (Vicus Maracitanus), situated in c. Tunisia only 25 miles SE of Le Kef (SAH, 191f.), portrays a sheaf of corn and vineyard produce carried by a bull. This appears on the bottom register where one usually finds sacrificial victims. The message is clear: the first fruit of the crop is offered to the god of the harvest, a figuration often found on stelae from c. Tunisia and the region of Béja-Le Kef (V. ill. no. 4 right).

We must and can go further, however. In Siliana, in central Tunisia c. 30 miles SE of Le Kef, the famous Boglio stela, which was first published in 1945 by Charles-Picard, was discovered. The engraver has vividly and realistically sculptured three work-scenes of a large farming estate contemporaneous with Arnobius. On it we find that a certain Cuttinus, the patron of the rural domain, has assembled his family and personnel. The work-scenes are: (1) a man and a yoke of oxen; (2) workers with sickles at harvest time; (3) transportation of produce and the sacrifice of victims (V. ill. no. 5, p. 219 infra). Thus one scene depicts the sowing of winter, and another one illustrates the summer harvest. Saturn is enthroned, as he almost always


97 Cf. C. Poinssot, "Statues du temple de Saturne (Thugga)", Kar 6, 1955, 30-45, for stelae depicting the deity holding the sickle at (e.g.) the region of Siliqua (p.41, no.30); Mactar (Mactaris: p.41, no.31); Constantine (Cirta: p.42, no.41), etc.; cf. CPER 3, 25; on the wheat map of Roman N. Africa (to the Tetrarchy) v. SAH, 193.

98 SAM 1, 291f., nos. 1f., 5f.; SAH, 192, n.1; 194; 195, n.1.

is, in absolute majesty on the top register. The religious message communicated seems to be that all the workers of the estate confide in the deity who causes the crops to grow, who is the lord of the harvest and the fertility of the soil. Saturn reigns supremely as the lord of the land. It is one of the clearest pagan affirmations of the belief in divine providence that derives from Roman North Africa. Both Leglay and Picard date the monument during the Tetrarchy. Similarly depicting a very active agrarian life of the same general period (i.e., after the middle of the 3rd century A.D.) is the Cherchel (Iol-Caesarea), Algeria mosaic; and the inscription from the fundus Aufidianus, which we have already noted. In this connection one may also take note of the reaper of Maclaris's (Mactaris) epitaph (c. A.D. 270), and this Tunisian city is only c. 38 miles SE of Le Kef.

101 SAH, 98f. 102 O.c., 122.
105 CIL 8.11824.

In the way that Arnobius has accentuated the celestial lordship of the "rex poli" in 3.24.8f., who provides the winds, harvests, and rain, an inscription from Ksar-Toual-Zouameul (Vicus Maracitanus) similarly underscores Saturn's "puissance cosmique", his celestial rule, and his power over winds, land, and waters. On another monument from the same site the deity holds a sickle in the first register, accompanied by the sun and moon in the second, and a dedicant offering a grain of incense upon an inflamed altar. The latter practice (cf. "tura" of Adv. nat. 3.24.3) is the first one which Arnobius criticises in 3.24, and it is graphically illustrated on a stela from central Tunisia (v. ill. no. 6 right), where a dedicant pinches off a grain of incense upon an inflamed altar.

It is to be observed that in comparing the Ksar-Toual-Zouameul inscription with Adv. nat. 3.24.8-17, the former only lacks the name (dominus caeli) in order to provide an exact conceptual parallel between the two. For the name dominus caeli corresponds to the name of Saturn's predecessor Ba'al Shamin, is conceptually depicted on hundreds of Saturnian stelae, and is synonymous with Arnobius' "rex poli", which interestingly enough does not appear in the passage cited from the De bono patientiae.

In returning to the Boglio stela (v. p. 219 supra), it is to be further observed that the common sectarian adage, "bonis bene", which is found inscribed upon a number of Saturnian monuments, appears twice in the inscription of the stela: "Saturno Aug sacrum B(onis) B(ene)"; and below this: "...Cuttinus votu(m) sol(vit) cum suis. B(onis) B(ene)." The abbreviation "B B" may suggest that the term was so common that it was unnecessary to inscribe it in full.

Illustration No. 6. Central Tunisian Saturn stela (SAM-1, PL VIII, no.1).

106 Ibid., 230, no.1 (=ILT 573). 107 Ibid. It conveys Saturn's "maîtrise du ciel (rosaces étoilées), des airs (oiseaux), de la terre et des eaux (dauphins)."

108 Ibid., 236, nos.5f.; 237, nos.7f. 109 Ibid., 224, no.2. 110 SAH, 436.
A similar example of the use of this cultic motto is attested at the Saturnian stronghold of Djebel Bou-Kourneïn, c. 10 miles due S of Carthage. It was in use at Tébessa (Theveste) as well. Donatists later employed it as one of their principal battlecries. But Arnobius wrote before the outbreak of the Donatist controversy. The following data may be helpful to interpret the parallels existing between Adv. nat. 3.24 and the Boglio stela. First, the latter depicts the rural economy contemporaneous with Arnobius. Siliana was situated not far away from SV. Both Siliana and SV, and indeed many other Saturn sites in central Africa proconcularis appear to have been experiencing a resurgence of their rural economies.

There is enough evidence gleaned from Arnobius which suggests that a drought was occurring (at least) in the immediate area of SV while he was writing his work. And although the Saturn cult appears to have been in decline in Numidia, as we shall show below, it was a different situation in the proconsular province. Let us reconsider Arnobius' modification of Cyprian's language in the De bono patientiae in light of what we have just summarised. Note that Arnobius has taken unchanged from the bishop his "iustis...iniustis" and inserted these terms in 3.24.13. Yet for some reason he has changed Cyprian's "bonos et malos" to "bonis", which heads the list, followed by "malis". This may suggest a deliberate modification of an original source in order to make a theological point in the context of hard agrarian times and an intense conflict with the cult of North Africa's national agrarian deity. We have noticed that the prefaces to the arguments of Cyprian in De bono pat. 4, and Arnobius in Adv. nat. 3.24.1-7 are acutely different: the former stresses God's patience in tolerating pagan religious practices; the latter rejects in toto the gods' discrimination in favouring only those who practise their rites:

Tutelatoribus, inquit, supplicat diis nemo, et idcirco singuli familiaribus officiis atque auxiliis desunt. Nisi enim tura et salsas accipiant fruges, benefacere dii nequunt, et nisi pecorum sanguine deli-

111 SAM 1, 53, no. 51 = CIL 8.24152. 112 Ibid., 356, no. 51, actually at Henchir-El-Hamacha (15km. SE of Henchir-Altabia [28km. NW of Tébessa=Theveste]): CIL 8.28046; ILAlg 1, 2963.

113 Frend (1952), 54, v. also Leglay, SAH, 491f., who acknowledges the possibility that the term directly influenced the Donatists.
butas suas conspexerint arulas, suos deserunt atque abiciunt praesidatus? Atquin ego rebar paulo ante, spontaneas esse numinum benignitates ulteroque ab his fluere expectata benivolentiae munera. (Adv. nat. 3.24.1-7)

The practices enumerated, as we have seen, cohere with those (inter alia) of the Saturn cult. It is the gist of his argument that the deities who favour only their worshippers, is an unreasonable concept. Again, it is worthy of serious consideration whether Arnobius has intentionally inserted "benefacere" in 3.24.3, which in addition to his modification of Cyprian's term to "bonis", may suggest that a countersign of the Saturnian slogan, "bonis bene" is being implied. The fact that he does not mention the god by name need not pose any insurmountable problem of hermeneutics. First, he is writing to the "nationes" in a broad Graeco-Roman sense. Both motive for writing the work and the way that this motive influenced the development of his polemics, prevented him from restricting his argument to regional interests. This may help to explain his use of Greek writers and his not infrequent references to Greek cults. Second, Arnobius appears to have been that kind of recondite writer who assumed that his readers knew the sources and technical expressions used in a particular passage well enough without having to explain their meanings in detail. For example, he names Lucretius only once in the Adv. nat. (4.10.19), yet there are c. fifty passages which betray the Epicurean's literary influence. Another good example is that he does not give the precise identity of the opponents whom he calls viri novi in Book Two (esp. 2.15.2f.). We may say the same thing about frugiferius in Adv. nat. 6.10.24, the policies of the Tetrarchy which reduced the African provinces in 2.40.26f., and the First Edict of the Diocletianic Persecution in 4.35f.

We have suggested that Adv. nat. 3.24 appears to have been written in the context of difficult agrarian times, and it bears the mark of a distinct Cyprianic influence concerning divine providence. It was further suggested that Arnobius has modified Cyprian's text for theological purposes, viz. to develop a counter-attack against the pagan religious concept of the gods' favouring only their devotees, which was commonly symbolised in the Saturnian expression, "bonis bene." Arnobius' modifications suggest that he was primarily concerned

114 V. p.216, n.89.
to attack the concept of religious favouritism of the Saturn cult. We must investigate further the meaning of this favouritism.

The first question is: what did the Saturnian "bonis bene" signify among the worshippers of the national deity of Roman North Africa? According to Leglay, it seems to have introduced among the faithful of the cult an idea of "sect" simultaneously expressing the confidence which they felt in the virtues of their religion.\(^{115}\) It expressed "une sorte de 'souhait limitatif', qui réserve aux fidèles de Saturne les 'bienfaits de sa protection',\(^{116}\) the very concept which Arnobius appears to disparage in 3.24.1-8. In this context and according to the present enquiry, it is significant that Arnobius has also modified Cyprian's "copias messium" to the simple yet important "fruges". Not only does this relate to Saturn's North African epithet, frugifer, which we shall analyse below (noting a closer Arnobian parallel); and the fact that the deity was called the deus frugum;\(^{117}\) but the fact that Arnobius conceives of the Christian deity as the great lord of the harvest and the land in general, is rather unusual when one considers what we have studied in the preceding chapter.\(^{118}\) In other words, Arnobius' concept of the High God as an agrarian deity who indiscriminately blesses all humanity, who provides for the material needs of his devotees and non-devotees, comprises a small but very significant part of his understanding of God's relationship to man and the world in which he lives. It is undoubtedly all but absolutely certain that more than affection felt for the martyr-bishop caused Arnobius to take the passage from the De bono pat. and alter slightly some words and completely change others, and adapt its basic theological concepts related to divine providence and its basic linguistic structure to his own historical situation.

There is abundant evidence that Saturn was conceived as the lord of the harvests in Roman North Africa. We may mention, e.g., that it is undoubtedly as a thank-offering given to the lord Saturn who has blessed their harvests, that persons are depicted on stelae at Djemila (Cuicul), Algeria, offering the deity grain.\(^{119}\)

\(^{115}\) SAM 1, 356, no.51. \(^{116}\) Ibid., 228, no.9. \(^{117}\) The epithets are Deus frugum Saturnus frugifer from Ain Zana (Diana Veteranorum: CIL 8.4581; cf. also CIL 8.2666).

\(^{118}\) V. Part I of Ch. III supra. \(^{119}\) V. M. Leglay, "Les stèles à Saturne de Djemila-Cuicul", Lib 1, 1953, 37-88: man in toga approach-
quently on stelae dedicated to Saturn are such agrarian symbols as ears of grain (wheat, corn, etc.), the cornucopia full of fruits, bunches of grapes, the hoe, plough, and the yoke. Indisputable, also, was the widespread belief among North Africans that Saturn was the principal agrarian deity. Indeed, the deity dominates the wider group of North African agricultural deities. So it was logical to exclaim, "bonis bene", "well-being for the good ones", that is, as long as the "good ones" remained devoted to the king of heaven and earth. Senex — a Saturnian divine epithet employed by Arnobius in Adv. nat. 4.26.11 — was thought to be a rather jealous god, horrifying, and we can justifiably conclude that he therefore did not like any defections taking place to join the ranks of the Christians. His regal position in the Roman North African pantheon, his image as a jealous and cruel god demanding the ultimate sacrifice (v. n. 125 infra), and the fear-evoking characteristics of the deity's nature (cf. the frightful look upon the face of the dedicant in ill. no. 9 infra, p. 238), without doubt offered N. African Christianity its most serious competition and conflict. We particularly recall that several texts in the Adv. nat. strongly indicate the occurrence of a drought in the early fourth century, at least in Arnobius' immediate area. The Saturn cult was probably already in decline by this time. (More will be said about this infra.) Yet there is convincing evidence that the cult survived longer in the proconsular province: Africa proconsularis (and Bycazena) had a higher concentration of cultic strongholds, and the latest stela of the 8th of November A.D. 323 from Beja (Vaga) reveals that an hierarchically-ordered priesthood was still functioning (etc.). One is well-advised to consider that, in the proconsular province Saturn and his devotees, his

120 SAH, 153-214. 121 Ibid., 237. 122 The conceptual connection between the Graeco-Roman ἔπωνομα and senex is obvious. An analysis of this Saturnian epithet in the N. African Christian literature appears in SAH, 118-20.

123 V. Frond (1952), 76-80. 124 The chronological, religious, social, and economic factors related to Saturn's downfall are, admittedly and unfortunately, not exactly ascertainable. I am therefore using the ar-
priests, his (human) children whom he claimed at birth, his slaves and peasant-workers in the tiny fields and imperial domains throughout North Africa, did not surrender without a sustained resistance. If the fields situated in (at least) the central region of the proconsular province were parched by drought in A.D. 302-5, a Christian "evangelical campaign" offering the divine largesse "aequaliter bonis malis" might have appeared the best way, perhaps the only way, to attempt to eradicate the Christian religion's greatest rival in North Africa. One possible realization of such a campaign might have been the actualization of tangible Christian philanthropy during difficult agricultural circumstances, expressed by Christians towards those of their own religious persuasion and those who were not (i.e., the pagans). This is not based completely upon conjecture. There is an historical precedent, well documented in the epistles of Cyprian, that during the plague which occurred during the bishop's life, the expression of Christian fraternity towards non-Christians made an indelible impression upon a good number of the pagans of the period. This expression of Christian "brotherhood" is one of the causes of the historical success of Christianity.

There is another section of the Adv. nat. which contains a number of interesting parallels with the Saturn cult and (again) is agrarian-related: in 1.29-34 Arnobius frequently demonstrates that the Christian High God is the true lord of the land, elements, and natural processes. During his development of the theme of human dependence upon the divine in Adv. nat. 1.29, Arnobius poses the question:

chaeological discoveries of the past 100 yrs. as the basis of my method of interpreting various ideas/issues associated with these problems.  

125 This actually began as infant, later changed to substitutionary, sacrifice. Excellent discussion of literary allusions to the former appear in SAH, 314-32; cf. M. Muller, R. Depreux, P. Muller, and M. Fontaine, "Recherches anthropologiques sur les ossements retrouvés dans des urnes puniques", SAP 1952, 160-73; the latter was the transliterated molchomor, and at N'gaous (Nicivibus), Algeria, c. mid. 3rd century A.D., in the form of 4 inscriptions (SAM 2, 68-74, nos.1-4, Pl XXXI, figs.1ff.), it denoted a "great nocturnal sacrifice", an infant formerly promised to Saturn during pregnancy now is sacrificially replaced by a lamb ("agnum pro vicario"); v. SAH, 336-41. One rightly wonders whether there were any vestiges of this practice in N. African Christianity (cf. SAH, 490ff.; Freund [1952], 80).

"mundus iste in quo degitis, cuius est aut quis eius vobis attribuit fructum possessionemque retinere?" (1.29.17f.). He is quite unequivocal that it is the Christian God who grants to man the right to keep the "fructum" of the land, one of the salient features of Saturn's agrarian lordship. As we have seen, the god's main agrarian symbol, found on numerous ex-voto stelae and supported by pagan and Christian literary evidence, was the sickle. Arnobius refers to this in 6.12.5ff.: "Saturnus cum obunca falce custos ruris, ut aliquis ramorum luxuriantium tonsor..."; and compare the designation of the god in 4.9.16ff.: "Saturnum prae sidem sationis". Note also the inscription from Ain-Tounga (Thignica), Tunisia: "Sat(urno) Aug(usto) sac(rum) fru(ctus or ctuosus)...". The principal agrarian deity of the North African pantheon could give as well as receive fructum, the latter idea beautifully illustrated (v. ill. no. 7 this page) upon a stela from Hr. Es-Srira: a huge basket which has been placed upon a Saturnian altar is literally packed full of all sorts of agricultural produce. Or we may refer to the sacrificial bull found on a stela from Béja-Le Kef, facing ears of wheat growing in the field (v. ill. no. 3, p. 205 supra: 2nd register). And on the farm close to the Djebel Mansour, a stela shows Saturn standing, a lunar crescent appearing above his head, and couching a horn of plenty in his left elbow. We have concluded that the Timaeus influ-

Illustration No. 7. Basket full of produce on Saturn altar at Henchir Es-Srira (SAM 1, PL X, no.4).

127 V. ill. no.l, p.202 supra. 128 V. SAH, 142-6. 129 As Leglay suggests, this is a clear Varronian influence, De ling. lat. 5.64 (LCL: Kent): "quare quod caelum principium, ab satu est dictus Saturnus." V. SAH, 450ff.

130 SAM 1, 291, no.1, PI VII, fig.1. 131 V. N. Ferchiou, "Temoignages du culte de Saturne dans le Jebel Mansour (Tunisie)", CahTun 26, 1978, 9-25: p.23, fig.1; cf. p.12: "evoquant son pouvoir de Frugifer"; p.17: the deity is invoked as a protector of a gens Galliana.
enced Arnobius' understanding of the divine function in creation: he attributes the creation of the sun and moon to God. Yet the added remark of Adv. nat. 1.29.20ff. appears to have another origin:

...quis, ne fixa pigritiae stupore torpescerent elementa vitalia, solis ignes constituit ad rerum incrementa futuros?

It will be remembered (v. pp. 214f. supra) that Tertullian recognises as distinctly pagan the religious belief in the divinity of the sun because it makes fruit to ripen. The agrarian connection in Arnobius is quite clear, and at the end of the passage he is equally clear as to who is responsible for the creation of the sun and the moon.

The stelae are numerous which portray Saturn situated between his two acolytes, the sun and the moon, and significant for the present enquiry is one stela derived from Béja-Le Kef representing the classical idea of "Saturn" being derived from ἥκπος or "time": above the god's head appear sol, luna, and the other days of the week (v. ill. no. 8 right). It would appear significant, in light of this, that in Book Three, which we have suggested has the sub-theme of criticising a good number of agricultural deities (v. p. 214, 1st paragraph), Arnobius attacks this very pagan concept:

Quod ipsum licebit in Saturnum non absimili ratione traducere. Nam si tempus significatur hoc nomine, Graecorum

Illustration-No. 8. Days of the week above damaged head of Saturn. From Béja-Le Kef (SAM 1, PL VII, no.5).

132 V. pp.162-73 supra. 133 Cf. also Ad nat. 1.13;2.5. 134 1.29.23ff: "Solem deum cum esse credatis, conditorem eius opificemque non quaeritis? Luna cum apud vos dea sit, non similiter scire curatis genitor eius et fabricator quis sit?"

135 V. SAH, 223ff.; and e.g., SAM 1, 38, no.3, from the proconsular Saturnian stronghold Djebel-Bou-Kourneïn: votive stela, Saturn is veiled, holds the sickle, and appears with a bust of the sun and the moon, very common symbols in Saturnian iconography.
ut interpretes autem autumant, ut quod χρόνος est habeatur
Kρόνος, nullum est Saturnium numen. Quis est enim
tam demens, qui tempus esse dicat deum, quod mensura
cuiusdam est spatii in continua serie perpetuitatis
inclusi? (Adv. nat. 3.29.24-30)

Note also that Arnobius uses the divine epithet "genitor" (v. p.
170 supra) to mean "creator" of the moon in Adv. nat. 1.29.24f. (v.
p. 227, n.134 supra), describing here the High God's creative powers.
This use is unlike that of other Latin writers of antiquity, who
normally use it to designate a lesser demiurgic deity. The specific
Arnobian use of the word discloses a conceptual parallel with similar
ideas found in Saturnian theology (i.e., pagan religious ideas about
the nature of Saturn): genitor is likewise (and as in Arnobius rarely)
used to affirm that Saturn is the "créateur de la terre, père des
dieux et des hommes." 137 For the latter idea we may refer, as already
noted (v. pp. 184-94 supra), to Arnobius' conception of the High
God who is both father and lord of the lesser deities, and his remark
that Saturn is acknowledged "magnorum esse procreatorem deorum" (Adv.
at. 3.29.32). Genitor is used by Arnobius to describe Saturn's pre¬
eminent position as creator in the Romano-African pantheon several
times in the work (2.70.10; 2.70.18; 3.30.7; 4.20.5). And the latter
is also attested at Aïn-el-Asker (Sutunurca) and (probably) Aïn Tounga
(Thignica), Tunisia. 138 Saturn's radiated head is surrounded by sol
and luna on another stela from Béja-Le Kef, which reveals what we
have been encountering throughout this study, viz. an unmistakable
agrarian connection: one acolyte holds a basket (of fruit? grain?)
and the other an ear of grain (v. ill. no. 9 infra).

The section of the Adv. nat. which is presently being analysed
(1.29-34) is prefaced by a chapter in which Arnobius uses the epithet
pater (1.28.40ff.) to underscore the High God's preeminence in rel¬
ation to all other deities. He is father of all (1.28.4: "rerum pat¬
rem"); of the gods (1.28.25: "patrem...illorum" [sc. deorum]); and
it is only by his paternal gift that they exist (1.28.40f.: "munus
dei patris et donum est, ut infinita meruerint idem esse per saec¬
ula"). Leglary himself has argued that this use of pater by Arnobius
(and other terms as well) "reste dans la ligne de la légende; mais
on peut penser aussi qu'alors s'impose à lui avec une particulièr

136 v. pp.169ff. supra. 137 SAH, 114. 138 SAM 1, 104, no.1; cf.
SAH, 114.
Although it is true that we concluded that the underlying philosophical concepts which have influenced Arnobius' thinking about the relationship between the High God and the gods are Platonic (v. pp. 184-94 supra), their use to describe a providential deity in a section emphasising his agrarian-related largesse, would strongly suggest that Arnobius has developed a polemical argument whose main antagonist is the pagan pater deorum of Roman North Africa. Let us look closely at Adv. nat. 1.28.30-4:

Nam si omnes concedimus unum esse principem solum, quem nulla res alia vetustate temporis antecedat, post illum necesse est cuncta et nata esse et prodita et in sui nominis prosiluisse naturam.

This language is similar to that which a later Neoplatonist, and probably a North African as well, used to describe Saturn as "deorum omnium princeps" (Sat. 1.7). Turning again to pater, noteworthy is Leglay's comment upon the use of this epithet by Arnobius' pupil:

Etant donné l'origine africaine de Lactance, ne peut-on pas voir dans cette expression une réminiscence provinciale et en même temps le désir d'opposer le dieu des chrétiens au Saturne africain qui est lui aussi pater et dominus...

One can make the same observation regarding the uses of such terms (et alia) in Arnobius, and base it upon both more abundant and convincing evidence. Note Leglay's remark about dominus: we shall analyse its function in the same section of the Adversus nationes (1.29-34) infra. Presently it is necessary to draw our attention to Adv. nat. 1.30.1-8:

Nonne cogitatio vos subit considerare, disquirere, in cui a possessione versemini, cuia in re sitis, cuius ista sit quam fatigatis terra, cuius aer iste quem vitali reciprocatis spiritu, cuius abutamin fontibus, cuius liquore, quis ventorum disponuerit flamina, quis undosas excoigitaverit nubes, quis seminum frugiferas potestates rationum proprietate distinxerit?

This passage establishes that Arnobius was the recipient of a tradition which stressed the deity's ownership of the land ("in cuia possessione...re...terra"), and his celestial ("aer", "ventorum", "nubes") and terrestrial ("fontibus" and "liquore") lordship. As we have already proved (v. pp. 137 and 141 supra), it is impossible

139 SAH, 8. 140 Macrobius. 141 SAH, 8, n.5.
that these concepts derived from Epicureanism, and extremely doubtful that either Stoicism or Platonism has inspired this particular aspect of Arnobius' conception of deity. It would appear that a contemporary pagan-Christian debate, in the specific form of a serious conflict with the Saturn cult, concerning the practicable benefits of the divine largesse during a period probably characterised by drought and famine, helps to account for this stratum inherent in his understanding of God's relationship with man and his natural environment. Thus one must look elsewhere for a possible direct source, and again one can notice a number of literary and theological parallels with Cyprian's De bono patientiae. One must also keep in mind that this statement follows the pagan (and Arnobian) remarks about the agrarian conditions in North Africa which obviously provided— as they did also in Cyprian's day when he was writing the Ad Demetr.—fuel for the anti-Christian fires, especially the following:

Penuria, inquit, frugum et angustiae frumentariae artius nos habent. (Adv. nat. 1.3.26f.)

Non pluit, inquit, caelum et frumentorum inopia nescio qua laboramus. (Ibid., 1.9.1f.)

What indeed is the main message of Adv. nat. 1.30, especially observing the enumeration of the elements found therein, if not that the Christian God alone is the lord of all natural and celestial processes? And since it has been noted that Arnobius expresses a particular interest in the occurrence of drought (v. pp. 207ff.), of special importance is the reference to water and clouds, undoubtedly denoting the deity's power and ability to send rain as compared with other deities. The same power and ability to send rains for his devotees was a feature of Saturn's celestial and agrarian lordship. An example is the dedication monument erected at the farming village of Bir-Derbal, c. twenty-five miles due NW of SV, in the proconsular province.

Arnobius' reference to the pagans who wear out the land ("quam fatigatis terra") in Adv. nat. 1.30.3, suggests the kind of intense

142 I refer to De bono pat. 4.65f. (SC: Molager) and the uses of "elementa", "ventos", "fontes", "copias messium", etc.

143 V. SAH, 138f. This aspect of his lordship was often symbolised by the presence of the goat on stelae.

144 SAM 1, 289, no.7.
working of the land c. the end of the third-beginning of the fourth
centuries A.D. (which we have noted supra, pp. 205f.) when agri-
tural activity was ascendant. Thus according to Arnobius, God owns
the land and is in full control of the natural and agrarian process-
es. He is summus rex (Adv. nat. 1.27.7), the head and pillar of all
existent things and beings (1.29.4f.), and the great lord of the
land (1.30.1-8: v. p. 229 supra). Any North African pagan of Arnob-
ius' day, whether slave, peasant farmer, or member of the intelli-
gentsia or the aristocracy, who upon being presented with the same
concepts of deity, will invariably and immediately have thought of
Saturn.

It is, however, in Adv. nat. 1.30.6ff. (v. the text supra, p. 229) that a statement of utmost significance for the present enquiry
occurs. There Arnobius claims that the Christian High God has given
fertile seeds their own characteristics. It is doubtful, as Le Bon-
niec has suggested, that this statement conveys the Stoic concept
of Άγος Σπερμάτικος, mainly because its immediate (Adv. nat.
1.30.1-8) and general (1.29-34) contexts portray a deity who rules
the natural, celestial, and (as here) agrarian processes. The pass-
age accentuates, as we have been noticing, the deity's ability to
provide for the material needs of humans, and note the following
question: "Apollo vobis pluit, Mercurius vobis pluit, Aesculapius,
Hercules aut Diana rationem imbrion tempestatumque finxerunt?" (Adv.
nat. 1.30.8ff.). Saturn is not named herein, but it is logical to
discover that Arnobius has saved a subtle criticism (which is analy-
sed infra) of the deity in the climax of the section 1.29-34 (i.e.,
in Ch. 34). It is significant that there is prima facie evidence
which establishes that every one of the deities named were associated
with the Saturn cult. Leglay provides the important texts for Merc-
ury, Aesculapius, and Hercules. For Apollo one is referred to the
Saturnian statue which used to stand in the temple of Apollo at
Bulla Regia (Hammam Daradji, Tunisia). And the goddess Diana was

145 LeB, 273 and 306f. does not convince me that Stoicism has in-
fluenced Arnobius' thought in this context. For the conceptual simil-
arities, according to my suggested interpretation, in ante-Nicene Christian literature, v. p.216, n.90 supra; and it would perhaps be
superfluous to give the many examples from N. African Christian writ-
ings (e.g., v. pp.214f. supra).

146 SAH, 242-5 (Mercury [and Silvanus]); 245f. (Hercules and Aesculap.).
147 V. p.204, n.37 supra.
associated with Saturn's consort Caelestis, who was known as a "pluui-
arum pollicitatrix", and whose temple at Thugga was in the semi-
circular nymphaean design. There is epigraphic evidence that asso-
ciates Caelestis, Saturn's chief consort, with Hercules and Aes-
culapius. Important to observe also is Mercury's association in
Roman North Africa with the production of olive oil (e.g., at Mad-
auros [Mdaourouch, Tunisia], Numidia); the reference to the need
of rain in Adv. nat. 1.30.6ff.; and to the occurrence of drought
throughout the work (v. pp. 207ff. supra); the remark about pagan
and Christian production of olive oil found in the same text (Adv.
at. 1.21) mentioning that gods send the rains to water the fields;
the archaeological evidence indicating the existence of olive or-
chards just outside (due N) of SV; and epigraphical evidence at-
testing the worship of Mercury and Saturn (v. infra) at SV. One
does not necessarily get the impression that this enumeration of
deities in Adv. nat. 1.30.8ff. is intentionally arbitrary and writ-
ten to look absurd!

Preliminaries completed, we now turn to the use of "seminum
frugiferas" in Adv. nat. 1.30.6f., its relation to other Arnobian
texts in which it appears, and the occurrence and function of frug-
ifer as an agrarian-related epithet within Roman North African reli-
gious paganism. We first acknowledge that there are only two other
passages in which frugifer or the closely related frugiferius occur
in the Adv. nat. The first is 1.38.15f. Arnobius depicts a truly
omniscient Christ in a text, as noted already, literally indebted
to Lucretius and Quintilian. Christ has shown, Arnobius asserts,
"quod frugiferum primo atque humano generi salutare", and one qual-
ification of this general remark is "rationes quas habent semina"
(1.38.27), which again does not necessarily presuppose Stoic influ-

150 Ibid., 245: La Ghorsa. 151 Ibid., at Dougga (Thugga), 246.
152 Ibid., 244. 153 V. pp.74f. supra. 154 V. p.78, n.110 supra.
155 Commenting on Adv. nat. 1.30.8f., Le Bonniec, p.273, observes:
"Le choix des cinq divinités nommées ici s'explique mal: on attend-
rait Iuppiter pluit...Arnobe avait-il une intention précise? On a l'impression que sa liste de dieux est volontairement arbitraire,
voir absurde." I dissent.
156 V. pp.174f. supra.
ence: even in Augustine's day, Saturn's agrarian lordship was still being related, inter alia, to the growth of seeds for agricultural production. Finally, in Adv. nat. 6.10.23ff., there is reference to the Saturn cult: "Inter deos videmus leonis tor-vissimam faciem mero oblitam minio et nomine Frugiferio nuncupari." "Frugiferio" is a direct reference to either Saturn or his consort, Caelestis. Although in an early article Leglay argued that Arnobius was describing Saturn in this passage, he later changed his mind in SAH, this time concluding that it was Caelestis. Festugière thought that Arnobius meant Saturn, and Le Bonniec notes the possibility as well. Let us now analyse the possible interpretations.

The interpretation Frugiferius=Caelestis hinges upon an assumption which is not necessarily justified by a close reading of the text, viz. that Arnobius describes Caelestis, who is often represented in North African writings (e.g., Tertullian, Ap. 16.13: CChr: Dekkers) or upon stelae (cf. CPER 3, 31f.) as a goddess "leonocéphale" (cf. Arnobius' "leonis...faciem") anthropomorphically portrayed from the neck down. But the professor of rhetoric seems to be more concerned to stress the appearance of the face itself ("mero oblitam minio") than to inform his readers whether the image described is part lion, part human; or indeed lion in toto. The latter interpretation is very possible because the stelae are quite numerous which depict a lion who represents and replaces Saturn. The lion-headed statue found at Bir Derbal, Tunisia, situated c. twenty-five miles NW of Le Kef, which does appear to be Caelestis, supports Leglay's interpretation, however. Yet examples of cultic sites providing evidence of the god's replacement by a lion are Tebessa (Theveste) Algeria, and Beja (Vaga), Tunisia. Suffice it to say that, whether

157 V. p.231, n.145. 158 Civ. Dei 7.19. 159 Art. cit. (Lib), 74. 160 SAH, 8. 161 A.J. Festugière, "Arnobiana", VC 6, 1952, 208-54, p.250: or the lion-headed Kronos of Mithraism (cf. C0Th, 407, n.26). 162 Le Bonniec, BAGB 1974, p.205, also noting the possibility of a Mithraic connection, which has fallen by the wayside in the commentary (1982), p.81, this time leaning towards Saturn. On Caelestis generally, v. CPER 3, 29-37, which is still quite useful. 163 SAH, 8; CPER 3, 31f.; and the "leonino capite" of Tertullian, Ap. 16.13 (CChr: Dekkers). 164 SAH, 139-42. 165 SAM 1, 288. 166 Ibid., 266, no.2; 349, no. 45. (McCracken, 592, n.73, rejected the Mithras connection with Adv. 6.10 due to the Mithraic representation of the god Kronos.)
one follows the interpretation of Leglay or Festugière, it is most probable that Arnobius is referring to one of the main deities of the Saturn cult. And nonetheless, it is significant that Leglay interprets the symbol of the Saturnian lion as signifying, inter alia, the forces of nature.

The term frugifer was a very important epithet of Saturn. Denoting the ability of the deity to provide his worshippers with the agricultural produce of the land, its use is attested at Hr.-Mest (Musti: bis), Khamissa (Thubursicu Numidarum), Khenchela (Mascula), Hr.-el-Hammam (Aqua Flavianae: bis), Djemila (Cuicul: ter), Bir-Haddada, Kh.-Guidra (Sertei), Tizgirt, and Ksar Faraoun (Volubilis). One may add Aïn Tounga (Thignica), Teboursouk (Thubursicu Bure), Sousse (Hadrumetum), and worth quoting, Zana (Diana Veteranorum): "deo frugum Saturno frugifero Aug(usto)" etc. Leglay has also found a Roman inscription dedicated "Saturno frugifero". Between Tunis and Le Kef, at Hr.-Mest (Musti), an altar was dedicated c. A.D. 209-11 to the three deities Nutrix, Saturnus frugifer, and Janus Pater under Septimius Severus. Also, it was not until c. A.D. 364-7 that the temple of Saturnus frugifer at Cuicul (Djemila) was destroyed. The question now arises: why is Arnobius restricting the use of frugifer to the High God (1.30.6f.) in an agrarian-related context? Is there any significance in the fact that the only pagan god (or goddess) who receives this appellation is Saturn (or his main consort, Caelestis)? He had a golden opportunity to use it in another passage, viz. 3.32.11f., where the equation terra=Ceres is elucidated "quod salutarium seminum frugem gerat,...", and it appears in a text with the agrarian deities Tellus, Mercury, Magna

167 SAH, 141. 168 Ibid., 122. 169 SAM 1, 125=CIL 8.1406: under the double protection of Hercules and Frugifer.

170 Ibid., 203. 171 Ibid., 255. 172 SAH, 120; SAM 2, 77, no.2=CIL 8.4581.

173 V. SAH, 120-4. 174 SAM 2, 340, no.3. 175 Ibid., 1, 221, no.2; SAH, 90 and n.15.

176 Leglay, art. cit. (Lib), 37. 177 V. Tamas Gesztelyi, "The Cult of Tellus Terra Mater in North Africa", ACUSD 8, 1972, 75-84, for historical development and geographical dispersion; it was predominantly an agrarian cult; v. esp. p.75: most cultic artefacts come from the middle of Africa proconsularis! The map appears on p.79.

178 Associated with Caelestis at Mascula (Khenchela: CIL 8.2226); Rapidum (Sour Djouab: Masqueray: Ibid., 9195); Sitifis (Sétif: Ibid., 8433); for the Saturn and Mercury association v. SAH, 243ff.
Mater, and Saturn. A serious consideration of the fact that the epithet was used to proclaim Saturn as the supreme god of agrarian fertility, compared with its restricted use in the Adv. nat. noted above, may furnish a glimpse of one of the greatest upheavals in North African religious history. And the fact that Arnobius does not use frugifer directly as an epithet of the Christian High God is explicable as being due to (1) his obvious disdain for any but purely abstract appellations (v. pp. 128f. supra), a practice probably derived from his pre-Christian, Neoplatonically-informed apophatic theology; (2) the relatively small but significant part which the concept of the lord of nature, land, the harvests, etc. plays in his conception of deity as a whole, strongly indicating Christian (Cyprianic) influence; (3) his insistence throughout the work, but especially in Books 5-7, that there is a vast qualitative difference between the High God and the pagan deit-

Identified by the Romans as Ops: v. SAH, 219: Ops associated with Caelestis.

The main frugifer text is Adv. nat. 1.30.6f.; for a different view of Adv. nat. 1.38.27, v. Madden, art. cit., 220: the "rationes quas habent semina" (v. pp. 232f. supra) is "apparently a translation of the Greek logoi spermatikoi, and, as used by Arnobius, reflects the preoccupation of many gnostics with the dispersion through sexual reproduction of each soul's spark of the divine, ...". Madden has not convinced me of the "Gnosticism" of Arnobius; he ignores Fortin's article, which has convincingly argued against such a view; he simply rejects Jerome's biographical statements about Arnobius by using Bryce's reasoning, viz. "what bishop would have accepted and circulated Adversus Nationes as sufficient testimony to orthodoxy?" (art. cit., p.217, n.8: referring to ANF 6.406). In response I should comment that (1) the theological beliefs of the bishop are unknown; (2) if they were "orthodox," he might not expect orthodoxy from a recently converted pagan: hence the reasons for the more enlightened attack upon paganism than a defense of Christianity; (3) there is not the slightest shred of evidence from Jerome which even hints that the bishop wanted to circulate the work after Arnobius wrote it; (4) Madden does not consider Jerome's remark that Arnobius always used to attack the Christian religion, information possibly derived from Lactantius' lost letters, oral tradition, or Jerome's N. African correspondence (v. pp.60f. supra), which explains both the lack of mature ("orthodox") theological (Christian) beliefs and the possibility that Arnobius is retracting some of his anti-Christian views which he held as a hostile pagan opponent of the faith. This interpretation accepts Jerome's remarks as credible and acknowledges the "heterodox" nature of various Christian concepts which primarily appear in Books 1-2 (v. esp. pp.101-14 supra); (5) my evaluation of Jerome's testimony does not fit the description of attempting to explain "away apparent anomaly by biographical conjecture" (Madden, art. cit., 218), because such "apparent anomaly" is explicable
ies of the myths and contemporary belief (v. Ch. 5 infra).

There would appear to be one problem with the interpretation of the Arnobian use of frugifer in Adv. nat. 1.30.6f. as betraying a direct agrarian connection with the Saturn cult. An informed critic of the proposed view could retort by referring to the way in which frugifer was epithetically used in other North African pagan cults under the Roman Empire. Of equal importance would be the acknowledgment of its geographical extension and its obvious nexus with the agrarian life. For example, beyond the proconsular province frugifer was used as a divine epithet of Liber Pater at Lepcis Magna; and Concordia at Sabratha. Yet these appear to have been geographically restricted, and similar uses are not attested (according to the knowledge of the present writer) in the western provinces of North Africa. Also, neither of these deities plays as significant an agrarian role as Saturn in the Adversus nationes, and frugiferius is found only once in the work, and there (Adv. nat. 6.10.23ff.) it directly relates to the Saturn cult (i.e., either to Saturn or Cael- estis: v. pp.233f. supra). The best argument which the critic could give against the proposed interpretation might be developed in conjunction with the fact that frugifer was used as a Plutonian epithet in Africa proconsularis, the province in which SV was situated. Leglay has confirmed its use at Thuburbo Maius (Henchir-Kasbat) and Thugga (Dougsa). Of four other inscriptions which could describe either Saturn or Pluto, there is convincing evidence that at least two are Saturnian appellations. Since the publication of Leglay's three volumes, an inscription dedicated to Pluto frugifer has been unearthed at Henchir-Mest (Musti) dated c. A.D. 145. Considering in light of no.4 above (this note); (6) although Madden is correct to argue that Lucretius has influenced Arnobius' ideas in 1.38 (for its structural/conceptual indebtedness to Quintilian v. pp.174f. supra; note Madden's remark that this "consistently executed re-working of an authoritative text [sc. De rer. nat.] to suit his [sc. Arnobius'] own innovative purposes must surely absolve Arnobius of the charge of having transferred in ignorance the attributes of a familiar savior to an unknown one." [art. cit., 221]), he does not even briefly consider the possible Chaldaean influence upon this text, and his "examples" from Gnostic theology, usually given in the form of allusions to Jonas' work or "For gnostics, see, e.g., Korē Kosmou and Poimandres" (p.220, n.14), do not offer the kinds of literary and conceptual parallels that I have noted in the preceding chapter (v. pp.178-83 supra).
these data, one must conclude that the Plutonian designation of frugi-
ifer was geographically restricted to the proconsular province, and
the designation was much more widespread in the case of Saturn. It
will be further observed that Pluto was the patron deity of both
Thugga and Musti, and both Pluto and Saturn were called frugifer
at the latter.\textsuperscript{189} We are thus confronted with another problem: could
the use of frugifer in the agrarian-related Adv. nat. 1.30.6f. be
interpreted as a countersign used against a rival agrarian deity,
and could that deity be Pluto rather than Saturn?

The epigraphic evidence for SV\textsuperscript{190} which identifies the pagan
deities worshipped there is, as already noted (v. pp. 77f. supra),
very sparse. The name of neither Saturn nor Pluto appears. Cagnat-
Gaulkler record the discovery, however, of a number of dedicatory
fragments belonging to unidentified deities derived from SV.\textsuperscript{191} Archaeo-
logical data tip the scale in favour of the worship of Saturn
in the region of SV. More will be said about this in the section on
topography and chronology below. One is thrown back upon the Adver-
sus nationes to try to solve the problem as to whether the Arnobian
frugifer designates Saturn or Pluto.

The name of the chthonian/agrarian deity, Pluto, does not occur
in the Adv. nat., but its adjective Plutonius appears in 7.19.27.
There is no agrarian connection.\textsuperscript{192} Dis, the romanized equivalent
of Pluto, is found a mere eight times,\textsuperscript{193} as compared with seven-
teen for (various case forms of) Saturnus\textsuperscript{194} and seven for Saturn-
ius.\textsuperscript{195} Of the eight occurrences of Dis, half are not related to
agricultural concerns.\textsuperscript{196} Curiously enough the other four generally
correspond to Perphony's allegorical interpretation of the abduction

Mustis, cité Romaine de Tunisie. Tome I", Kar 14, 1967-8, 123-223,
p.177, no.6: "Plutoni frugif(ero) Aug(usto) genio Mustis, sacr(um)."
189 SAH, 122f. 190 I am not aware of any recent archaeological ex-
cavations made at Le Kef, Tunisia.
193 V. Adv. nat. 2.68.9;4.25.20;5.28.17;5.32.17;5.35.14;5.40.14;
5.43.12;6.3.42.
194 1.36.9;2.68.9;2.70.6;2.71.15,17;3.6.7;3.29.24;3.30.6;3.32.19;
4.9.16;4.14.4.23;4.20.5;4.24.16;4.26.11;6.12.5;6.25.6.
195 1.36.9;2.70.18;3.29.27;4.22.1;4.22.19;4.25.30;5.3.14.
196 2.68.9 (concerning sacrifice);4.25.20 (Dis wounded);5.28.17 (rel-
ted to the Halimuntian mysteries);6.3.42 (appearing in the attack upon
the pagan temples [Adv. nat. 6.1-8]).
by Dis. The Neoplatonist interprets Kore=the seminal seed; the abduction=the sun going down at seed-time. All four passages appear in the section of Book 5— in the space of twelve chapters— where Arnobius totally rejects any sort of allegorical interpretation of Graeco-Roman mythology.

This suggests that Porphyry may be the allegorist being attacked.

It is concluded that Arnobius is using frugifer in Adv. nat. 1.30.6 as an anti-Saturnian term.

We continue the study of Adv. nat. 1.29-34, turning now to 1.33: dominus is used in the innate knowledge passage twice to underscore (1) God's lordship over all things (1.5: "dominum cunctorum quaecumque sunt"); and (2) the subservience of animals (11.6ff.), trees (1.8: "arbores"), soils (Ibid.: "glaebae"), and rocks (Ibid.: "saxa") to the only lord of all (1.12: "cunctorum dominum solum"). We are again met with a concept of a deity who is the lord of the land. The gist is that the Christian High God is the lord of nature: all are born with knowledge that he exists. Arnobius' use of dominus here suggests that the great pagan lord of the land is being confronted with a vehement counter-claim to his sovereign realm.

The suggestion becomes more credible when we consider the fact that one of the most frequently used Saturnian divine epithets was dominus. Leglay has described it as being the most important of all the sacred names which his devotees gave him. Originating from the

Illustration No. 9. Top register: Saturn flanked by sun and moon. 2nd reg.: four seasons nude. 3rd reg.: dedican and genies. (Béja-Le Kef: SAM 1, PL VII, no.4)
Semitic $\text{adôn}$ (adôn), it was also used as an epithet to describe other deities (e.g., Ceres, Aesculapius, Mercury, Victoria, Pluto, Silvanus, etc.), but its meaning was limited: Neptune was the lord of water, Pluto of the underworld, and so forth. Yet Leglay has shown that the epithet could be used by itself to designate Saturn's absolute sovereignty and omnipotence. "Pour les Africains de l'époque romaine 'le Seigneur' ne peut désigner que Saturne." The concept of Saturnus dominus terrae who brings about the fecundity of the crops and blesses the harvests is present on many stelae, notably those also which are inscribed with dominus. An exemplary stela is derived from Hr.-es-Srina. Upon it dominus is substituted for Saturnus. And upon the deity's altar, as we have noted (ill. no. 7, p. 226 supra), has been placed a huge basket containing a superfluity of all kinds of agricultural produce. Restricting ourselves to Africa proconsularis, the epithet appears frequently on Saturnian monuments from such cultic strongholds as Ain Tounga (Thignica) and Djebel bou-Kournein, both of which were situated in agriculturally fertile areas. There is no obvious agrarian connection with Tertullian's remark that God's cognomen is dominus. And it will be remembered that Leglay has suggested (p. 229 supra) that Lactantius' frequent use of the epithet might have served to oppose Saturn's lordship. It would appear that Arnobius had the same purpose in mind when he wrote Adv. nat. 1.33.6-12.

The last chapter of the section of the Adv. nat. under investigation, 1.29-34, contains Arnobius' concluding argument that deus omnipotens, a common Christian epithet of the period, transcends any predications of time and rules the ages and seasons as their
sower: "sator saeculorum ac temporum" (Adv. nat. 1.34.12). Note that even if one translates "temporum" as "temps," as Le Bonniec does, there is still a Saturnian connection with the idea from classical antiquity that gave the equation \( \text{Saturnus} = \chi \nu \delta \nu \omega \), an idea which Arnobius attacks in Book Three and is analysed below. For the moment we will accept McCracken's "seasons" and observe that there is an exact conceptual parallel in the religious symbolism of the Saturn cult uniquely restricted to the geographical area of Beja-Le Kef. Of c. 3,000 monuments (or fragments of monuments) related to the Saturn cult, it is significant for the present enquiry that only two depict the deity as the sovereign lord of the four seasons, and both derive from Beja-Le Kef. One of these is illustrated supra (ill. no. 9, p. 238). All but the very bottom of the top register is destroyed. What remains, when compared with other stelae, obviously portrays an enthroned Saturn flanked by the sun and moon, to which we have also referred (pp. 227f. supra). Also illustrated above (ill. no. 8, p. 227) and derived from the region of Beja-Le Kef, Saturn's association with time, in the form of every day of the week, is engraved upon a dedicatory stela. The second register of illustration number nine (p. 238) portrays the four seasons: a hooded winter holds a duck; spring carries a basket and a bough of some kind; summer, a sickle and an ear of grain; autumn, a bunch of grapes and a basket of agricultural produce. A fine piece of pagan religious propaganda this must have been, an excellent advertisement from the proconsular "yellow pages" under "Chief Agrarian Deity". And it would not be unreasonable to suggest that this stela's provenance was SV and not Vaga (v. next paragraph for elucidation). The other stela representing the four seasons is very similar to its counterpart, except that one finds four feminine persons dressed in tunics bearing the same agrarian symbols, but in the order (left to right) of autumn, summer, spring, and winter. Leglay's interpretation of these three stelae (SAM 1, 292, nos. 5, 6, and 7), made of course without any reference to the Adversus nationes, is worth...
quoting: "Cette stèle (sc. no.7=ill. no. 8, p. 227 supra) est à rapprocher des n° 5 et 6: Saturne, maître du Temps, est le seigneur des Saisons et des Jours."

The reference to "Béja-Le Kef" found often in this study needs elucidation at this juncture, before we progress in our analysis. Leglay's dossier enumerates seven hitherto unedited stelae under the geographical specification "Regions Béja-Le Kef" (SAM 1, 291-3), catalogued in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leyden. This can be confusing, since the two cities are c. forty miles apart. The explanation for the lack of more precise data is that a Major J.E. Humbert of Superville bought the stelae in Tunisia during the period 1821-1826, for King William I. Unfortunately neither the inventories of the Rijksmuseum nor the personal papers of the major give any more exact information than "achetées dans les régions de Béja et du Kef." 216 It is obvious from this, however, that the presence of the two prepositions (i.e., and not "de la region Béja-Le Kef," which the reader might have assumed was the meaning of the term upon reading "Béja-Le Kef" supra, passim) before each location clearly discloses that some stelae were bought in the area of Béja (Vaga), and others in that of Le Kef (Sicca Veneria), the latter being the city where Arnobius very successfully taught rhetoric and most probably resided, as we have concluded in Chapter Two, following Jerome. 217

We are now prepared to go further in our analysis of "sator saeculorum ac temporum" of Adv. nat. 1.34.12. While still keeping in mind the archaeological evidence noted in the preceding paragraph, we should now focus upon the epithet sator. It appears that the Christian High God, appearing in the final chapter of an agrarian-related section (Adv. nat. 1.29-34) emphasising the deity's sovereignty over heaven, earth, the natural elements and fertile seeds, etc., has conveniently replaced Jupiter's father (Saturn) in 1.34. According to the chronological development of the Saturn cult this replacement makes sense in view of the fact that the latest dated stela, the 8th of November A.D. 323 from (incidentally) Béja (Vaga), manifests an acute Jovian influence upon the Saturn cult. And the famous Boglio monument, which we have seen dates from the late third century and originates not far from SV, has the Jovian eagle engraved

215 SAM 1, 292, no.7, Pl VII, fig.5. 216 Ibid., 291. 217 V. pp.70-87 supra.
with wings spread above an enthroned Saturn flanked by Castor and Pollux (v. ill. no. 5 supra, p. 219). Sator is a Saturnian term also in the Latin literary tradition specifically recalling the Varronian explanation of saturnus being a derivative of satus. Arnobius' phrase, "Saturnum praesidem sationis" of Adv. nat. 4.9.16f. appears also to be Varronian-inspired. Just because Arnobius may be following the classical literary tradition, however, does not necessarily mean that he was not speaking from experience. There would appear to be two good reasons to take such a position: (1) the Adversus nationes was evidently not intended to address party or regional interests, but the nationes; (2) he is a very cultivated pagan of the intelligentsia and (according to Jerome) a successful rhetorician, who has been professionally trained in the art of elocution to speak and write in the language commensurate with his cultural milieu. Indeed, a later pagan and probably a North African himself was cognizant of a tradition which referred to Saturn as "the author of times and seasons". More importantly, sator is used as a divine epithet for Saturn by Arnobius' pupil, Lactanius: "sator omnium deorum fuit". And noteworthy also is the use of sator in the Adv. nat. exclusively to describe the Christian High God.

The final passage which we must analyse is mainly related to the classical literary conception of Saturn being synonymous with Ἑπόνοος and it contains a number of remarks at the end which

219 Varro, De ling. lat. 5.64; cf. Macr., Sat. 1.10.20. G. Herbig, "Satre-Saturnus", Philol. 74, 1917, 446-59, suggests that saturnus derives from an Etruscan "Gentilgott" and is etymologically related to satrius, satrenus, etc. Cf. SAH, 499.

220 Cf. Aug., Civ. Dei 7.13, on the question who is Saturn?: "unus, inquit (sc. Varro), de principibus deus, penes quem sationum omnium dominatus est."

221 Cf. SAH, 8. With perhaps the exception of Book Two, which Arnobius himself acknowledges is a planned digression in 3.2.1-4: v. p.12 supra for the function of the digressio in the Adv. nat.

222 His polemical horizons were broader and not restricted to N. Africa, shown in his attacks upon Porphyry.

223 V. p.98, n.245 supra. Macr., Sat. 1.22.8. On the tempus relation v. Civ. Dei 7.19;7.21; Sat. 1.8.6f.; Div. inst. 1.12; Cic., De nat. deor. 2.64.xxv.

224 Div. inst. 1.23. V. p.128, n.69 supra. On this concept v. SAH, 473f.
evince agrarian-associated facets of the deity’s lordship:

Nam si tempus significatur hoc nomine, Graecorum ut interpretetes autamant, ut quod χρόνος est habeatur ἥν τον, nullum est Saturnium numen. Quis est enim tam demens, qui tempus esse dicat deum, quod mensura cuiusdam est spatii in continua serie perpetuitatis inclusi? Atque ita ex ordine tolletur et iste caelestium, quem Caelo esse editum patre, magnorum esse procreatorum deorum, vitisatem falciferum vetustas edidit prisca et minorum transmisit aetati.

Kρόνος was the Greek equivalent of Saturn according to such writers as Sophocles,229 Plutarch,230 Sextus Empiricus,231 and Porphyry of Tyre.232 Lactantius233 and Augustine234 follow the same Varronian tradition that Arnobius criticises in the above text. Macrobius is familiar with the tradition as well.235 But its significance for the present analysis is the fact that it occurs in Book Three: in Adv. nat. 3.6, as we shall observe (v. infra, pp. ff.), Saturn heads what is apparently a syncretistic list of agrarian deities similar to one found in a nearby pagus of SV; 3.24 contains, as we have noted (v. pp. 212-25 supra), a number of conceptual parallels of an agrarian nature with the Saturn cult; and the vituperation of a good number of high-ranking North African agrarian deities beginning with this chapter (3.29) and ending in chapter thirty-four. Significant also is Arnobius’ conclusion: since an allegorical interpretation of Saturn’s name is fallacious, this deity is to be removed from the celestial realm (“ordine tolletur et iste caelestium”). This attack upon the North African national god’s heavenly reign and his imperious relationship to time are the same kinds of concepts graphically depicted upon the three stelae, which are probably from SV, analysed above (v. pp. 239ff. supra); and listed as being among the salient features of the Christian High God’s sovereign imperium of Adv. nat. 1.29-34. But Arnobius does not restrict his diatribe to Saturn’s heavenly realm, undoubtedly because he is aware of the deity’s pre-eminent position as the Lord of the land and harvests. This is brought out by the appellation “magnorum esse

229 Androm. fr.122. 230 E.g., Quaest. rom. 272.34.E (LCL: Babbit).
231 Pyr. 3.208 (LCL: Bury). 232 Abst. 2.27.2.2 (Budé: Bouffartigue-Patillon).
procreatorem deorum" (Adv. nat. 3.29.32). *Procreator* is used elsewhere only to describe the High God (1.31.2) and Jupiter (4.23.21f.). Saturn's designation as *procreator* recalls what we have stressed concerning Arnobius' use of the concept of *pater deorum* in Adv. nat. 1.28.4, 25 and 40 (v. pp. 228f. supra). The Arnobian *coup de grâce* appears exactly where one would expect it, viz. in the weakest link in the whole vast chain, especially if a drought was in progress.

It is indeed extremely interesting that Arnobius concludes his argument on the non-existence of Saturn by focussing upon (3.29.32f.) his agrarian-related characteristics. He is first called the "vine-planter" ("vitisatorem": 1.32), an epithet which vividly conveys the pagan belief in the deity's agrarian lordship. It also communicates the extent to which the pious went in their total dependence upon the deity to provide a good crop. For if the deity was thought somehow actually to be involved in the planting of the crop, it was natural to continue the logic of the concept and believe in his ability to protect its growth until harvest time. And thousands of Saturnian stelae establish that many believed this. Indeed, Arnobius has deemed it necessary to attack the pagan belief in "Saturnum praesidem sationis" (4.9.16f.). The argument would certainly appear to have been inspired more by existential involvement in (or perhaps simply a profound awareness of) the conflict between the Saturn cult and Christianity, rather than a purely intellectual debate completely based upon literary sources. In light of this, the following data should be carefully considered: Arnobius' remark in 1.21.6ff., that pagans and Christians cultivate the olive and the grape and Saturn the *vitisator* attacked in 3.29.32; the Saturnian stelae derived from "Béja-Le Kef" picturing an anthropomorphic autumn holding a bunch of grapes (v. ill. no. 9 supra, p. 238) and Arnobius' challenge to let the gods make the pagans' autumn harvests full from the vineyards (1.21.6f.: "Ex olivis vestris atque vinetis plenam faciant autumnitatem fundi,..."); and the archaeological evidence confirming the cultivation of vines, fruit trees, and the olive during the Roman period and in the countryside due N and E of SV (v. p. 75 supra), most interesting in light of the designation of Saturn in Adv. nat. 6.12.5ff. as "Saturnus cum obunca falce custos ruris, ut...

For the Saturnian evidence v. (e.g.) SAM 1, 292, nos. 5 (Pl VII, fig.4) and 6 (Béja-Le Kef).
aliquis ramorum luxuriantium tonsor,...". It would be unreasonable, therefore, to assume that the above remarks about Saturn found in Arnobius were strictly made for academic purposes. And if the rhetor uses a majority of his Saturnian passages to denigrate the anthropopathic depictions of the gods in Graeco-Roman mythology, it comes as no surprise: he does so much in respect of a vast majority of the gods named in the work.\textsuperscript{237}

**Topography And Chronology.**

We return to Book Three which is significant (inter alia) for: the belief in divine providence vis-à-vis the agrarian life (3.24.1-17), a concept which is indebted to Cyprian (v. \textit{supra}, pp. 210-6); the Saturnian text just analysed (3.29.25-34: v. pp. 243f. \textit{supra}); the critique of various prominent North African agrarian deities (3.29-34: passim); the statement that the gods are afflicting the lands (3.11.12: "terræ") "cotidie" (Ibid.) with evil (v. \textit{supra}, pp. 207ff., for a full list), indicating a tense agrarian situation; and very important for a remark made in 3.6.1-11:

\begin{quote}
Et tamen ne nos quisquam pervicaciter arbitretur sacramenta nolle suscipere ceterorum quaecumque sunt numinum. Devotas etenim mentes et manus pretendimus supplices neque aspernamur quocumque invitaveritis accedere, si modo disascamus, quinam isti sunt divini quos nobis ingeritis, et quos par sit adiungi summi regis ac principis venerationi. Saturnus, inquit, et Janus est, Minerva Iuno Apollo Venus Triptolemus Hercules atque alii (et) ceteri, quibus magnificas aedes cunctis paene in urbibus religiosa consecravit antiquitas.
\end{quote}

Saturn comes first in this list, quite naturally for a North African who is enumerating the deities who should be worshipped together with the Christian princeps and \textit{summus rex}. Indeed, Saturn is the first deity named in Book Three. The reference to "antiquitas" may presuppose a strong pagan defense of the mos maiorum, which would be another reason for beginning his attack with the principal deity of the North African pantheon. Both the enumeration itself and Saturn's apparently pre-eminent place in it perhaps could be easily written off as the arbitrary listing of deities in a passage whose significance lies elsewhere, if it were not for epigraphic and\textsuperscript{237} For details of this interpretation v. Ch.V \textit{infra}.  

\textsuperscript{237}
archaeological evidence which discloses that the same kind of phenomenon was occurring in the Saturn cult that Arnobius is apparently describing in 3.6.1-11, viz. an association (let us call it this for the moment) of other deities with Saturn. And it would appear to be quite significant for this study that this evidence derives from the area of the pro-consular province in which Sicca Veneria was situated.

We turn first to an inscription found just ten miles SE of SV, at the small village of Pagus Veneriensis (Koudiat es Souda, Tunisia). Its short distance from SV and its name reveal that it was under SV's civil administration. A close religious affiliation most probably existed between the two, as the worship in both of (at least) Jupiter, Saturn, Minerva, and of course, Venus, would indicate:

Iovi, Saturno, Silvano, Caelesti, Plutoni, Minervae, Veneri Aug(ustis) sacr(um) pagus Veneriensis patrono L(u cio) Antonio Britanno, curat(ibus) P(ublio) Octavio Marcello sacerd(ote) Saturni...(etc.)

Poinssot and Leglay have noted that it is Jupiter who heads the list here, even though a priest of Saturn appears among the curatores. Neither has suggested a date, but a good guess might be c. the same general period as those from Siliana (the Boglio stela) and Béja (dated the 8th of November A.D. 323) because of an obvi-

In addition to Arnobius, we have seven stelae from the regions of Béja and of Le Kef, some revealing striking conceptual parallels with some of the Saturnian passages in Arnobius (v. the preceding subsection).


L. Poinssot, "Note sur une inscription de Koudiet-Es-Souda (Tunisie)", CRAI 1913, 424-8.

SAM 1, 294, no.1. V. A. Beschauoch, "Une stèle consacrée à Saturne le 8 Novembre 323", BACTH 1968, n.s.4, 253-68.
Jovian influence. The other piece of evidence is the Saturn stela derived from either Béja or Le Kef, which shows an association of Saturn with Juno, Venus, and Minerva (ill. no. 10 supra, p. 246: going from left to right in the second register). A similar inscription, commented upon by Frend,\textsuperscript{244} contains a dedication by a priest of Saturn to Sailvanus, Mercury, and other deities at Aziz ben Tellis (Idicra) near Constantine (Cirta), Algeria. Found in Leglay's dossier and coming from the same site are two inscriptions dedicated to Saturn (called dominus), Nutrix, Jupiter, Hercules, Venus, Mercury, and Testimonius which are (as in the case of a vast majority of Saturnian inscriptions) undated.\textsuperscript{245}

W.H.C. Frend was the first to suggest that the passage cited above (Adv. nat. 3.6.1-11) describes syncretism occurring within the Saturn cult contemporaneous with Arnobius. The latter would, therefore, appear to be describing real events of his time.\textsuperscript{246} Indeed, Frend and Nicholson appear to have been the only English-speaking scholars who have even posed the question - albeit rather in passing - of the possibility that Arnobius might evince that the Saturn cult was still alive.\textsuperscript{247} Leglay has interpreted Adv. nat. 3.6.1-11 as denoting a Saturnian "hiérarchisation bien normale pour un africain."\textsuperscript{248} Note also that all but two of the deities which appear in Arnobius' list are found in the section of SAH which analyses "Saturne et les autres divinités". For Apollo (Adv. nat. 3.6.8) we recall\textsuperscript{249} that in the temple of this deity at Bulla Regia (Hamam Daradji), which was situated only c. twenty-five miles N of SV, there stood a statue of Saturn; and the Apollo-sol association, the latter being represented as an acolyte of Saturn on hundreds of stelae and notably on two from "Béja-Le Kef".\textsuperscript{250} Saturnian syncretism occurred also at Musti (Hr.-West [Le Krib]: c. 30m. SE of SV), including Janus (cf. Adv. nat. 3.6.8);\textsuperscript{251} Thuburbo Maius (Hr.-Kasbat);\textsuperscript{252} Hr.-Rohban

\textsuperscript{244}1981 repr., 456, n.121: CIL 8.8246. \textsuperscript{245}CIL 8.8246D;4477;SAM 2, 63, no.1; CIL 8.8247; SAM 2, 63f., no.2.

\textsuperscript{246}Frend (1952), 105. \textsuperscript{247}O.P. Nicholson, "The Date of Arnobius' Adversus gentes", StudPatr 15, Part I, 100-7 (=TU 128), p.106, n.50: "Nor need we think that Saturn, the god who looked after the agricultural interests of the towns, was dead." NB: V. p.217, n.95 supra.

\textsuperscript{248}SAH, 8. \textsuperscript{249}V. p.204, n.37 supra. Apollo is not in SAH, 215-53.

\textsuperscript{250}SAM 1, 292, nos.5,7; cf. Adv. nat. 3.33.10-3. \textsuperscript{251}Ibid., 221, no.1=CIL 8.15577: Nutrix, Frugifer, Janus; no.2=CIL 8.27436 (same gods).

\textsuperscript{252}ILT 710: "Saturni Soli Lunae Marti Mercuri Iovi Veneri."
The significance of the aforementioned ideas depicting the Christian High God's relation to the natural processes in Arnobius, especially the deity's sovereign rule over the agrarian life, is explicable in light of what appears to have been an intense conflict which occurred between the Saturn cult and the Christian Church in North Africa beginning in the last half of the third century A.D. During the same period Christianity was continuing to spread geographically and organise internally, data which led Monceaux to propose the theory of "conversions en masses" from Saturn to the rising sun of North African Christianity. Frend further researched the problem and he discovered that the last datable inscription related to the Saturn cult, from Sillegue (Novar), Algeria, is c. A.D. 262 or 272. After this date, he showed, within a generation only Christian inscriptions appear. Frend thus concluded that between A.D. 240-75 "worship of Saturn appears to have ceased almost entirely" (i.e., in Numidia), because the next datable inscriptions are Christian. Marcel Leglay's trilogy on the Saturn cult has produced a different thesis. Accepting the Sillegue inscription as the last datable monument of the cult, he (1966) maintained that among the stelae that are not datable, which form the vast majority, it is all but absolutely certain that such characteristics as their form, decoration, textual style, and the style of the dedicant's apparel permit dates ranging from the end of the third century (A.D.) to the beginning of the fourth century. Augustine knew of worshippers of the deity in his day. Also, since the publication of SAH and SAM 1-2, a stelae consecrated to Saturn...
on the 8th of November A.D. 323, found only c. forty miles N of Le Kef (SV) in the environs of the Zahret Mediène, c. ten miles due W of Béja (Vaga), has been discovered. Beschacouch posits that the dedication comes from an open-air temple in the environs of the oued Kasseb. This provides irrevocable evidence that the Saturn cult continued to the end of the first quarter of the fourth century, and undoubtedly well beyond because the inscription records the existence of the hierarchically-ordered priesthood. This indicates a cult still living in the northwestern part of Africa proconsularis at least, and there is no reason to believe that the situation was greatly different in other regions of the province. And the fact that the monument derives not far from Le Kef may help to shed further light upon the meaning of the aspect of Arnobius' concept of God under analysis. Of the same general period, within c. a generation are the Boglio stela (v. p. 219f. supra) and the ex-voto stelae from Central Tunisia preserved in the British museum, both of which are dated c. A.D. 289-95, at the moment of the renewal of the rural economy in North Africa. Chronologically, geographically, and theologically this evidence coheres well with the Adv. nat., and one can therefore with good reason suggest that an intense christianising of former Saturn cultic sites had already materialised, and in some areas, particularly in the proconsular province, the battle between the Christian and Saturn cults was fiercely continuing. And some of these sites were not very far from the city of Sicca Veneria, where Arnobius was writing the Adv. nat.

ent multos deos, et dicunt eos dominos suos et deos suos." It would appear reasonable to suggest that if the cult was already moribund, Augustine would not have written these words. Cf. also De cons. evan. 1.23.34; SAH, 7;104, n.1; M.D. Madden, The Pagan Divinities and Their Worship as Depicted in the Works of Saint Augustine, Exclusive of the City of God. CUAPS XXIV. Washington, D.C., 1930, 46-53 (Saturn).

262 V. n.243, p.246 supra. 263 Art. cit. (1968), 255. 264 Ibid.

265 SAM 1, 255f., nos.4ff., Pl VIII, figs.3ff. 266 Leglay (SAH, 99-104) argues that such temples as those at Cuicul, Abthugni, Thuburbo Maius, Thuburnica, etc., continued to be used for worship throughout the fourth and to the beginning of the fifth centuries.

267 Cf. now also W.H.C. Frend, The Rise of Christianity. Philadelphia, 1984, 446: "In proconsular Africa Saturn's (sc.) cult lasted longer." He means "longer" than in Numidia and the Mauretanias. Yet v. n. supra; and Liebeschuetz' critical comment (1979: 231) that epigraphic evidence almost entirely ceased in the second half of the third century, and this "phenomenon was universal".
In turning to questions related to the topography and chronology of these sites, many stelae and temples cannot be dated with any exactness. Dougga (Thugga) provides the earliest dated inscription (between 1 July A.D. 36-16 March 37: c. thirty-five miles NE of SV) of an aedes Saturni (one of the two which existed in the city). A later temple probably existed during the third century A.D.

Dated in the same general period ("assez tardive") is an ex-voto from Carthage (SAM 1, 20, no.11; Pl II, fig. 2). The greatest Saturnian stronghold in Africa proconsularis, Djebel-bou-Kournein, the "mountain of two horns," from the southern slope of the western summit of this mountain (500 metres) where appear the ruins of the temple of Saturnus Balcaranensis (Latin transliteration [or translation] of the Phoenician Ba'al Qarnaim="Ba'al of the two horns"), no less than six-hundred stelae (many fragmentary), sixty lamps, and six different coin types have been excavated which strongly suggest that the site continued to receive worshippers at least to the end of the fourth century A.D. Coins found in the temple of Saturn at Bir bou-Rekba (Thinissut) reveal its active use at least to the beginning of the same century. From the second greatest Saturnian stronghold of the proconsular province at Ain Tounga (Thignica), many of Leglay's "Series B" stelae, which manifest a sophisticated sculptural design and are therefore late in date, derived from the 538 which have been discovered, are given no more a precise date than the third century A.D. We have already noted the Boglio stela from Siliana, dated during the Tetrarchy. Many monuments found at Ksar-Toual-Zouameul (Vicus Maracitanus: c. twenty miles SE of SV) have received a date c. the second half of the third century A.D. In an area rich in olive cultivation, the temple at Hr.-

Yet the appearance of datable aspects of stelae can often help to place them in a general period. One example is the toga contabulata, in vogue from the beginning of the Severan Dynasty (v. e.g., SAM 2, 257f., no.11, Pl XXXV, fig.3: Mons=Mopthi).
Douemis (Uchi Maius:278 c. twenty miles NE of SV) was probably still in active use during the proconsulate of M. Aurelius Aristobulus (A.D. 290-4).279 Leglay suggests that another proconsular Saturnian stronghold (sixty-three stelae, some fragmentary: SAM 1, 274-85), Thuburnica (Sidi-Ali-Bel-Kassem: c. twenty-eight miles NW of Le Kef), continued well into the Christian era.280 Stelae nos. 4-7 from Central Tunisia (SAM 1, 225f.) have been dated "au moment du renouveau de l'économie rurale qui suivit les années 289-295"281 because of very striking stylistic similarities with the Boglio stela. Some of the stelae from the temple of Saturnus frugifer282 at Djemila (Cuicul), Algeria (Numidia) date c. the end of the third/beginning of the fourth centuries A.D., and the temple itself was in use during the first half of the fourth century.283 The Koudiat es-Souda inscription may be late third/early fourth century, as we have noted.284 And we may conclude the same in respect of some of the stelae which derive from "Beja-Le Kef."284a Finally, the stela discovered close to Beja and dated the 8th of November A.D. 323, is the latest Saturnian monument known to date.

A few comments are necessary in light of some of the issues which this study has analysed in relation to the Adversus nationes. First, it is certain that the Saturn cult was still in existence at least eighteen years after Arnobius wrote his work, and only c. forty miles due north of Sicca Veneria. One can justly assume that even then (8 November A.D. 323) it geographically extended beyond the confines of the immediate area of Vaga (Béja) because one priest named on the stela bears the title magister, denoting a superior rank within a college of priests.285 In Saturn's left hand is found the Jovian sceptre, suggesting a Saturn-Jupiter syncretism with which we should compare what we have observed regarding Adv. nat. 1.34,286 and various late stelae (dated later than A.D. 295) originating from

278Historical analysis of the site can be found in A. Merlin and L. Poinssot, "Les inscriptions d'Uchi Majus", TDAA 2, 1908, 9-23.
279Because of his namesake Is_dedication of the monument ("Aurelia [Aristo]bula"): SAM 1, 272, no.1.
284V. pp.246f. supra; Leglay, SAM 1, 294, no.1, offers no date.
284aSAM 1, 292, nos. 4,5,7 (PI VII, figs.3ff.), and no.6.
Central Tunisia! Above the pruning hook (cf. Adv. nat. 6.12.5f. and p. 226 supra) of the deity the sculptor engraved the sun. Saturn's other acolyte, the moon, is missing, and Beschaouch has rightly suggested that this may be an insistence upon the solar character of Saturn. This is interesting in light of Apollo's appearance in Adv. nat. 1.30.8 and 3.6.8 (in fourth place after Saturn); the statue of Saturn which stood in the temple of Apollo at Bulla Regia (Hammam Daradji); and fragments of Saturnian stelae, statuettes, and statues found together with the heads/statues of Apollo (and Jupiter and Mercury) at Tébessa (Theveste), which led Gsell to suggest that they were mutilated by Christians c. the end of the fourth/beginning of the fifth century A.D. Both Leglay and Beschaouch have argued that the Saturn cult continued throughout the fourth century (A.D.). And it would appear from the above evidence that the very fertile areas of North and Central Tunisia, including the region Béja-Le Kef, comprised a very significant stronghold for the cult in the proconsular province.

Conclusions.

God depicted as the lord of nature and the agrarian processes, who sends the rains, who has created the sun to make things grow, who blesses the harvests of all aequaliter, is a conception of deity which indeed comprises a small, but very important, part of Arnobius' overall understanding of the manner in which the Christian High God providentially relates himself to man and his world. Comparing this aspect of his thought with his concept of God as a whole, one is justified to call it unusual, taken at face value. Yet by taking the aforementioned evidence into consideration, the present writer concludes that this aspect partly indicates a clear Christian

287 SAH, 98f.; cf. SAM 1, 225ff., nos.4ff., P1 VIII, figs. 3ff.
288 Beschaouch, art. cit. (1968), 263. 289 V. p.231 supra.
290 SAH, 102. 291 Ibid. 292 Ibid., 96-105. 293 Art. cit. (1968), 262: "Il confirm que, malgré la propagation victorieuse du Christianisme, le culte de Saturne africain demeurait vivant et florissant." Perhaps "florissant" is going beyond the evidence provided principally by one stela. I would qualify this by saying that the cult appears to have existed longer and over a wider area in the proconsular province, especially in the northern and central regions.
influence, to a certain extent indebted to the De bono patientiae of Saint Cyprian. Whether Arnobius has carried with him into his Christian views of the agrarian lordship of the deity any religious concepts which he held as a pagan, is not ascertainable, but certainly possible in light of the conceptual parallels noted above with the Saturn cult.

It would be quite difficult to imagine that Christianity could have succeeded in finally replacing the Saturn cult as the predominant religious expression in Roman North Africa without experiencing some kind of assimilation by the Christian God of various agrarian aspects of Saturn's lordship. This whole study has not, of course, been developed according to an understanding of the North African Saturn as being only an agrarian deity (v. p. 217, n.95 supra). This formed only one manifestation of what appears to have been an all-encompassing imperium which possessed jurisdiction in heaven and on earth. Indeed, it was during the period in which Arnobius was writing the Adv. nat. (late 302 to before the end of 305) that two extremely powerful forces were confronting the Christian Church in Roman North Africa: the Roman Empire and the cult of Saturn. Whether one accepts Frend's sudden replacement theory, or the more gradual and time-consuming one of Leglay, it is logical to suggest that in Arnobius one glimpses a few impacts resulting from the most cataclysmic event in North African religious history up to his time. In an area as important for agriculture as Sicca Veneria, the proposed assimilation theory makes perfect sense, especially in light of everything analysed above: the occurrence of drought at least in Arnobius' immediate geographical area; the fine points of his critique of North African agrarian deities, but especially Saturn; the very close conceptual and literary parallels existing between Adv. nat. 1.29-34 and certain epigraphic data pertaining to agrarian-associated ideas frequently expressed in the Saturn cult; the evidence pointing to a late third century renewal of the rural economy in Roman North Africa and the significant role played by Saturn in this event, particularly in Central Tunisia (e.g., as demonstrated by the Boglio stela, monuments from Central Tunisia, etc.).

294 V. SAH, 107-264.
Serge Lancel has concluded that it is quite impossible precisely to date the appearance of rural parishes which began in the dioceses of the North African Church under the jurisdiction of the principalis cathedra. 295 Yet at the Council of Carthage on the 1st of September A.D. 256, as Monceaux 296 and Lancel 297 have noted, the eighty-seven bishops who attended reveal that the Church was predominantly urban. And perhaps Frend is correct to argue that the initial developments of the North African Church were urban. 298 The situation had vastly changed, however, by the Council of Carthage in 345/48, where we find Antigonus, an "episcopus Maginensis", (?) 299 and his Donatist counterpart Optantius, having already signed an official agreement delimiting their respective "plebes", 300 which is used in the acts of the 411 Council with dio(e)cesis to describe "non plus une communauté en particulier parmi celles dont l'ensemble constitue le 'diocèse', mais le 'diocèse' lui-même..." 301 Paulus the rival (Donatist) bishop of Fortunatianus at SV posed no threat to the "Unitatem ecclesiae Siccensis", 302 but one looks in vain through the pages of the gesta of the Council of 411 for details of the geographical delimitation of SV's diocese, 303 even though Fortunianus speaks in them no less than thirty-eight times. 304 But although the Donatist Church was predominantly rural, 305 we may note Petilian's response to Alypius: "Sic etiam tu multos habes per omnes agros dispersos" (Conc. Carth. 411 182.2 [SC 195: Lancel]). And the new Ep. 20* of Augustine describes Antoninus' receiving the Fundus 299 300 301 302 303 295 Gesta conlat. Carth. 411: Lancel, SC 194 (=vol.1), p.184: "Il est impossible de dater l'apparition des paroisses rurales qui ont essaime dans les diocèses à partir de la principalis cathedra...". 296 Monceaux II, 7-10. 297 Gesta conlat. Carth., SC 194, 184. 
Thogonoetensis as a cathedra to which were attached eight small villages formerly belonging to Fussala. The same kind of diocesan configuration containing a cathedra to which a number of rural parishes were responsible that we find in Augustine's forty mile diocese (at least), and at Fussala, etc., undoubtedly characterised also the cathedra of Urbanus, the bishop of SV who (with another bishop) chose Antoninus for a new bishopric in the diocese of Hippo. We know of one priest, Apiarius, who served under Urbanus in the diocese of SV, but exactly where is unknown.

Patchy evidence this certainly is. Perhaps the best conclusion that we can make from this is that sometime after A.D. 256 and before the end of the fourth century, the centrifugal influences of the urban cathedrae gradually began to demarcate outlying rural parishes for which they were spiritually responsible. And if Monceaux's suggestion that the "hiérarchie ecclésiastique s'accordait avec la hiérarchie civile" is correct, then it is very probable that such pagi as Pagus Veneriensis (Koudiat-es-Souda); and castella as Castellum... (Nebeur; Hr. Sidi Merzoug), Ucubi (Hr. Kaoussat), etc. were among the communities dependent upon the cathedra principalis at Sicca Veneria.

In light of the above, one could within good reason posit that one of the main priorities of the evangelical agenda - with historical precedents found in the works and epistles of Cyprian - of the North African Church of the period in which Arnobius was writing the Adv. nat. will undoubtedly have been an emphasis upon the Christian God's concern for the material well-being of all persons. This we have seen rather admirably brought out in Adv. nat. 3.24.1-17.

It has been suggested that one reason for the success of Christianity in Roman North Africa during the late third century (specifically in Numidia and the proconsular province) might have been a widespread pagan belief in the failure of the gods to assure prosperity. Yet this does not go deep enough by attempting to ascertain precisely what it was that the Christian religion offered the pagan to make the change in his/her religious allegiance worthwhile. In other words,


310 W.H.C. Frend, CHA II, 463.
what did the pagan find appealing about the Christian concept of divine providence, especially during the occurrence of drought and famine,\(^{311}\) which he/she might not have been able to find in the Saturn cult? What qualitative existential difference will a change of religious allegiance from Saturn to the High God have made? If the pagans were indeed thinking that the gods (especially Saturn) were failing to provide a prosperity, what will have made them think differently about the Christian God? Considering the tension existing between pagans and Christians in respect of agrarian concerns found principally in Books One and Three of the *Adversus nationes*,\(^{312}\) and noting the tradition which Arnobius has received depicting God as the lord of the agrarian life, one may define the contemporary context of the conflict between Christianity and the Saturn cult by acknowledging first that Christianity had already begun to make itself felt in the rural communities outside Sicca Veneria:

> Vobis secundas tribuant (sc. dii) valetudines, adversas nobis ac pessimas. Opportunis imribus vestra irigent rura, pluviarum quicumque sunt rores nostris ab agellulis abignant. Lanitia curen vestra numerosis fretibus multiplicari, sterilitatem infas-tam nostris pecurii inferant. Ex olivis vestris atque vinetis plenam faciant autumnitatem fundi, at ex nostris exprimí unum prohibeant palmitis rorem.

(Adv. nat. 1.21.1-8)

It was upon those "rura", which were probably drought-stricken, that Saturn "cum obunca falce custos ruris" (Adv. nat. 6.12.6) was beginning to encounter sharp opposition from the Christian Church's concerted efforts to win the countryside.

But the existential questions remain.\(^{314}\) Before we offer possible answers, we must identify the underlying tradition that has informed the specific concept of deity of Arnobius which this study has analysed. It is most reasonable to rule out any direct Platonic or Stoic influence upon this aspect of Arnobius' conception of deity. The analysis found in the preceding chapter has firmly established that the same conclusion can be made about Epicureanism. Specifically concerning Stoicism, note Balbus ap. Cicero, *De nat. deor.* 1.v.13:

\(^{311}\) I am basing this statement upon the conclusions made supra, pp.207ff., concerning Arnobius' references to the contemporary agrarian situation in North Africa, which appears to have been characterised by drought and food shortages. This might have intermittently occurred during the period in which Arnobius was writing.

\(^{312}\) V. pp.210-45 supra. \(^{313}\) V. preceding page and the top of this page.
"Cleanthes quidem noster quattuor de causis dixit in animis hominum informatas deorum esse notiones." The second of these is benefits derived from a temperate climate, earth's fertility, and so forth. The third is awe inspired by lightning, storms, rain, snow, et cetera. Yet Stoic pantheism was based upon the concept that the mundus (earth) itself was a god: M. Aur., Med. 4.29; 4.40; 4.46; 8.50; 9.2; 12.28; Sen., De ben. 4.7.1.

We are thus thrown clearly back (as argued) upon Christian influence in attempting to explain the source of Arnobius' understanding of God as an agrarian deity. Cyprian's De bono patientiae appears to have been an immediate literary source. Yet since there existed within religious paganism similar beliefs which both antedated the arrival of Christianity to Roman North Africa and thus developed a tradition independent of its influence, it would certainly be prudent to suggest that Arnobius might very well have held such views as a pagan (with qualifications to be noted). And his existential involvement in the Saturn cult during his pre-Christian period is quite possible. In addition to Cyprianic literary and theological influence, a possible primary source of this tradition might have been homilies preached in the church at SV during hard agrarian times and heard by Arnobius, which were addressed to the farmers mentioned in Adv. nat. 1.21, some of whom were wealthy (1.16.20). There was possibly much at stake to be lost, much comforting of the congregation by its minister(s). And many like Arnobius could detect a sincerity in the sound of the voices heard in such gatherings (v. pp. 110 and 113 supra). The present writer would conjecture that pagi like Pagus Veneriensis (Koudiat-es-Souda) surrounding SV were under the direct episcopal supervision of the bishop of their principalis cathedra, and an organised evangelisation of these rural parishes at this time will have accentuated the Christian God's ability to improve the present uncomfortable predicament. If not, however, Christian temporal benevolence and eschatology might have brought well-being to many. One might further theorise that the De bono pat. was required catechetical reading, and in order to put him on the right path, the bishop advised Arnobius to read it (before formal instructions and the completion of his pledge of faith: v. pp. 101-5 supra). His prior experience thus influenced him to select and paraphrase De bono pat. 4 and incorporate it into his argument in the
agriculturally-significant passages of Books One and Three: the Christian God indiscriminately blesses the harvests of pagans and Christians. As we have seen in the analysis of Adv. nat. 3.24, this was a concept of deity which an intellectual *pagan* found more acceptable than that of the sectarian favouritism exemplified by the Saturn cult.

It is remarkable that a majority of the basic features of Arnobius' Christian concept of divine providence, which manifests a predominant agrarian relationship, could easily be interchanged with the same kinds of features pertaining to Saturn. It is as if one great military general who has instructed his troops as to the details of his strategy for the upcoming battle, suddenly dies, and another general takes his place. The latter has the same battle plan, the same basic military tactics as the commander whom he replaced. For example, note the total absence of Christ in all the passages analysed above.

There is no obvious need of an intermediary for the High God to bring about good harvests. One need not expect Arnobius to believe otherwise, for there appears to have always been a strong leaning within North African religious paganism towards monotheism. Indeed, monotheistic tendencies apparently go far back into prehistoric Berber religious culture, and Saturn himself was a sovereign deity and remained so evidently until the later phases of his reign, when his cult began to be syncretised more frequently than in earlier periods with other cults (v. pp. 246ff. *supra*). *Pater* denoted Saturn's pre-eminent rank within the Roman North African pantheon, and Arnobius' Christian *pater* is not indebted only to Platonism. It was a pagan religious concept which Saturninus of Thugga (Dougga) describes in Sent. Episcop. 52: "Gentiles quamvis idola colant, tamen summum Deum patrem creatorem cognoscunt et confitentur." The concept of Saturn the great and all-powerful divine king was easily assimilated to the Christian High God. And it would be superfluous to add to this stratum the interrelated agrarian concepts which have been noted already, and which both religious traditions had in common.

But in addition to similar concepts existing within both the Christian and Saturn cults, there were some differences as well, and I do not put as much weight upon 1.38.27 (v. pp. 232f. *supra*) as I have upon 1.30.6f. (v. pp. 232-8 *supra*): the former deals with Christ's role as the revealer of great knowledge; the latter is anti-Saturnian.
it is in the nature of these differences that one might find answers to the existential questions enumerated above (pp. 255f.). We may first refer to the concepts, very conspicuous in the Adv. nat., of the accessibility of the divine and the deity's personalised power, universal divine providence reaching beyond the confines of sectarian religious beliefs, and eschatology. Turning to the first concept, note that Burger (op. cit., 98) has argued that Arnobius' understanding of God as a personalised deity is unimaginable in Neoplatonic philosophy, and he adds: "Hier ist christlicher Einfluss unverkennbar zu bemerken." One may go further (v. esp. conclusions to Ch. III supra: pp. 195-8): the concept of an immanent deity found in a good number of passages in the Adversus nationes most often appears in the context of a discussion about Christian worship, usually prayer, and this connection predominates throughout most of the Arnobian epithets. This strongly suggests: (1) existential involvement in Christian worship (v. Ch. II, pp. 107-14 supra); and (2) the appeal of a Christian deity who was both sovereign and personalised. It was the latter aspect of the divine nature which Saturn lacked. And the reader may recall that we concluded above (p. 197) that the appeal of a personalised deity is one of the most conspicuous of Arnobius' Christian understanding of God. It is therefore quite significant, in light of the comparison of Christian and Saturnian religious concepts given in this chapter, that Leglay (SAH, 486) has referred to the supremacy of the African Saturn (i.e., within the African pantheon) which entailed a distance from humans as one strength of the god. But it was also his weakness (so says Leglay): the inaccessibility of the deity led quite probably to his downfall.

The accessibility of the deity is the most prominent feature of the Christian tradition about God which Arnobius has received. Again, this concept, as noted already, is frequently found in passages containing a reference to worship, especially prayer. And if the individual pagan began to believe that a deity could be both omnipotent and immanent, it might well have made the existential difference to justify a change in his/her religious allegiance. For Arnobius it apparently did.

If we add to this concept of the personalised deity the belief that the latter's providence was not restricted (as in the Saturn cult) to his own devotees but is universally available as his indiscriminate acts on behalf of all humanity's material well-being, we might reason-
ably conclude, as Arnobius himself has done in Adv. nat. 3.24, that
the equality of all vis-a-vis the great and powerful "rex poli"
(3.24.8f.) was a concept which was intellectually more reputable.
Its tangible, practicable effects were undoubtedly achieved in the
Christian concern to see temporal salus come to all. We are not
going beyond evidence derived from Arnobius, for the neophyte claims
that the members of his new religion are "sharers of their own sub-
stance, and united by the bonds of kinship with all on whom the sun
shines" (McCr: 4.36).

The final concept concerns eschatology. We have not covered
this in our study, but we do analyse its function in Arnobius' soter-
iology in Chapter VI. Suffice it to observe here that his understand-
ing of "salvation" is predominantly eschatological: Arnobius evinces
a clear and strong belief in the munus immortalitatis, given by the
High God. It was a concept that was not so clear, well defined, and
personalised in the Saturn cult. And an emphasis upon the reality of
a better existence in the hereafter makes sense in light of the (prob-
ably) unpleasant agrarian situation in Roman North Africa contemporan-
eous with Arnobius.
THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST AND THE MORTALITY OF THE GODS: ARNOBIUS' RESPONSE TO PORPHYRY'S HEcateAN ORACLE AND COMMENTARY.

The State Of Research: Porphyry, 'Viri Novi', And Arnobius.

Early this century Bousset suggested that a Hermetic and Neopythagorean group formed the main adversaries of Adversus nationes 2.13.1 One year later Kroll argued that Porphyry was the principal source of Adv. nat. 2.2 Jerome Carcopino later attempted to identify the viri novi of Adv. nat. 2.15.2f. as Hermetists who followed both Pythagoras and Plato.3 A. J. Festugière then postulated that the viri novi comprised a heterogeneous Gnostic sect which adhered to Hermetic, Oriental Gnostic, Neopythagorean, and Neoplatonic doctrines.4 The pendulum again swung towards Porphyry when Pierre Courcelle discovered several literary parallels existing between extant fragments of the Katà Χριστιανῶν and a number of passages in Adv. nat. 2.13-57.5

And we should not forget Bidez in respect of the Arnobius-Porphyry connection, who also early this century noticed a correspondence between Adv. nat. 2.13 and 2.62, both of which deal with "magic," and De Civitate Dei 10.9, which relates to Porphyrian theurgy derived from De regressu animae. M. Mazza later modified Festugière's thesis: the viri novi were a homogeneous Gnostic sect heavily indebted to Iranian (i.e., Zoroaster et al.) ideology, and Numenius probably served as mediator. The most recent work done on the problem is the fundamental article of Ernest L. Fortin. Interpreting the novi of Adv. nat. 2.15.2 chronologically, Fortin argues that it is reasonable to search for possible literary parallels in the writings of the period immediately succeeding Arnobius. Such writers as Cassiodorus (De an.) and Nemesius (De nat. hom.) provide evidence that Arnobius is attacking a Neoplatonic group in Book Two. This corroborated Courcelle's thesis (1953) by demonstrating (inter alia) the presence of Porphyrian philosophical metaphors (clavus, gluten) in the same Book. Only five years before the publication of Fortin's article, P. Hadot had also noticed a good number of literary parallels in Porphyry, Arnobius, and Marius Victorinus (v. Ch. III, p. 134, supra). All the aforementioned works have the following in common: (1) they are restricted to Book Two and (2) they mainly focus upon the identity of the viri novi named in Adv. nat. 2.15.2f.

6 J. Bidez, Vie de Porphyre le philosophe néo-platonicien. Gand, 1913, 160.
9 Art. cit., 204f.: One weakness is that he accepts without question McCr's dating (+A.D. 300) of the text.
13 The present study accepts as valid the arguments/observations of Kroll, Bidez, Courcelle, Hadot, and Fortin as they apply to the Porphyry-Arnobius connection.
However, notwithstanding a few very beneficial remarks made by O'Meara and Wilken, the question whether Porphyry might be the principal opponent (or the inspiration of opponents) in certain sections of Adv. nat. 1, has not been investigated. Two important considerations arise. First, if Porphyry is the main enemy who receives the attack upon Neoplatonic anthropocentric soteriology of Adv. nat. 2, it is worthwhile investigating the possibility that some of his anti-Christian propaganda might be present in Book One. Also, a logical method of investigating this possibility in respect of any Book of the Adv. nat. should include an analysis of Eusebius' PE and DE, the two Christian works (the former more than the latter) which contain more fragments of Porphyry's anti-Christian works than any other source. For it can be legitimately assumed that if Eusebius and Arnobius, who were contemporaries, both had Porphyry as a common enemy, and Eusebius' PE and DE contain the Porphyrian fragments noted, then it is quite possible that Eusebius may shed further light upon the Arnobius-Porphyry connection. We shall also keep in mind for our enquiries in this chapter and the following chapter the significance of Augustine's De Civitate Dei.


16 Cf. McCr, 249, n.143: "...it seems reasonably clear that in Book One he is answering only actual objections." J.R. Laurin, "Orientations maîtresses des apologistes chretiens de 270 à 361", AnGreg 61, Rome, 1954, 146-85, argues that the opponents of Book One are fanatical priests zealously devoted to the religious mos maiorum and in charge of transmitting the gods' will via the oracles to men (pp.167ff.). LeB, 196, associates "nonnullos" of Adv. nat. 1.1.1 with "novis...viris" of 2.15.2f. I agree, but am not as sympathetic to Festugière's argument as Le Bonniec is.

17 Although Porphyry stressed more than Plotinus man's need of divine aid in the salvific process (ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς σωτηρία:the goal of philosophy), he yet "retains an intellectualist and anthropocentric view of human relations with the divine." Andrew Smith, Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition. The Hague, 1974, 104.
Introductory Remarks: Porphyry.

First it is necessary to give the chronological information related to the contemporaries, Arnobius and Porphyry. For Arnobius, it was concluded that the Adversus nationes was written in the period of late A.D. 302 to sometime before the end of 305 (v. Ch. I supra). Maxxoc (Βασιλεύς) was born at Tyre on the 5th of October A.D. 234, and may have been a Christian at one time in his early life. It was during his study at Athens that Longinus changed his name to Porphyry. In July or August 263 he became the disciple of Plotinus in Rome. In August 268 due to suicidal tendencies, Plotinus advised him to go on holiday. He responded positively and went to Lilybaeum, Sicily, and there he heard of his master's death in July or August 270. He died c. 305 shortly after he published the Enneads.


20 There was a similar tradition about Ammonius, denied by Eusebius (HE 6.19.7-10). Porphyry's more than ordinary knowledge about Christianity might suggest an early involvement in the faith. Yet the Ep. An. provides evidence that in his pre-Plotinian period (i.e., before 263) he was already intensely interested in comparative religious studies (cf. Vit. Plot. xvi). Augustine remarks that Porphyry was involved in the faith in Civ. Dei 10.28, but nowhere else implies this. Socrates (HE III.23.37: PG 67.445) says that he left the Church because certain Christians assaulted him at Caesarea in Palestine. Bidez, op. cit., 11, n.2, correctly observes that Vincent of Lerin's remark (Comm. xvi. PL 50.663) that Porphyry and Origin met when old is an interpolation of Eus., HE 6.19.5. Bidez (p.7) rejects the story of his Christian background. A.D. Nock, Conversion. The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo. Oxford, 157; W.H.C. Frend (1981 repr.), 524, n.56; and Barnes (1981), 175, accept it as possible.

21 Eunapius, Vit. Soph. 456. 22 Vit. Plot. iv. 23 Ibid., xi.

22 Eunapius, Vit. Soph. 456. 22 Vit. Plot. iv. 23 Ibid., xi.

24 Dodds, art. cit. (OCD), 864, gives this date. Cf. however, Bouffartigue-Patillon, op. cit., xiii: "On ignore combien d'Années lui restaient à vivre." (i.e., after the publication of the Enneads); Barnes (1981), 175.

25 Armstrong (LCL: Enn.), ix, suggests between 301-5; Bouffartigue-Patillon, op. cit., xiii, agree with J. Igal, La cronologia de la vida de Plotino de Porfirio. Madrid, 1972, 126: terminus a quo=300. I mainly follow T.D. Barnes, "The Chronology of Plotinus' Life", GRBS 17, 1976, 65-70, for the above dates, with the exception of the date of Porphyry's birth, a problem which was not related to his topic.
Porphyry was apparently a polymath. He wrote between fifty-seven and seventy-seven works\textsuperscript{26} on topics as diverse as embryology,\textsuperscript{27} vegetarianism,\textsuperscript{28} an allegorical interpretation of Homer,\textsuperscript{29} and many other philosophical and religious works.\textsuperscript{30} It may have been due to his insatiable thirst for knowledge both practical and theoretical that he left Lilybaeum for North Africa, perhaps to do zoological research in Carthage for the \textit{De abstinencia.}\textsuperscript{31} As for his Nachleben, this "chain of Hermes let down to mortals,\textsuperscript{32} had a more profound effect upon Latin philosophical speculation in the West than his master, and such men as Chalcidius, Marius Victorinus, and Boethius came under his sway.\textsuperscript{33} He still had very devoted followers in St. Augustine's day in North Africa.\textsuperscript{34}

There is still not a consensus about the date of Porphyry's \textit{Καὶ ἔρημος}, which is translated by Latin writers as either \textit{Contra} or \textit{Adversus Christianos},\textsuperscript{35} but Barnes' theory that it appears to have

\textsuperscript{26}Dodds, art. cit. (OCD), 864, does not disagree with Bidez's no. of 77 for the Porphyrian corpus of works; R. Butler, "Porphyrios", PW 22.1, col.276, suggests 57 according to Suidas' titles, surviving texts, and ancient writers who mention Porphyry's writings. Bouffartigue-Patillon, op. cit., xiiif., agree with Beutler. See the former, xiv-xvii for the recent eds. of various works.

\textsuperscript{27}I agree with Bouffartigue-Patillon, xv, on the Porphyrian authorship of the \textit{Ad Gaurum}. Dodds, art. cit. (OCD), 864, says Porphyry probably wrote it rather than the second century physician Galen.

\textsuperscript{28}\textit{De abstinencia.} \textsuperscript{29}\textit{De antro nympharum.} This covers Od. xiii. 102-12. V. Bouffartigue-Patillon, op. cit., xiv, for the latest edition and translation.

\textsuperscript{30}Eunapius, Vit. Soph. 457, notes that there was no branch of learning which he neglected.

\textsuperscript{31}The reasons why he went to North Africa and how long he stayed there are unknown. He was in Carthage, however, long enough to rear a Partridge: \textit{Ἡμεῖς γὰρ υἱὸν κατὰ Καρυγήδων, πέριδικος ἐμπιστόντος ημῶν, τρίφωνες τούτον...} (Abst. 3.4.7). Bouffartigue-Patillon, op. cit., xviii, suggest the date 268-71 for the Carthage trip.

\textsuperscript{32}Eunapius, Vit. Soph. 457. \textsuperscript{33}V. Copleston, op. cit., 227f.; Hadot's books (1968, 1971); Fortin's article (n.8 supra); and P. Courcelle, \textit{Late Latin Writers and Their Greek Sources}. Trans., H.E. Weidck. Cambridge, Mass., 1969, 33-46.

\textsuperscript{34}Civ. Dei 10.29. This explains the number of passages devoted to attacking Porphyrian doctrines in the Civ. Dei. This will be brought out in this chapter and the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Adversus} (cf. Gk. \textit{Καὶ}) is often favoured by Jerome, e.g. Comm. in Gal., prolog. (PL 26.371f., Harnack CC fr. no.21); cf. \textit{Contra} in Aug., Ep. 102.8, Harnack CC fr. no.81.

\textsuperscript{36}A.B. Hulen, \textit{Porphyry's Work Against The Christians: An Inter-
been composed at the end of the third/beginning of the fourth century has much to commend it.\(^{37}\) If this date is correct, the CC may very well have had a close connection with the persecution. Of the original fifteen Books, only a few fragments survive, and among these scholars for a long time have not been in agreement whether Harnack's attribution of fifty-one passages of Macarius Magnes' Apocriticus to the CC are genuinely Porphyrian.\(^{38}\) Yet of the twenty-seven studies that have been made of the Apocriticus since the ninth century, R. Goulet's thesis (1974: the last study) submitted at the University of Paris and supervised by P. Hadot, has made it fairly certain that M. Magnes used the CC in the work.\(^{39}\) This has corrected Barnes' Draconian efforts to dispense with all fifty-two fragments of M. Magnes identified as preservation of 'something of the tenor and arguments of Against the Christians, but only indirectly, 


\(^{39}\) R. Goulet, Makarios Magnès. Monogenès (Apocriticus). Introduction générale, édition, traduction et commentaire du Livre IV ainsi que des fragments des Livres IV et V. Thesis, University of Paris, 1974, 2 vols, I, 287: "Si l'on tient compte des conditions de transmission des vestiges du traité de Porphyre et de la possibilitè de retouches importants du text des objections de la part de Makarios, on ne d'empressera pas de tomber dans l'hypocriticisme qui consisterais à refuser toute dépendance des objections de Monogenès à l'égard du Contra Christianos sous pretexte que nous ne parvenons pas a des parallèles absolument identiques." Goulet has identified no less than twenty-three parallels existing between the Apocr. and fragments of the CC found in other sources.
from a later writer or later writers who used Porphyry. To compound problems, one is entirely dependent upon Christian opponents of Porphyry for the fragments. Such writers as Eusebius, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Methodius of Olympus, and Philostorgius wrote refutations of the CC. Having already been condemned by Constantine, the CC was ordered by Theodosius II and Valentinian III to be burnt in 448.

The chronology of other Porphyrian works which can be classified as anti-Christian in character has not been established. Concerning the Περί τῆς ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας (=Phil. or.), a work which is significant for this chapter and the following chapter, a good number of scholars has suggested a pre-Plotinian (before 263) date for this defence of Hellenistic religious culture. Others have placed its publication in the post-Plotinian period. Thus O'Meara has suggested that it was written after 268, and Phil. or. and De reg. an. are one and the same work. Years ago Chadwick suggested that Porphyry's remark about having been called away on business of the Greeks (Καλοῦσις ἐὰν τῶν Ἑλλήνων χρείας) appearing in Ad Marc. 4, may have been due to Diocletian's request that he prepare a defence of traditional religion against the Christians. Wilken maintains that Phil. 40


42 V. "Methodius of Olympus", ODCC, 910; Jerome, Comm. in Matt. 24.16ff. (SC: Bonnard)=Harn. CC fr. no.44, says that Eusebius and Apollinaris each wrote three books. For Eus., v. now Barnes (1981), 174ff., esp. his remark that Eusebius' Against Porphyry "must have been an ephemeral and hasty work." (p.175); I shall come back to this crucial comment.

43 Soc., HE 1.9.30; Cod. Theod. 15.5.66=CJ 1.5.6. 44 CJ 1.1.3.


46 Op. cit., 35ff. 47 Henry Chadwick, The Sentences of Sextus. A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics. TS 5. Cambridge, 1959, 142: "...a strange and cryptic phrase which may perhaps mean that he had been invited to attend the confidential deliberations which preceded the launching of the persecution of the Church under Diocletian in 303. (Porphyry would be a natural person to consult about such a project, as the author of several formidable books against the Christians.)"
or. resulted from the trip, and the "priest of philosophy" who wrote three books against the Christians mentioned by Lactantius (Div. inst. 5.2) is Porphyry, and Chadwick has noted that this identification is possible.\(^47\) Wilken has rather ingeniously suggested that the three books refer to the Phil. or. rather than the CC.\(^48\) Finally, there is disagreement also as to whether the Phil. or. included Chaldaean Oracles: Dodds and Des Places say no,\(^49\) and Lewy and O'Meara say yes.\(^50\) The present writer has accepted the latter over the former.

An Introduction To The Argument Related To The Divinity Of Christ: Porphyry, Eusebius, And Augustine.

It appears that the CC, the Περὶ τῆς οἰκογενειακῆς φιλοσοφίας, and the De regressu animae have provided fuel for the Arnobian fire of Book One (to varying extents). "The Church won by answering Porphyry out of Porphyry, employing his own methods against himself with amazing effectiveness."\(^51\) Although Hulen did not have Arnobius in mind when he wrote this, it appears that Porphyry's Hecatean Oracle derived from Phil. or. rejects the divinity of Christ and depicts the Christians as foolish infidels, has given the African professor a particularly important axe to grind:


'Ecto, non sequitur, sed quod factum est in mortem factum est, quod imitatur bona praedicationis, et non est non est in auctoritate divina praedicationis, et non est in auctoritate divina praedicationis.'

Eusebius, DE 3.7. PG XXII (Eus. 4) 236f.

"Παραδεξόμεθα τοις ἀδέξιοις τῶν τισιν εἶναι τὸ μέλλον λέγειν μετά τῆς ἁμών. Τὸν γὰρ Χριστὸν οἱ θεοὶ εὐθείας τοις αἰωνιόνιοι καὶ αἰωνίοις διάθεσαν γεγονότα, εὐφημῶς τε αὐτοῦ.

\(^47\) Wilken (1979), 131; Chadwick, op. cit., 143 and n.l.

\(^48\) Wilken (1979), 131; Chadwick, op. cit., believes that the mention of three books (rather than 15, thus describing the CC) weakens the Porphyrian connection in Div. inst. 5.2.3: v. his suggestion on p.143, n.l. I do not understand why Wilken (125) argues that DE was not written against Porphyry.


\(^50\) Lewy, COTh, 4: Chaldaean Oracles formed the nucleus of Phil or. Cf. O'Meara, 35-8.

\(^51\) Hulen, op. cit., 54, on the CC. Most studies of Porphyry's anti-Christian arguments concentrate on the CC, and as Wilken (1979: 118f.) notes, the Phil. or. is often ignored.
Eusebius is attempting to exonerate Christ from the charge that he was simply a charlatan, and the parallel texts clearly reveal the Porphyrian dirt that he has swept under the rug. Thus he does not inform his readers that the Christians are involved in error, that they worship Jesus' soul because they are estranged from truth. He does say they are ignorant. More importantly, he deletes entirely the Porphyrian commentary which unequivocally discloses the Neoplatonists' true thoughts about the holy man Jesus: the latter is directly responsible for causing the Christians to be entangled in error and thus to be cut off completely from acquiring any knowledge of immor-
tal Jupiter. He ignores the remark that the gods hate Christians because they were prevented by fate from receiving the gifts of the gods and acquiring knowledge of "God." The latter undoubtedly is a reference to the High God who appears in the fragments of the Phil. or. ap. PE. This man, so Porphyry interpreted the oracle in Civ. Dei 19.23, gave the Christians the fatal gift of entanglement in error. From him they dangerously fall. Some scholars who studied the above oracle/commentary had already amazed De Labriolle: Geффken believed that Porphyry did not attack Christ himself; Harnack said that he was a devotee of Christ; Bidez, a noble conciliation which Christians themselves could accept. And the French scholar asked a question which has apparently gone unnoticed: "on doit se demander si cette bienveillance apparente ne prepare pas une tactique hostile." De Labriolle was apparently the first to observe that Eusebius only gives Porphyry's criticisms of the Christians. Yet Wilken has recently argued that "Porphyry sought to give Jesus a place within his religious scheme." Barnes has also maintained that "Many years before he wrote Against the Christians, even before he became a pupil of Plotinus, he had composed On Philosophy from Oracles in three books, which depicted Jesus in a far more favorable light." Both scholars fail to analyse Apollo's oracle which found praiseworthy Jesus' condemnation to the cross as the result of judges whose verdict was just (Civ. Dei 19.23), the fine points of the commentary upon the Hecatean oracle given by Porphyry, and the contradictions existing between Apollo's oracle and that of Hecate, not to mention the criticism of Porphyry's real intention given by Augustine. The best recent analysis of the Hecatean oracle is that made by O'Meara:

The burden, however, of the text cited is that Christ in the opinion of the oracle was not God. He was piissimus, pietate praestantissimus, and again piissimus and pius; his soul was immortal as were the souls of all pii; but his body shared forever the fate of all bodies. So far was he from having any special union with Wisdom, that

53 Wilken (1979), 123; also id. (1984), 152f.
54 Barnes (1981), 175. It is inaccurate to state that he wrote many years before he became Plotinus' disciple. If one argues that the concepts found in the fragments of Phil. or. reflect a pre-Plotinian mentality, one may note (1) that Porphyry had to write an "Apologia pro
he merited condemnation for having misled his followers: *illa uero anima aliis animabus fataliter dedit errore implicari*. The emphasis at once on Christ's 'piety' and *nothing more* is remarkable. (op. cit., 53)

Eusebius apparently defended against the accusation that Christ was a magician in DE 3.7 by distancing himself as far as possible from the argument put forward by Porphyry that Jesus was responsible for the disciples' entanglement in error. He quotes Porphyry out of context and undoubtedly felt justified by doing so because his adversary had similarly attacked the Christians by misconstruing the literary texts upon which their religious beliefs had been based. And one such principal belief was the deity of Christ, clearly attacked and rejected in both oracle and commentary. The reason that Eusebius deleted the bad stuff from the passage was to use Porphyry's "praise" of Christ to defend against the charge that he had been a sorcerer. Is it possible that such a great defender of Christ's divinity simply ignored the Porphyrian rejection of it? The answer is no. In DE 3.6 (end) he introduces Porphyry by emphasising Christ's holiness, wisdom, and ascension. The Hecatean oracle follows (3.7). He then launches a detailed defence of Christ's divinity: he who conceived nothing mortal or human (*μηδὲν θυνίον καὶ ἀνθρώπινον*) told his disciples to make disciples of all nations (3.7: PG 22.240). At the end of 4.10 he affirms that Jesus was born like us and arrayed with mortality, he was God and as one who was not man (PG 22.281). Towards the end of the following book he reaches his climax, and the way in which he constructs his phrases indicates that the Hecatean rejection of Christ's deity is the object of his attack: 'Εν θαυμα καὶ διὰ τούτων ὁ Θεὸς λόγος ἐναθρωπήσας πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους αὐτὸν ἀγίον, ἀλλ' οὐ Θεὸν εἶναι ὁμολογοῦντας: "Θεὸς ἐγώ εἰμι, φησί, καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρωπος ἐν σοι ἀγίος" (5.22: PG 22.404: citing Hosea 11.9).

In De cons. evan. 1.7.11, Augustine refers to pagans who speak of Jesus Christ as having possessed the most distinguished wisdom, but only as a man. His disciples claimed more for their master than he actually was by calling him God:

*...qui dominum ipsum Iesum Christum culpare aut blasphemare non audent eique tribuunt excellentissimam sapientiam, sed tamquam homini, discipulos vero eius dicunt magistro suo amplius tribuisse quam erat, ut eum filium dei dicerent*

*Nuptis Suis* (so Chadwick, op. cit., 143) in the midst of criticism that he had deviated from Plotinus' doctrine (v. 2.42, n.169); and (2) his attempts to bring the *via salutis* to the non-philosopher, already present in Phil. or., nullifies the method of dating a Porphyrian work on the grounds of "intellectual development" alone.
et verbum dei... et ipsum ac deum patrem unum esse, honorandum enim tamquam sapientissimum virum putant, colendum autem tamquam deum negant.

They desire evidence that Christ is God (De cons. evan. 1.8.13), yet acknowledge him to be the wisest of men (Ibid.). Augustine calls this an unworthy praise of Christ (1.14.22). Porphyry is described as a vain eulogizer of Christ. The disciples lied when they said that Christ was God: he was nothing more than a man of exalted wisdom. His disciples taught something totally different from what he had taught them (1.34.52). It appears that the Hecatean oracle and Porphyry's commentary were important weapons of the anti-Christian propaganda of Porphyry published sometime before the Diocletianic Persecution, and it was still powerfully influential in North Africa during Augustine's day.

Worthy of mention is a similar oracle given by Lactantius, which is most probably Porphyrian, and it was uttered by the Milesian Apollo. The argument that Jesus was simply a mortal continued in the CC. One example is Porphyry's attempt to play off the λόγος προφορικός against the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος. Jesus was neither, hence he was not λόγος at all. But the argument began with Phil. or., a work whose anti-Christian character has not been acknowledged by modern scholarship, although the evidence above suggests otherwise. And the following list of Porphyrian works found in PE supports this interpretation:

1. PE 1.2.1-4 (SC): CC fr. 1 Harn.
2. PE 1.4.7 (SC)=Abst. 4.21.
3. PE 1.9.7-10 (SC)=Abst. 2.5.
4. PE 1.9.11 (SC)=Abst. 2.7.
5. PE 1.9.21 (SC): CC fr. 41 Harn. (Bk. 4 of CC).
7. PE 3.4.12 (SC)=Abst. 4.9.
8. PE 3.4.13f. (SC)=Abst. 4.9.
11. PE 3.9.1-5 (SC)=De cult. sim.=Fr. 3, Bidez (3*7-7*4).
12. PE 3.11.1 (SC)=De cult. sim.=Fr. 4, Bidez (7*5-7).
13. PE 3.11.4-10 (SC)=De cult. sim.=Fr. 5, Bidez (7*8-8*2).
14. PE 3.11.7 (SC)=De cult. sim.=Fr. 6, Bidez (8*3-13).
15. PE 3.11.9-16=De cult. sim.=Fr. 7, Bidez (9*1-11*13).
16. PE 3.11.22-44 (SC)=De cult. sim.=Fr. 8, Bidez (11*14-18*9).

55 Div. inst. 4.13.11. 56 Theophilact, Enarr. in evan. S. Ioan. 12 (PG 124.1, col.1141=Harn. CC fr. no.86): Εἰ γὰρ λόγος, φθορίς, ἢ τίς τοῦ θεοῦ, ἢ προφορικὸς ἐστὶν ἢ ἐνδιάθετος ἀλλὰ μὴν οὗτος τούτο, οὗτε ἐκείνοι ὀφθαλμοί δὲ συν γὰρ λόγος ἐστίν. Nullifying the Johannine λόγος in this
way was tantamount to accentuating his mortality. The same motive is found in Epiphanius, Adv. haer. 51.8 (PG 41.902=Harn. CC fr. no. 12), where Porphyry analyses the contradictions of the birth narratives of Mt. 2.3 and Lk. 2.39; cf. Aug., Ep. 102.28 (=Harn. CC fr. no. 85): Solomon said that God did not have a son; cf. Jerome, Ep. 57.9 (=Harn. CC fr. no. 2): Porphyry maintains that there is a contradiction between Mt. 1.22f. and Is. 7.14, obviously proving why an intellectual should reject the story of the Virgin Birth as nonsense.
The number of citations from each work appearing in the list above can be given as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Citations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acr. in philol.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>CC</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Ep. ad Boeth. de an.</td>
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<td>Ep. An.</td>
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<td>Cult. sim.</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abst.</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phil. or.</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Note that the CC is in second place for the least number of citations. This may suggest that Porphyry's main method of attack in the CC was to criticise Christian beliefs by using the Bible against his opponents. It would appear, therefore, that Eusebius may have used Porphyry to attack Porphyry, especially since he sometimes uses the Abst. against the Phil. or. to attempt to demonstrate that the Neoplatonist often contradicted himself. It is the same method revealed in the extant CC fragments which Porphyry used. Eusebius also uses a Platonic text (i.e., from Plato) against Porphyry, and the goal of this attack appears to have been to prove that there was a great difference between the doctrines of master and disciple, the same argument which Porphyry
used in order to drive a wedge of credibility between Christ and his followers. And the same kinds of methods of attacking Porphyry are found in Augustine's anti-Porphyrian works, and in Arnobius' attack upon his opponent's positions. A tentative conclusion can be made from an analysis of the contents of the aforementioned Porphyrian fragments: the Phil. or. appears to have been a doubly dangerous piece of literature for the Christians: it was constructive in that it offered a two-way soteriology to the pagans (i.e., one for philosophers; the other for non-philosophers), and it was critical in that it struck at the central concept of Christian views of salvation (i.e., by rejecting the deity of Christ). According to Augustine, the main motive of both oracles (i.e., of Apollo and Hecate) was to prevent people from becoming Christians.57

In the προείμον of Book One (Περὶ Θεῶν) of Phil. or. Porphyry made it clear that the oracles provided the one sure source of σωτηρία.58 The Hecatean oracle came from Book Three, Περὶ Ηρῶν, and the final two sections covered Christ and the ignorance of the Christians, respectively.59 Porphyry explicitly stated that the gods had now revealed the truth to humans.60 The soteriological argument, albeit from an educated pagan's point of view, of both oracle and commentary is clear. First, on the question si Deus (sc. Iesus) est, the answer is an unconditional no. Second, it therefore follows that Christ was simply a human being. Christ was human, and therefore mortal, in both anima and corpus (v. p. 269 supra).61 Yet Porphyry goes further. By describing Christ as a pious human "sicet et aliorum piorum", and who is subordinate to the fates, he is not only nullifying the divinity of Christ and thus - and this appears to have been his main goal - invalidating any salvific benefits (dona) which may result from worshipping him, he seems also to be tactfully positing that Christ was in need (or had been at one time in need) of salvation.62 For according to Porphyry

57 Civ. Dei 19.23: "Una est tamen et illius et huius intentio, ut nolint homines esse Christianos, quia, nisi Christiani erunt, ab eorum eruit potestate non poterunt."

58 PE 4.7: Βεβαιος δε και μονιμος δ ενεχεθεν ως αυ ικ μου βεβαιου τας ξενιας του αωηναι ζυντονως. Wolff, op. cit., 42f., gives the arrangement of the three books of Phil. or.

59 V. Wolff, 38-43, esp.43. 60 PE 4.7. 61 Cf. also PE 5.1.

62 Cf. now p.263, n.17 supra. Porphyry also refers to the σωτηριον θεου in the Ad Marc.
in Phil. or., the gods themselves were not exempt from nor superior to the power of the fates, an idea which may well have derived from Chaldaean theology. Eusebius mocks Porphyry's subordinating the gods to the fates (PE 6.1) because they differ in no way from other men and therefore do not reveal any work of a higher divine nature. After quoting an oracle that enslaves Zeus to the fates, Eusebius advises his opponents to confess the Lord of fate who can effect a change (6.3). Porphyry maintains that the deliverance from the bonds of fate is a gift of the gods (6.4). Eusebius concludes: there is nothing divine in this (PE 6.6). Only the initiated are delivered from the bonds of ἐμαμένα, according to Porphyry. The logic of this theology would therefore have it that Jesus was not only a mortal, but something like a second class one subject to the fates like the rest of the uninitiated masses. It makes sense to find that after he has complimented Jesus the wise man, Porphyry goes on to demonstrate that he did not offer any new or significant religious truth that the pious pagan could not already receive from worshipping the gods. We know from Proclus and Lydus that according to Chaldaean theology, the practicing theurgist was not subject to the law of ἐμαμένα. Arnobius has apparently attacked this concept in 2.62.1-6:

Neque illud obrepata aut spe vobis aeria blandiatur, quod ab sciolis nonnullis et plurimum sibi adrogantibus dicitur, deo esse se gnatos nec fati obnoxios legibus, si vitam restrictum, aulam sibi eius patere, ac post hominis functionem prohibente se nullo tamquam in sedem referri patritam... By subordinating Christ and his followers to the fates, Porphyry classified both in the common masses who needed to acquire immortality through theurgical elevation prescribed by Chaldaean theology.

63 V. COTH, 451f. 64 Civ. Dei 19.23: after acknowledging that Jesus forbade men to pay heed to the evil demons, Porphyry adds: "Hoc autem,...et dii praecipuit et in superioribus ostendimus, quem ad modum animum advertere ad Deum moment et illum colere ubique imperant."

65 Tim. 3.266.18=COTH, 212, n.142: νοθάσαει (sc. οἱ φυσάι) τα ἔργα του πατρος: μοῖρας + ἐμαμένης + τὸ περὶ φεύγουσιν ἀναίδες, ὡς φησίν τὸ λόγιον.

66 Mens. 2.10: τὰ ἀποκαθίσταμένας φυσάς ὑπερβαίνειν τὴν ἐμαμένην φοι τὸ λόγιον, οὐ γὰρ ὑπὲ ρ ἐμαμένης ἀγέλην τίποτα θεουργοί.

67 O'Meara, op. cit., 146, was the first to suggest an association between the Phil. or. and this passage. The "aulam" has an exact parallel with a number of Chaldaean theological texts: v. pp.180f. supra. V. COTH, 212f. and 266, for the soteriological argument related to fate.
Hence Porphyry's statement in the commentary (Civ. Dei 19.23), "pius et in caelum, sicut pii", makes sense in light of this interpretation. The locating of Jesus' soul "in caelum" is strongly suggestive of Chaldaean theological influence, according to which those souls of the common masses did not ascend to the highest (i.e., the Noetic) sphere where the highest and supreme deity exists, but rather only to the astral gods (C0Th, 452; Civ. Dei 10.9, referring to De reg. an.). Now by positing that all followers of Christ are fated not to receive *dona deorum* and knowledge of Zeus, Porphyry is essentially arguing that Christ did not provide such benefits during his earthly life. His fatal gift to his followers - to be contrasted with the salvific gifts which the gods give their worshippers - is therefore entanglement in error (Civ. Dei 19.23: "errore implicari"), guidance away from the truth (Ib.: "hanc colunt aliena a se veritate"), and disaster (Ib.: "periculum"). Hence Christianity is anti-salvific in propagating the need to worship a dead mortal: "ex eo (sc. Christo) in eis facile praecepsque periculum" (Civ. Dei 19.23). According to Augustine, both oracle and commentary had continued to play a significant role in anti-Christian Neoplatonic propaganda in the North Africa of his time. He concluded that Porphyry's argument was reminiscent of the Photinian heretic "qui tantummodo hominem, non etiam Deum noverit Christum."  

A New Investigation: Porphyry And 'Adversus Nationes' 1.

In turning to Arnobius, every premise of the Hecatean Oracle and (more importantly) Porphyrian commentary is attacked in Adv. nat. 1.34-47. In this section Arnobius attempts to prove the divinity of Christ against the charge that he was only *mortalis* by emphasising his super-human *munera* (or *dona*) given to humanity and his superiority over the fates. Arnobius prefaces his argument by stressing Jupiter's mortality: how can this god claim worship when in fact he was born like all humans? The pagans did not need to take pride in their worship of Jupiter because he was "in utero matris suae formatus" (1.34.17). The divine  

68 The "fataliter dedit" clearly implicates Christ for feigning divinity and being responsible for cutting off his followers from "deorum dona" and "Iovis agnitionem." Contra Wilken and Barnes: v. p.270, nn. 53f. supra.  

epithet "fons rerum" is Chaldaean (v. pp. 133f., supra), with which we should compare DE 4.1 (PG 22.252): "Bouληθείς γάρ ὁ θεός ὑπε
μόνος ὡς ἄγαθος ἄγαθοῦ τε παντὸς ἄρχη καὶ κηνή; and Adv. nat. 2.2.
12-15: "An ulla est religio verior...quam deum principem nosse,...
qui bonorum omnium solus caput et fons est", both of which should be compared with the Chaldaean passages appearing above, pp. 133f.
We note that in Adv. nat. 1.34 the Christian High God has conveniently replaced Jupiter's father (Saturn), being given some Saturnian epithets (v. p. 240 supra). His argument is: if the gods are hostile towards the Christians alone, neither they nor the pagans know God. 72 Arnobius later says the same thing about Jupiter that Porphyry said about Christ. 73 Also, as O'Meara himself has acutely pointed out, Book One begins by refuting the use of oracles used in the attack upon Christianity. 74 A principal pagan charge against the Christians which Arnobius retorts throughout Books 3-7, appears in Adv. nat. 1.36.1-6:

Sed non, inquit, idcirco dii vobis infesti sunt, quod omni-
nipotentem colatis deum, sed quod hominem natum et, 75 quod personis infame est vilibus, crucis supplicio inter-
emptum et deum fuisse contenditis et superesse adhuc cre-
ditis et cotidianis supplicationibus adoratis.

72 Adv. nat. 1.35.7-11: "Etenim si una religio est nobis vobisque
communis, cessat ira caelestium: sin nobis infesti sint solis, mani-
festum est nescire et vos et illos deum, quem Iovem non esse ipsis
clarum est indignationibus numinum."

73 Cf. I. Opelt's sagacious remark in "Schimpfwörter bei Arnobius
dem XInteren", WS n.f. 9, 1975, 161-73, p.163: "Bei der Kritik an der
Konzeption der Einzeltoter nimmt Juppiter eine Sonderstellung ein."
Note that he is subordinated to the fates in 5.14.24f.

74 O'Meara, op. cit., 146, suggests that Adv. nat. 1.1 is associat-
ed with Phil. or.: "Quoniam comperi nonnullus, qui se plurimum sapere
suis persuasionibus credunt, insanire, Bacchari et velut quidam promp-
tum ex oraculo dicere: postquam esse in mundo Christiana gens coepect,
terrarum orbe perisse, multiformibus malis affectum esse genus human-
um, ipsos etiam caelites derelictis curis sollemnibus, quibus quondam
solebant invisere res nostras, terrarum ab regionibus exterminatos..."
Cf. Eus., PE 5.1-Harn. CC fr. no.80: Νυνί δὲ θαυμάζοντι, εἰ τοιοῦτων εἰς κατεληφθῇ νῦν τῶν πολίν, Ἀσκληπίου τῶν ἐπιθέμαις καὶ τῶν ξα
λών θεῶν ἀνθνήσκειτ' οὖσας. 'Ιππεὶ γὰρ τιμωμένου, οὐδὲν οἷς θεῶν δημοσίως
ὑψεῖται ὁ πατέται. V. Hulian, op. cit., 38; McCr., 269, n.1; LeB., 196f.;
E.R. Dodds, Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety. Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine. Cambridge,
1965, 115, dates this c. 270. I accept Barnes' date of late third/early
fourth century for the CC.

75 M. Magnes, Apocr. 4.22, responds to the pagan attack upon the idea that a deity entered a "place full of blood and gall" (i.e., Mary's womb).
Porphyry found no fault in the worship of the Christian God: "'In Deum vero,' inquit, 'generatorem et in regem ante omnia, quem tremit et caelum et terra atque mare et infernorum abdita et ipsa numina perhorrescunt; quorum lex est Pater, quem valde sancti honorant Hebraei.'" (Civ. Dei 19.23). The idea that the gods vituperate those who worship a condemned mortal is present in the commentary upon the Hecatean Oracle: "misereberis autem hominum dementiam." And Augustine confronted the same mentality: "Contemnis (sc. Porphyrius ap. De'Teg. an.) enim eum (sc. Christum) propter corpus ex femina acceptum et propter crucis opprobrium...".

There follows (Adv. nat. 1.36.6-32) a long list of deities which contains (inter al.) Faunus (=Pan: 1.36.10); Aesculapius (=Asclepius: 1.13); Mercury (=Hermes: 1.15), specifying Maia as his mother; Diana (Artemis) and Apollo (1.16). Quoting from selected texts in Phil. or., Eusebius notes that Porphyry offered hymns to each of these gods/goddesses, praising therein the fact that they had been (e.g.) in their mother's womb, born of a mortal mother, etc. (PE 3.14). He had just before given lengthy quotations from De cult. sim. (PE 3.11f.) showing how Porphyry allegorized the names of various Greek deities, and with this one should compare the last half of Adv. nat. 3, as well as the list in 1.36.6-32.

After giving his parody of the births of the deities, Arnobius asks: "hine ergo Christum coli et a nobis accipi et existimari pro numine vulneratis accipiant auribus...Haec est iustitia caelitum, hoc deorum iudicium sanctum?" (1.36.32-7). The mention of wounded ears appears to be a response to Porphyry's remark (Civ. Dei 19.23: "non audientes et deos") that the Christians, fated not to receive the gods' gifts or a conception of Immortal Jupiter ("quibus vere fatum non concessit ab diis dona obtinere neque habere Iovis inmortalis notionem"), shut up their ears to the pagan gods. We may compare Eusebius' conclusion made after quoting from Phil. or.: 'Εντολὴ μοι τῇ ὑπὲρ ὁσιοῦ Ελλήνες θεοῦ γεννητοῦς γυναικῶν ἑθελοῦσα, εἰς παράθεσιν, εἰ ποτε πειράματα κατέστην τὴν τοῦ ἡμετέρου σωτηρος γένεσιν, καὶ ὅτι οὐ ποιητῶν εἰσίν αἱ φωναί, ἀλλ' αὕτων τῶν θεῶν αἱ προκείμεναι σημειώσεις (PE 3.14). By developing his characteristic method of literary retortion, Arnobius responds to the accusation

76 Civ. Dei 10.28; v. O'Meara, op. cit., 50f.
again in 1.37.1f.: "Natum hominem colimus. Quid enim, vos hominem nullum colitis natum?" He then uses the Euhemeristic theory against this charge by referring to the pagan "antiquissimas litteras" (1.37.7). Yet the charge remains: "nihilominus tamen nati hominis obiectatis cultum" (1.37.15f.).

According to Augustine, Porphyry argued through Hecate that Christ was mortal in his soul (anima) and body (corpus), and the Christians, who were fated not to receive the gods' gifts (dona deorum) were entangled by Christ's fatal gift of error. Christians were thus "aliena a se veritate." Note the fine points of the pagan attack in the following:

Sed concedamus, interdum manum vestris opinationibus dantes, unum Christum fuisse de nobis, mentis animae corporis fragilitatis et condicionis unius: nonne dignus a nobis est tantorum ob munerum gratiam deus duci deusque sentiri? (Adv. nat. 1.36.1-5)

If pagans worship Liber, Ceres, and other deities, even more so should Christians worship Christ "qui ab erroribus (cf. Porphyry ap. Civ. Dei 19.23: "errore implicari") nos magnis insinuata veritate traduxit..." (Adv. nat. 1.38.12f.: cf. Porphyry: "aliena a se veritate"). And in the preface to Phil. or. Porphyry made it quite clear where one could go to receive a revelation of the truth: "Εξει δὲ παρούσα συναγωγὴ πολλών μὲν τῶν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν δογμάτων ἄνομαρχήν, δὲ οἱ θεοὶ τάλανεις ἐχεῖν ἔθεσισαν" (PE 4.7).

Such scholars as Klussmann, Brakman, and more recently, Hagendahl have studied the literary and conceptual parallels between Lucretius' eulogy of Epicurus (De rer. nat. 5 prooem.) and Arnobius' praise of the great blessings which Christ has bestowed upon his worshippers found in the second half of 1.38. Hagendahl has es-

77Every god found in this passage except Hercules has an agrarian association. This may suggest the use of Porphyrian anti-Christian propaganda by a Neoplatonic group which blamed Christians for the crop failures and resultant food shortage in N. Africa. V. Adv. nat. 1.3;1.9ff.;1.13-6;1.19ff.;1.29 and Ch. IV sup-


79Cf. McCr, 287, n.176: "Only on a basis of a belief in imitation of Lucretius by Arnobius can the remarkable statements of the second half of the chapter be explained." The parallels are too numerous to be enumerated here and remain outside the aims of the present study.
tablished how, but not why, the eulogy was used by Arnobius. The purpose of the apologetical use of Lucretius in Adv. nat. 1.38 is to present Christ as the great giver of superhuman _manna_ to his followers: it is the mighty acts of Christ in the form of divine gifts bestowed upon man that prove his deity. This is a great contrast with Porphyry's representing the fickle humanness of Jesus in the CC by underscoring the contradictions between his words on the one hand, and his deeds on the other. The fact that Christ is depicted as the revealer of scientific knowledge to his disciples might also have the CC in mind. For in the fifteenth Book Porphyry asserted that the evangelists were ignorant of both secular and divine matters. It will be recalled that Porphyry in his commentary upon the Hecatean Oracle argued that Christ's fatal gift to his followers was the entanglement in error: they were fated not to receive _deorum dona_. We noted also (p. 276 supra) that in Phil. or. Porphyry affirmed that Jesus had not revealed any new religious truth to humanity (Civ. Dei 19.23). Another reason for 1.38 and following chapters is to show that the disciples were the direct recipients of Christ's teaching. That is, they received the pure teachings of the Lord himself, and they taught exactly what their master taught. In De cons. evan. 1.16.24 we find the Porphyrian argument that Jesus cannot be blamed for Christians' refusal to worship the gods, for the disciples taught something different from the lord's teaching. Compare Eusebius' panegyric of Christ in DE 3.5, two chapters before he gives the Hecatean Oracle. Christ's doctrines were those of a philosopher's life. The disciples carried to others what they had learned of him. Why suspect that those who heard Christ's doctrines invented their account of their teacher's work?

Hagendahl, op. cit., 18ff., has established that Arnobius used Lucretius as a model for 1.38, but he was not an Epicurean himself (v. Ch. III supra). C. Marchesi, "Questioni Arnobiane", ARIV 88, 1928-9, 1009-32, argues that he was strongly opposed to Epicureanism. This goes perhaps too far. One must distinguish between Lucretian philosophical influence and literary borrowing for polemical purposes. V. pp.174f. supra.

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^80^ Hagendahl did not attempt to identify the opponent(s) behind 1.38.

^81^ Jerome, Adv. Pelag. 2.17 (PL 23.578f.-Harn. CC fr. no.70). This concerned the contradiction inherent in Jesus' denial to go to Jerusalem and his actual visit there in Jn. 7.8ff.

^82^ Id., Hom. lxxv, De prin. Marc. (=Comm. in Matt. 3.3=Harn. CC fr. no.9: "Locum istum impius ille Porphyrius, qui adversum nos con-
The Hecatean Oracle and Porphyrian commentary upon it formed the centrepiece of Arnobius' attack in the section under analysis (Adv. nat. 1.34-47), but theological concepts and technical terms derived from Chaldaean theology which Porphyry utilised, appear to have been incorporated in Arnobius' polemical argument as well:


Ἀἵτινν τὸν ὀδὸν μακάριον τρικεῖτο, κελτολόν
...δάφνης ὁ δὲ ἔρχεται
δέσοφατοι ἕγγεβαιναι...

According to Porphyry, the way to the gods is steep and rough, and within there are innumerable paths. Arnobius declares that Christ has brought back his followers who did not have a guide from the precipices ("deruptis") and paths lying away from the high roads to smoother places. This seems to represent an antithetical argument related to two opposing theories of divine guidance to, and revelation of, the truth. One can go further. The negative sense of "deruptis" used in a soteriological context, viz. concerning that from which Christ delivers lost ("caecos") humanity, suggests a direct literary retortion upon the Chaldaean theological concept which equated κρημνός with Tartarus: οὖδὲ τὸ τῆς ὕλης σκυθαλὸν κρημνῆ χαταλείψεις. The oracles promised the neophyte delivery from the precipice (κρημνός=Tartarus: cf. Arn.: "deruptis") through theurgical elevation. The concept may lie behind Porphyry's concluding remark in his commentary on the Hecatean Oracle: "ex eo (sc. Christus) in eis facile praecepsque periculum." On the latter word, note that in 2.2, a passage which has already been identified as betraying Porphyrian influence by Hadot, Arnobius appears to have this insult in mind: "Et non in cunctos et lumen praetenderit vitae et periculum ignorantionis amoverit?"

scripsit, et multis voluminibus rabiem suam euomuit, in quarto decimo volumine disputat, et dicit: "Evangelistae tam inperiti fuerunt homines, non solum in saecularibus, sed etiam in scripturis divinis, ut testimonium quod alibi scriptum est, de allo ponerent prophetam."

Note that both McCr and LeB give "precipices" for "deruptis". Bryce-Campbell have "precipitous."

83 V. Corth, 213, 294; also 298: the Chaldaean term "deep" is called "precipitous" because Tartarus is depicted as a chasm.
In Phil. or. Porphyry also maintained that the revelatory function of the terrestrial angels was to manifest the truth about the Father by declaring his height and depth. According to Arnobius, Christ's salvific mission to earth produced similar results:

Porphyry, Phil. or. (or De reg. an.) ap. Aug., Civ. Dei 10.26. ...

...alia (sc. angelos) autem, qui in terris ea quae Patris sunt et altitudinem eius profundi-tatemque, declarent.

Lewy's COTH contains a long mystic hymn discovered by Augustine Steuchus in 1540, which appeared in Book Two of Phil. or., and the second part of which dealt with ministering spirits. Porphyry's attached scholium explains the meaning of these spirits:

Thus one order of angels perpetually stand before the High God, another is separate from him and these are sent to earth for certain messages/ministrations, and those who are forever around his throne singing hymns to him. In DE 3.3 (PG 22.193) Eusebius appears to be responding to the same Chaldaean concept:

85 LeB, 306, suggests that "profundas...altitudines" in Arnobius is an echo of Romans 11.33: "0 altitudo diuitarum sapientiae et scientiae Dei: quam incomprehensibia sunt judicia eius et investigabiles ulae eius!" Yet the closer literary and conceptual parallels, the opponent's argument attacked in both general (1.34-47) and immediate (1.38) contexts, and the similar theological ideas found in both passages, suggest that Porphyry's ideas are skillfully being used against him.

86 Criticism of Jesus' followers for apostasising from the true worship of the gods was a cardinal accusation of the Phil. or.: cf. Wilken (1979), 123.

87 V. COTH, 10, n.26 for the full Greek text which mentions the names of Porphyry and Phil. or.
Eusebius appears to have had Porphyry's last two angelic classes in mind, and due to his knowledge of Judeo-Christian angelology, he was able to separate these heavenly beings from Christ. Note that although they are sent by the High God's will on salvific missions, they nevertheless fall short of receiving worship. Apparently Arnobius did not have this rich tradition upon which to depend: thus Porphyry's messengers are disqualified as authentic intermediaries between the High God and humans. Another important observation is that both Eusebius (DE 3.3) and Arnobius (1.38) are praising Christ The Teacher in their response to the Hecatean Oracle and Porphyrian commentary.

We turn now to the meaning of the Father's height and depth. Proclus (Crat. 57.25=C0Th, 159, n.351; OC, fr. 18, p.70) has preserved a Chaldaean hymn, which Lewy suggests was addressed to the planetary gods, and it contains the invocation: ος τον υπερκοσμον πατρικου βουδον ιοε νουνυτε. Knowledge of the hypercosmic Paternal Depth is the direct result of contemplating it. We shall note similarities between Arnobius and Porphyry in their understanding of contemplating the divine, especially observing their use of Pythagorean silence, in the next chapter. For the moment we should take note of Lewy's definition of the phrase above. "Depth" here is the pleroma of the intelligible world. All divine intelligences think the Father. Hence the planetary gods are alone "able to expound the mystery of his intellectual emanations and the hierarchic order of His supercelestial court" (C0Th, 161). He goes on to say that only one of these gods could have revealed the mysteries of the High God's existence to the Chaldaeans, and this was brought about mainly by Apollo. The latter plays an important role in Phil. or., and the picture which one gets from this is fairly clear, viz. that Porphyry attributed to these heavenly intermediaries the ability to reveal the truth about the existence of the High God. "Height" appears to designate the object of the Platonic-Chaldaean metaphysical cognition. Proclus again informs us that the divine is inaccessible to mortals who think according to the body, and only those who lift themselves up to the heights (i.e., in intellectual contemplation) will find him accessible (OC, fr.
In 1.39 Arnobius makes two main points. First, Christ who is described as the Teacher has led him from polytheistic error (the worship of images and the practice of litholatry) to the truth: "Nunc doctore tanto in vias veritatis inductus omnia ista quae a se veritate." The remark about "viias veritatis inductus" should be contrasted with the Hecatean scathing proclamation that Christians were "aliena a se veritate." It may have also served the dual anti-Porphyrian purpose of disclosing Christ as the only authentic "via universalis animae liberandae." Also, the fact that he begins 1.39 by stressing the vanity of venerating "simulacra" may suggest that Arnobius is attacking Porphyry's pagan apology for this practice in Περὶ δυσλυμῶν. Book Six contains a lengthy criticism of the worship of images as well. Eusebius also claims that Christ's teaching (cf. Arn.: "doctore") has turned all nations away from the delusions of idols to embrace the knowledge and worship of the εἰς πάντων θεοῦ. This, he adds, ratified the oracles of old (Jer. 16. 19). And four chapters before he partially cites from the Hecatean Oracle (DE 3.3), Eusebius argues that Christ was not a deceiver because he taught philosophy in its highest form to his disciples; he taught the truth; he was the author of a divine philosophy, not of a vulgar type, and so forth. Immediately before citing from Abst. he concludes that these were the gifts of our Saviour's teachings to his disciples (DE 3.3). Arnobius' conclusion (1.39) is that such dona Christi demonstrate that he is deus, and such gifts are not restricted to the temporal sphere:

Ita ergo Christus non habeatur a nobis deus neque omni

It will be remembered that 1.39 is the only passage that describes in detail (cf. 3.24.6ff.) Arnobius' pagan beliefs/practices before his conversion to Christianity.


V. Wolff, op. cit., 42. The pagan opponent of M. Magnes finds the idea that gods dwell in the images much purer than the doctrine of the incarnation (Apocr. 4.22).

Wilken (1979), 133, has observed that Eus. uses this Gk. term deliberately to oppose the Porphyrian Supreme God. The passage referred to is PE 1.3. I have noticed similar divine epithets used by Arnobius and Porphyry, viz. (e.g.) Ζεὺς Κεφαλῆς (caput); Ζεὺς πρῶτος (deus primus); Ζεὺς βασιλεύς (deus rex); ὁ πάντων ἀνθρώπων (prima causa); μέγας αρχικός διάντων (deus princeps). For Arnobius' epithets v. p.128 supra. Porphyry's epithets come from PE 3.9.
It is significant that Arnobius can speak of Christ's salvific blessings upon man as "dona", especially since Porphyry in the Hecatean Oracle and commentary insisted that the Christians were fated not to receive "dona deorum." And we may note in passing - for we shall come back to this important Porphyrian concept in Ch. 6 - that in De reg. an. the Neoplatonist acknowledged that the "donum Dei" (Civ. Dei 10.32) of the universal salvation of the human soul had not come to his attention.

The next two chapters (Adv. nat. 1.40f.) respond to the charge that Christ died an ignominious death. This ties in with the argument that Christ was mortal, and in the Hecatean Oracle Jesus' condemnation to death indicates as much. Yet we recall that Augustine found it contradictory that Apollo could praise the judges who correctly sentenced Jesus to the cross, and Hecate's "compliments" for his piety and wisdom. There might be some significance in the fact that Pythagoras heads Arnobius' list of holy men who met a violent death (1.40.6: the counter-charge against the pagan mockery of Christ's death), and both Porphyry and Iamblichus wrote biographies extolling his great deeds.

The accusation that Christians worship a mortal appears again in Adv. nat. 1.42. Arnobius again reminds his readers that Christ is God because of his "dona" which he bestowed upon his worshippers:

Natum hominem colitis. Etiamsi esset id verum, locis ut in superioribus dictum est, tamen pro multis et tam liberalibus donis quae ab eo profecta in nobis sunt deus dici appellantique debetur. (11.1-4)

And now a new concept appears which may seem strange in light of what he elsewhere has to say about corporeal existence: Christ

...cur ergo damnatus est? oraculo respondit dea: Corpus quidem debilitantibus tormentis semper oppositum est...".


He literally accepts the traditional miracles attributed to Pythagoras. V. J. Bidez, "Le philosop Jamblique et son école", REG 32, 1919, 29-40. Note that Arnobius in 2.13.8f. attacks "vos appello qui Mercurium, qui Platonem Pythagoramque sectamini...".

Earthly life in a body is frequently referred to disparagingly as bondage: cf. 1.40;2.25;2.27;2.30;2.33;2.37;2.61;2.76f. Most of these
is called "praesidem nostri corporis" (1.42.7). "The call to separate soul from body seems to be the major ethical injunction which Porphyry lays upon us in his moral treatises." Even in his pre-Plotinian soteriological views he posited that this was necessary, and one recalls his famous dictum cited by Augustine that "omne corpus esse fugiendum ut anima post beata permaneret cum Deo." In refuting this concept, Arnobius depicts Christ not only as not mortal, but also as the divine guardian of that aspect of man's being which lay outside the pale of Neoplatonic soteriology. Yet it may be directly related in a negative sense to the Chaldaean concept of the salvation of the body which later Neoplatonists discuss (COTh, 216). Taking 1.42.7 out of context, we may perhaps be inclined to translate (as some have done already) "corporis" as "community," denoting the Church as the body of Christ. Yet we may note the following. First, Adv. nat. 1.45f. enumerates a long list of dona Christi, most of which are based upon an understanding of salus as meaning physical health. MacMullen's remark that what "pagans did pray for...was health, first", perfectly fits Arnobius' understanding of the human temporal experience of salus. He says so much in Adv. nat. 6.16.5f.: good health ("val-etudines") heads the list of things for which pagans pray to the gods' images in their temples. Second, daemon (or forms of it) appears only six times, and once (1.45.6) it describes those evil beings who cause physical disease. The same belief appears in Chaldaean thought, and was widespread in the Graeco-Roman world. But the Chaldaeans appear to have been somewhat fanatical in their use of apotropaic rites to cure bodily illness. Proclus relates that the Chaldaeans had "efficacious phylacterys for every limb appear in Book Two where the exalted anthropology of the Neoplatonists is attacked.

96 A. Smith, op. cit., 20. 97 Civ. Dei 10.29: a frequent theme of De reg. an. ap. Aug.; cf. Ibid., 13.20: corporeal resurrection denied; 22.26: the soul must be free from all bodily contact to be happy; he also rejected metasomatosis (incorrectly called metempsychosis by some scholars) into animal bodies (v. O'Meara, op. cit., 24); also 12.27; 13.29; and the famous remark about his master: £ύκες μὲν αἰσχυνομένεως ἐτοι σώματι εἴν (Vit. Plot. 1).

98 LeB, 168, on Adv. nat. 1.42.2, translates "praesidem nostri corporis" as "le Chef de notre communauté" without giving an explanation in his commentary on the passage, p.320.

of the human body" (COTh, 290f.). They used such materials as amulets, stones, and plants in conjunction with conjurations thought to exorcise the demon who was causing the physical illness. Hence the importance Arnobius places upon Christ's healings of the body without using any material aids in 1.44 (et 45f.), and the criticism of the magicians' use of such aids in 1.43. Eusebius (DE 3.6) explicitly and rigorously divorces the use of amulets, enchantments, incense made from roots and herbs (etc.) from Christ's and his disciples' teachings and practices. Note also that both Eusebius (DE 3.6: in the chapter preceding his citing from the Hecatean Oracle) and Arnobius (1.43.1-5) respond to the accusation that Christ was a magician who became acquainted with secret knowledge from the Egyptians. Eusebius also insists (DE 3.6) upon the fact that neither Jesus, nor his teaching, nor his followers have had anything to do with performing miracles by using libations, incense, i.e., material aids.

The next question (Adv. nat. 1.42.8f.) would also appear to have both the Hecatean Oracle and its commentator in mind: "Ergone, inquiet aliquis furens iratus et percitus, deus ille est Christus?". Cf. the Lucretian eulogy (De rer. nat. 5.8: LCL: Rouse-Smith): "Dicendum est, deus fuit, deus." Hagendahl (1958: p. 18; cf. LeB, 304, giving also Virg., Ecl. 5.64) has suggested that these words from the eulogy comprised Arnobius' immediate source. Yet "inquiet" has a parallel in the Hecatean inquirer: "De Christo...si est Deus...". His adjectives "furens...percitus" cohere well with the attitudes of other Christians who have fought against Porphyry. It might have been the case that the oracle brought to Arnobius' mind the famous words, undoubtedly well known to Arnobius as the result of his literary studies of the Epicurean's poem, and the eulogy furnished him with what appeared to be the best response to Porphyry. Arnobius continues in 1.42 by wondering whether the same person, becoming madder, will demand proof of what he has just said about Christ. This demand to prove the credibility of a particular religious idea appears in most Books of the Adv. nat. and is one of the main themes inherent in Arnobius' method of literary retortion. We can make the same observation about PE, DE, and De cons. evan., all of whom have Porphyry as a principal antagonist. The main Porphyrian accusation which set off all the fireworks - and which will demand
our attention in the following chapter – appears in PE 1.1: Christians can offer no evidence of the truth of their religious beliefs. All they assent to is faith. The proof which Arnobius offers is significant:

Nulla maior est comprobatio, quam gestarum ab eo fides rerum, quam virtutum novitas, quam omnia victa decreta dissolutaque fatalia, quae populi gentesque suo geri sub lumine nullo dissentiente viderunt, quae nec ipsi audent falsitatis arguere, quorum antiquas et patrias leges vanitatis esse plenissimas atque inanissimae superstitionis ostendit (Adv. nat. 1.42.14-21)

There are four main proofs given. First, there was something about his works and new powers that prove Christ's divinity. We recall that in Civ. Dei 19.23 Porphyry argued that Christ offered nothing new in respect of teaching, and he undoubtedly is the enemy behind Adv. nat. 1.42 and DE 3.5ff. who called Christ a deceiver. (He had to explain the miracles in some way: v. infra.) Note that Eusebius refutes the charge that Christ worked miracles by magic by showing that it was a strange and divine being who was incarnated (DE 3.6). Second, Christ has broken the laws of fate. This is an apparent response to Porphyry's remark that Christ's fatal gift to the Christians was entanglement in error: they were fated not to receive "dona deorum." We have already noticed (v. p. 276) that Eusebius attacked Porphyry's subordinating the gods to fate and challenged him to confess the lord of fate. Third, people witnessed Christ's powers without disagreement. Hence the harmony and uniformity existing between the words and deeds of Christ and his disciples. The reference to eye-witnesses may be related to statements made elsewhere about the miracles being publicly performed (v. Ch. VI), which in turn may be a retortion of PE 5.1 (=Harn. CC fr. 80), where we hear Porphyry's grumbling that since Jesus appeared humanity has not received any public assistance from the gods. We showed (pp. 271f.) that Porphyry desired to drive a wedge of credibility between Christ and his followers. This was taken very seriously by Eusebius and Arnobius (also Augustine in De cons. evan.). Both ask (DE 3.5; Adv. nat. 1.54) why did the disciples witness to Christ unto death, when they were able to live in harmony with the pagans? Both acknowledge that they bore witness with one mind/faith (DE 3.5; Adv. nat. 2.12). Both wonder how uneducated men could have deceived the entire world (DE 3.5; Adv. nat. 1.55: cf. 1.52). Eusebius stresses the credibility
of an eye-witness account as well (DE 3.6). Compare DE 3.7, appearing immediately after citing from the Hecatean Oracle, and Adv. nat. 1.50, both emphasising Christ's sending fishermen, farmers, and the uneducated throughout all nations. Fourth (and finally), the power and teaching of Christ has caused many pagans to abandon their ancestral traditions. Both Eusebius (DE 3.7) and Arnobius (2.12) drive this proof home with precision. And they apparently took sorely Porphyry's (PE 1.1) finding the Christians' faith intellectually inferior. Observe the following examples given by Eusebius (PE 1.5) and Arnobius (2.8f.) of situations in the lives of pagans in which they also use faith: going on voyages; taking a journey; sowing the earth; getting married; raising children; depending upon physicians; carrying out war/entering a military profession; accepting a philosophy, both specifying Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and Stoicism.

Chapters 43-4 have already been partially covered (v. pp. 287f.). Here Arnobius responds to the charge that Christ was a deceiver/magian, and that it was by magic that he performed his miracles. Eusebius responds to an identical accusation, and this is most probably Porhyrian. It does appear to be certain that the latter is on record for arguing that Christ performed no authentic miracle, and he did assert that the disciples used magic in their evangelistic missions. There is a great deal of mutual animosity in the two chapters, and 1.43 contains a counter-charge of "magic" practiced by the same people who accused Christ of being a magician. We shall observe in the next chapter that there are a pretty good number of similarities between 1.43 and Porphyry's questions addressed to Anebo the Egyptian priest. From information found in this section and other passages in Adv. nat., "magic" would appear to denote the theurgical practices which characterised post-Plotinian Neoplatonism. The accusation that Christ was a magician would represent an interpolation by a Neoplatonic group of

100 Sailing, sowing, marrying, and begetting children appear in C.Cels. 1.11. Chadwick noted the similarities between Arnobius and Origen. Closer parallels exist between the former and Eusebius.
102 DE 3.5.95f.=Harn. CC fr.7.
103 De cons. evan. 1.15.23. Cf. DE 3.5 and Adv. nat. 1.54: both respond to the charge that the disciples were liars. The text in Arnobius begins his defence of scripture.
practicing theurgists, indebted to Chaldaean theology and anti-Christian propaganda via Porphyry, into the Hecatean oracle and commentary. "Magic" used in this way poses no problems for this interpretation, for Augustine similarly equates magic with theurgical practices. Indeed, the appearance of a philosophical group in North Africa at this period who called themselves followers of Plato (Adv. nat. 2.11.4; 2.13.9; 2.14.3f., etc.) and who practiced theurgy (cf., e.g. Adv. nat. 2.62), will have given Arnobius ample reasons to designate them *viri novi* (2.15.2f.).

Chapters 45-7 comprise the climax of the argument begun in 1.34. The goal is to prove that Christ was not a mortal - therefore he was and still is divine - by enumerating the many *munera* which have intermittently appeared throughout the argument (since 1.36). After the initial question, "Ergo ille mortalis aut unus fuit e nobis?", the refrain, "unus fuit e nobis?" appears eleven times in 1.45f. The fact that Arnobius uses his limited knowledge of the N.T. in this section may imply that his opponents were using the scripture of the Christians in their attack upon Christianity.

One should also note in this connection the long series of impassioned refrains, based upon a method of literary retortion, found in Adv. nat. 4.24-7, climaxing in 4.28. The latter forms the second of six résumés found in the work (which we analyse in the second part of this chapter) of the argument that the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic depictions of the gods in the myths prove they are *mortalis*. Between each refrain (1.45f.) Arnobius lists the *munera Christi* which prove his divinity. In his conclusions in 1.47 he notes that it is not the miracles alone that prove his greatness, nor did he do these for self-aggrandisement, but that unbelievers might know what a true God is. Finally, as Porphyry repeated himself in the commentary about Christ being a mortal subor-

104 Civ. Dei 10.9. Cf. Apocr. 3.1, which compares Christ being spat upon with the disappearance of Apollonius from Diocletian’s court.

105 Observations not made by either Courcelle or Fortin.

106 Cf. Apocr. 3.3 for an example of a similar method of attack upon Christianity. It served as the centre-piece of Porphyry’s attack in the CC, if the extant fragments give us an accurate picture.

107 PE 1.2=Harn. CC fr. no.1 (partially cited): ...πιστεύεις δάκτυλο-\[...\] θαύμασθαι δι’ ἀρρητοίς ἐναργοὺς παρέχειν τεκμήριον· τὰ πάντα ἑαυτῷ ἠλθείσι...; should be compared with Adv. nat. 2.4. 5-9: "Non credimus, inquitis, vera esse quae dicit...Sed et ipse
ominated to the fates, Arnobius repeats himself likewise by making the opposite point: "non (modo) ea Christum potuisse quae fecit (sc. munera of 1.45f.) sed constituta etiam exsuperasse fatorum." The way he has constructed the sentence reveals that he desires to accentuate Christ's power over the fates. Note that the plural corresponds to "fata" of the commentary. There follows a list of physical diseases which "fatalibus accidunt inroganturque decretis" (1.47.17), and the final tour de force: "(si) solus haec Christus correxit restituit atque sanavit: sole ipso est clarius, potentiorem illumuisse quam fata sunt, cum ea solvit et vicit quae perpetuis nexibus et immobili fuerant necessitate devincta" (1.47.17-21).

If the aforementioned interpretation is correct, it appears that the Hecatean Oracle and Porphyry's commentary upon it served a useful purpose in the anti-Christian propaganda in Roman North Africa during the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Diocletianic Persecution. Phil. or. should now be considered as a serious piece of anti-Christian propaganda in its own right. Echos of the Hecatean/Porphyrian argument reverberated over a century later in Arnobius' homeland: "Porphyrius...Dominum Christum...quippe in ipsa carne contempsit quam propter sacrificium nostrae purgationis adsumpsit" (De reg. an. ap. Civ. Dei 10.24). We may be fairly certain that the gauntlet had been picked up many years before by the professor of Sicca Veneria. And such a response to the subtle but vicious attack upon the deity of Christ that Porphyry developed in the Phil. or., accentuating above all his mortality, to which two great doctors of the Church responded with sharp counter-attacks, would perhaps help to explain the absence of any reference to the birth narratives and the name Jesus in the Adversus nationes.

quae pollicetur non probat." V. also Ch. VI.

Porphyry's introductory remarks, therefore, should be read (I suggest) in light of his commentary upon the Hecatean Oracle and the present interpretation: "Praeter opinionem, inquit, profecto quibusdam videatur esse, quod dicturi sumus. Christum enim dii plissimum pronuntiaverunt et immortalem factum et cum bona praedicatione elius meminerunt..." (Civ. Dei 19.23). Note the "immortalem factum".

In general v. H.D. McDonald, "The Doctrine of God in Arnobius, Adversus Gentes", Stud Patr 9, 1966, 75-81, but "doctrine" may indeed be going too far.

It is universally agreed that Arnobius' principal method of attacking paganism in Adv. nat. 3-7 is one of a literary retortion based primarily upon the Graeco-Roman myths. There is no use of scripture and only a glimpse here and there of any Christian religious ideas. It is interesting both in light of observations made in the preceding section and the analysis found in the next chapter, that Eusebius basically uses the same method of attacking Porphyry in the PE. It is to be regretted that Arnobius never bequeathed to posterity his equivalent of Eusebius' DE. Yet being similar to Porphyry's method of criticising Christian tenets as revealed in the extant fragments of the CC, Arnobius assails the religious worldviews of the pagans by using their own sacred literature, and the cultic practices derived therefrom, against them. However, a detailed investigation of the way in which the pagan attack of Adv. nat. 1-2, and Arnobius' counter-attack of Books 3-7 are organically related reveals itself as more virgin territory in the field of Arnobiana. The way that Arnobius develops his argument in response to Porphyry's portrayal of Christ as a mortal in Phil. or. discloses two facts. First, it provides a clear picture of just such organic relation. It may be that the main reason that Arnobius has been so misunderstood is because a particular section of the Adv. nat. has been isolated, studied independently, and interpreted out of its own context. An investigation of the relationship between the pagan accusations of Adv. nat. 1-2 and the Arnobian counter-accusations of 3-7 may clarify how the individual books fit together, as well as the author's main message and intention in writing the work. The reader is again reminded that we shall not walk down the well-worn path which many have used (and abused!) to discover the extent to which Arnobius can be christened orthodox.

110 Micka simply strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. His thesis is that the theme of divine anger is the main one of the work: "In the treatment of this problem (sc. divine anger) are involved the alternatives which bind together all seven books of the Adversus nationes" (op. cit., 60). This is incorrect. The divine anger concept functions as a sub-theme in the major argument that the anthropopathic representations of the gods (1) in the myths and (2) assumed in certain cultic practic-
unorthodox, heretical, half-pagan, and so forth. A predominantly literary method of retortion functions as the main medium through which Arnobius develops his counter-attack upon Porphyry according to a main theme which runs through the Adv. nat., viz. that the pagan gods are mortal because of their anthropomorphic and anthropopathic depictions in the Graeco-Roman myths. This argument is found throughout Books 1, 3-7, and is indirectly used in Book 2. In the latter one finds a definition of mortalis expressed in more pejorative terms than perhaps that of any ante-Nicene Christian work. Arnobius turns Porphyry's main premise against him by arguing that the gods of the myths are mortal because of their human forms and emotions. Yet he takes the argument one step further than Porphyry. At least the latter "complimented" Jesus with the designations piissimum and sapientissimum. The iron claw within this velvet glove was "sicut aliorum piorum", that is mortalis. Even a neophyte of the ante-Nicene period appears to have seen the real fire through the smoke. (We shall qualify this remark later.) Arnobius does not offer any pseudo-compliments. Not only does he use the aforementioned argument to prove the mortality of the gods, but he also frequently attempts to prove that the sub-human emotional disturbances caused by the immoral acts of the gods can place them on the same existential level (or below that) of the brute beasts. We shall come back to this first important fact of Arnobius' polemics.

Second, the response to Porphyry would appear to manifest a clear indication of the basic norms of orthodoxy beyond which even an uninstructed neophyte did not go, existing in North African Christianity in the period A.D. 302-5. Compared with the religious syncretism which befell paganism during this and earlier periods, (e.g., sacrifices of Bk.7) prove their mortality. Micka did not support his thesis by demonstrating from the primary sources Arnobius' dependence upon Epicureanism.

111 Micka, op. cit., 166, notes that Arnobius' emphasis upon man's nothingness was to make pagans realize that attributing human vices to the gods degraded and destroyed their divinity. This is accurate, but the main theme of Bk. 2 is to demonstrate that Christ alone can grant immortality to the human soul.

Christianity was still in some basic areas an exclusive religious movement. Arnobius may perhaps legitimately be called heterodox in his conception of creation, and he is apparently ignorant of all the O.T. and a great deal of the N.T. He uses pagan epithets to describe his new saviour (sospitator; praeses). And he is not clear - as one might expect - in his understanding of the ontological relationship between Father and Son. Yet he has received a tradition which affirms that in his own being and his great deeds and gifts, Christ is no less than deus, and he is worthy of man's worship. Through him alone comes the immortalization of the soul (Adv. nat. 2.65). Finally, concomitant with this is the fact that such rejection of Christ's deity was present in the pagan attack upon Christianity in the East (Eusebius, and to a lesser extent Lactantius), and Eusebius (unlike Arnobius and Lactantius) calls his opponent by name. This might indicate a planned dissemination of Porphyrian anti-Christian propaganda throughout a considerable area of the Roman Empire before the Great Persecution began.  

(We will come back to this hypothesis also.) And Arnobius' familiarity with this propaganda may suggest his personal use of it when he was an outspoken opponent of Christianity.  

We may now come back to the first observation. "Tout le traité est une immense retorsion." Le Bonnec is right. Yet there has not been any detailed analysis as to the function of this apologetical method, specifically in Books 3-7, and how it is organically related to the pagan attack in Books 1-2. Its predominant use is literary, and its object is to prove the provenance of the pagans' concepts of deity:  

quid est enim quod dici de immortalibus diis possit, quod non ex hominum (di) scriptis ad humanas pervenerit notiones? aut quicquam vos ipsi de illorum ritibus potestis caerimoniasque narrare, quod relatum in litteras non sit et scriptorum commentariorum publicatum? (Adv. nat. 4.18.13-8)  

He does not consider the possibility that there might have existed some kind of pre-literary tradition, and this allows him to derive  

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113 This would tie in with the theories of Chadwick and Wilken (v. pp.267f. supra), yet having a wider geographical significance.  

114 Thus many passages in Bks. 1-2 could be interpreted, as noted above (pp.101f., 107), as recantations (retractationes) of his former position as an opponent of the Church. We shall return to this important hypothesis in Ch. VII.
every piece of evidence for his argument from the religious literature of the pagans. The above text can be given as the best example of Arnobius’s attitude towards pagan religious literature and is partly explained as evolving from Adv. nat. 1.54-9 where one finds the pagan attack upon Christian scripture. If the extant fragments of the CC give us an accurate account of his main method of attacking Christian beliefs, Porphyry vilified Christianity basically from within its own literary tradition. Arnobius devotes only six chapters to the pagan attack upon scripture (1.54-9). A principal complaint is that it was written by liars (1.54ff.). Eusebius (v. p. 281 supra) responds to the same charge, and Augustine (De cons. evan. 2.3.7; 2.12.29; cf. 1.11.17) spends much time in proving that this was not true. He also responds to the accusation that the authors of scripture were unlearned and common men (1.58: cf. 1.50; 1.52), an insult taken seriously by Arnobius and Eusebius (v. p. 190 supra). In 1.56 we find the assertion that certain insertions, additions, modifications, and emissions of words, syllables, and even letters have been made to scripture. This is rather difficult to evaluate because it is very general, perhaps because of Arnobius’ poor biblical knowledge. Augustine does, however, often deal with the charge that omissions and interpolations apparent in a biblical text discredit its reliability (e.g., De cons. evan. 2.5.15f.; and indeed in Bk. 2 passim). We most probably see in both cases the acute mind of Porphyry, striving always for grammatical exactness and clarity and conciseness in the written composition, no doubt due greatly to his philological training under Longinus in Athens. For example, in the preface to Phil. or. he vows that he has added nothing to, or taken away anything from, the oracles with the exception of correcting an erroneous phrase; changing it for greater clarity; completing a defective metre; and striking out anything not conducive to the purpose (PE 4.7). He undoubtedly found much to criticise in the Bible! Eusebius himself admitted that the oracles of Porphyry were adorned with fine poetry and inflated by the grandeur of language (PE 4.1).

The description of the biblical writers as uneducated appears to have been a frequent theme in the CC. Also, Porphyry explained the disciples’ ability to perform miracles as being due to having knowledge of and practicing magical arts. Arnobius is attacking a similar accusation in this section of his Book:

115 All derived from Jerome: Hom. 11 in Psalm. Ixxvii Harm. CC fr. no.10: Matthew was ignorant for putting Isaiah instead of Asaph in Mt. 13.35; Comm. in Joel 2.28 (CEHR: Adrijan)=Harm. CC fr. no.5; cf. Hom. Ixxv, De prin. Marc. (=Comm. in Matt. 3.3)=Harm. CC fr. no.9. Again, I remind the reader that my assumption is that the CC fragments now extant give an accurata indication of Porphyry’s method of biblical criticism.
(OChr! Morin-Harn. CC fr. no. 4).

Hoc enim dicit Porphyry: *Hominem rusticam et pauperem, quoniam nihil habeant, magicis artibus operantem sunt quaedam signa. Nam fecerunt signa et in Aegypto magi contra Moysen. Facit et Apollonius, fecit et Apuleius: et infinita signa fecerunt. 116*


...ex immensa illa populi multitutin, quae sum gratum sectabatur admirans, piscatorum opifices rusticarn atque id genus delicat imperitorum, qui per varias gentes missi consta illa miracula sine ullis faciis atque adminiculis perpetrarent.

We may compare Adv. nat. 1.58.1f.: "Sed ab indeciptis hominibus et rudibus scripta sunt et idcirco non sunt facili auditione credenda." Note De cons. evan. 1.11.17, appearing between references to Porphyry: "Illud quoque adventrant, qui magicis artibus tanta potuissent et nomen suum ad populos in se convertendos arte ipse consecrassero delirant." And immediately after giving his partial citation from the Heclat-ean Oracle, Eusebius (EI 3.7) proves the divine nature of Christ's teaching, in response to the charge that he and his disciples were sorcerers, because men of the fishermen's class, rustics, and the uneducated were able to teach it to people all over the world. Amobius follows the above text by mentioning that the miracles of Christ and his disciples were brought about either by a command or touch. His conclusion denies a concern to concede the point made about the social background of the disciples, but he rejects totally the charge of magic:

"Neque qui quomin est ab illo gestum per admirationem stupentibus cunctis, quod non unum donaverit faciendum parvisis illis et rusticis et eorum subiecerit potentari. (1.50.34-7)

In the passage above Porphyry gave Apollonius and Apuleius as examples of pagan miracle workers. In 1.52 Amobius enumerates a long list of magicians. Among these are Apollonius - Apuleius does not appear - and Julian. The latter was the elder Julian who edited, along with his son Julian, the Chaldæan Oracles during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. 117 It was from the latter that Porphyry drew some of his materials in writing Phil. or. 118 and De reg. an. "The Chaldæan Oracles were brought to the notice of the Neoplatonists (to whom we owe all the information we possess upon this subject) by Porphyry." 119 Amobius' challenge to the magians is that they perform the same kind of healing miracles by (theurgical) incantations as uneducated Christians have done many times with bare commands. 120

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116 Cf. Eus., C.Hier. 4 (PG 22.304): Christians were called Ἐπάθουκολλῆμενοι= "rustici." Hierocles also compared Apollonius to Christ. The pagan in Apocr. 4.5 on Mt. 24.4f. (false Christs will come) observes: 300 yrs. have passed and no one has appeared unless one adduces Apollonius.


118 Ibid., 7. 119 1.52.19ff: "experiri libet et recognoscere an eum suis efficere diis possint quod ab rusticis Christianis iussionibus factitatum est nudis."
In turning to the pagan attack upon scripture (Adv. nat. 1.54-9), four chapters are given to refuting the charge that the biblical writers were liars who fabricated falsehoods about Christ. This accusation is found in the CC, Hierocles, and the pagan opponent of Macarius Magnes. In Book fourteen of the CC Porphyry asserted that Paul's censure of Peter for not straightforwardly going on his evangelistic mission was a falsehood ("mendacium"). His main point was that these leaders were not acting in one accord. A similar pagan argument lies behind Amobius' response to the charge that Christian writers are liars. The success of the world-wide evangelisation is explained as being due to the harmonious agreement of disparate nations.

121Bis., HE 6.19.2ff.=Harn. CC fr. no.39. In Sicily Porphyry wrote treatises against the Christians attempting to slander their scriptures. He mentioned those who had interpreted them.


123Bis., C.Hier. 2 (HC 22.300): Peter and Paul were liars, unlearned, and unskilled (άγνωστοι γεγονότοι και αναφηκτοί, και γέννατοι').

124A well-worn theme in the Apoc. V. 2.12: the evangelists invented the events concerning Jesus; 2.15: judgment (Jn. 12.31) is a fairy tale (ταιροισιαν), gospels are full of δαιφων; 3.2: Mt. 26.36 is μεταρειστον δαιφων; 3.4: the swine story (Mt. 8.31ff.) is myth, humbug, mockery, and flat laughter which convicts Christ of much baseness; 3.5: Mt. 19.24 are words of a man in distress; 3.6: Mt. 14.25 (Jesus walks on water) is child-lish; cf. Adv. nat. 1.54.14: "puerii adsertione"; Apoc. 3.19: Peter is especially criticised: 3.21: Peter was unforgiving (Acts 5.1-11); 3.22: he was impious and involved in many base things; he was crucified despite having the keys to the kingdom; stories concerning him are inconsistent; and Paul: 3.30;3.2;4.4. The mention of Peter in Adv. nat. 2.12.23 makes perfect sense in light of the pagan attack upon him, esp. if he was the patron saint of SV in Amobius' time (v. pp.87-90 supra). Peter received special criticism from Porphyry, and we shall analyse his possible connection with Adv. nat. 2.12 in Ch. VI.

125Jerome, Comm. in Gal. prolog. (PL 26.37ff.)=Harn. CC fr. no.21: "...et sceleratus ille Porphyril, in primo operis sui aduersum nos libro, Petrum a Paulo objectit esse reprehensum, quod non recto pede incideret ad evangelizandum: volens et illi maculam erroris inverte, et huius procacitas, et in commune ficti dogmatis accusare mendacium, dum inter se Ecclesiarum principes discrepant."
which have agreed on one conclusion, viz. the truth of the Christian religion. This is a recurrent theme of the FE, DE, the Civ. Dei where Augustine attacks (Bk. 10) Porphyry's views about the "via universalis animae liberandae," and also De cons. evan. For Amobius (and the others named) the purpose of making such a comment appears to have been in response to the universal salvation theme (to be studied in Ch. VI) and to the accusation that there was a great disparity between the teachings of Christ and those of his disciples.  

Now it is necessary to demonstrate the specific manner in which the response to Porphyry's rejection of Christ's deity is developed in the Adversus nationes. There is one grand theme littéraire in the work related to the pagan gods of the myths: in respect of their anthropomorphic depictions and anthropopathic behaviour, all pagan religious literature accentuates the humanness, and therefore the mortality, of the gods and goddesses. The discussion of divine anger serves as a sub-theme under the anthropopathic motif and is not the main theme of the work. In developing the anthropopathic motif, Amobius indeed argues that the expression of ira among the gods/any divine being proves their humanness, mortality, and therefore perisableness. Yet he also makes the same point concerning such emotions as affecio, affectus, aegritudo, cupiditas, gaudium, libido, passio, perturbatio, sensus, tristitia, and voluptas. The main purpose of his argument is to demonstrate that Porphyry's rejection of Christ's deity while still classifying him as a good and wise mortal, could easily be turned against him.


It is first necessary to observe that there are six résumés of the aforementioned motif given in Amobius' work. In each instance he drives home his main point with precision: if gods/goddesses emotionally behave in this manner, they are of an earthly, and therefore mortal, race. Résumé one comprises all of 1.18:

Quod si verum est istud et est exploratum et cognitum, eccefervescere deos ira et huiusmodi motu, perturbationie inactari, immortales et perpetui non sunt nec in divinitatis aliquid existimatione ponendi. Ubi enim est ul¬lus, sicut sapientibus videtur, affectus, ibi esse necessit passionem: ubi passio sita est, perturbationem consentaneum est consequi: ubi perturbatio est, ibi dolor et aegritudo est: ubi dolor et aegritudo est, im¬minationi et corruptioni iam locus est: quae due si vexant, adestr inver¬sus interitus, mortis omnino finiens et cunctis adimens sentientibus vitam.  

126 Adv. nat. 1.55.1-5: "Quodsi falsi ut dicitis historia illa rerum est, unde tam brevi tempore totus mundus ista religione complectus est, aut in unam coire qui poten¬unt menten gentes reglonibus diisissae, ventis caeli connexionibusque dimotae?"  
127 Contra Micke. 128 I am not giving an exhaustive list here, but only a good number of such examples to demonstrate Amobius' main argument.  
129 Henceforth="R1."
Like a chain reaction affectus (1.5) leads to passio (1.6), perturbatio (1.7), dolor et egrotudo (1.8), immunitio et corruptio (1.9), which finally culminates in interitus and mors (11.10fr.). Ira (1.2) introduces the chapter, and it will be observed that here and elsewhere in the Adv. nat. it is one anthropopathic term which serves Amobius' overall polemical argument. His conclusion is quite clear: gods that display emotions of this kind are not immortal (immortalis: 1.3), eternal (perpetus: 1.3), nor do they possess any divinity (divinitas: 1.4).

The second resume occurs in 3.12.13-22. He has ended eleven chapters wherein he has attacked the anthropomorphic deities of the pagan myths. Against the following definition he puts the individual deities whom he criticises in the remaining chapters of the Book, and again his object is to prove that they are mortal:

Nostra de hoc sententia talis est. Naturam omnem divinam, quae neque esse cooperit aliquando nec vitalen ad terminum sit aliquando ventura, linamentis carere corporeis neque villas formam effigies possidere, quibus extima circumscripsit membrorum solet coagentia finisse. Quoiquid enim tale est mortale esse arbitramur et labile; nec obtinere perpetum posse credimus avitatem quod extremis coercitum finibus necessaria circuncludit extremitas.

With this we should contrast Amobius' understanding (e.g., 1.31; 3.19) that the Christian High God absolutely does not possess any form. By attempting to prove that gods/goddesses who possess corporeal forms cannot attain to eternal life, Amobius has begun to touch upon the natural conclusion evolving from his mortality theme, viz. a mortal being cannot grant immortality to another mortal being. We shall analyse the soteriological aspects of his argument in Chapter VI.

The third resume is found in 4.28. Amobius has already completed a sustained attack upon the anthropomorphic representations of the gods. His argument is that corporeality denotes mortality, which in turn leads to perishableness (3.1-19, esp. 12133). There follows a section (3.20-4.27) which includes the anthropopathic motif under discussion. Note that in 4.27.24 he has concluded that the sexual lust of the deities proves that they are "generis humani." His principal summary appears in 4.28.1-8:

Ubii enim rustiae matrimonia puerperia nutricibus artificia debilitates, ubi status capitis et condicio servitutis, ubi vulnera caedes crucur, ubi amor desideria voluptates, ubi amnis animorum affectio ab inquietis perturbationibus veniens, necesse est divinum nihil istic esse, nec quod proprium caducis est generis et terrenae fragilitatis praestantiori posses adherere naturae.

Henceforth="R2." Henceforth="R3." This is a complementary sub-theme to the anthropopathic motif and both can be sub-classified under the main argument, turned against Porphry, that the pagan gods/goddesses are mortal.

His intention is to bring to his readers' attention the fact that their deities have been represented as being enslaved to the passions of human corporeal existence. His selection of terms like "debilitates," "condicio servitutis," and "generis et terrenae fragilitatis" in the context of such an argument strongly suggests that he is retorting Porphyry's Hecatean Oracle and commentary. For in the oracle Hecate stressed the debility of Christ's body in that it suffered debilitating torments like any mortal body (Civ. Dei 19.23: "Corpus quidem debilitantibus tormentis semper constat et mortua est"). And we noted that Amobius (v. p. 280 supra) responds to the pagan assertion that Christ was mortal like other mortals in his mind, soul, and body (Adv. nat. 1.38.1-4), and there also we find "fragilitatis et conditionis unius" (1.3). "Divine" behaviour of this kind enumerated in 4.26.1-8 causes Amobius again to conclude:

Aut igitur vobis quae reperi sunt dii alii in quos omnia ista non cadant - in quos enim haec cadunt, humani sunt generis atque terreni - aut si hi sunt tantummodo quorum nonima publicaestis et nores, opinionibus tollitatis vestris. Mortalia sunt enim quaeacumque narratis. Adv. nat. 4.28. 26-31)

In the pericopeae noted above from Adv. nat. 4.28, the key phrases are "generis et terrenae fragilitatis," "humani sunt generis atque terreni," and the coup de grâce: "mortalia sunt."

Amobius' fourth résumé occurs in 6.2, which immediately precedes a chapter that might have been written as a response to Porphyry's criticism (in the OC) of the Christians for not offering sacrifice and incense to the gods. After giving an enumeration of the ideal characteristics of the gods, negatively underscoring anthropopathic terms (adfectus, cupiditas, ira, perturbatio, voluptas), he gives his typical conclusion:

Caduci enim generis et infinitatis humanae est contrariis agere: eoque quod tangat adfectio pati dolere deminui sepientium scita et præformati definiunt nec posse alter fieri quin legibus mortalitatis adstricti sint qui-sint ullis perturbationibus mancerpatis. (Adv. nat. 6.2.22-7)

Again affirming the form and emotional behaviour of the deities, Amobius has placed his fifth résumé in Adv. nat. 7.4-5. In 7.4 he disproves the pagan concept that the sacrifices give the deities pleasure. Just before he develops the corporeal-incorporeal antithesis which is also found in Porphyry and which we shall analyse in

134 Henceforth:"R4." 135 Aug., Ep. 102.15-Ham. CC fr. no. 79 (from Bk. 7): "Accusant, inquit, ritus sacrorum, hostias, thuris, et ceterae, quae templorum cultus exercuit; cum idem cultus ab ipsis, inquit, vel a Deo quem colunt exorsus est temporibus priscis, cum inducit Deus primitiis egisse." Cf. Adv. nat. 6.1.5-12; and 6.3.1-3: "Sed templa illis extrinseca nulla nec eorum effigies adoramus, non maestus hostias, non ture ac vina libatom." cf. 6.27.1-6.

136 Principally in 7.5. 137 Henceforth:"R5a" (=7.4) and "R5b" (=7.5), respectively.
the next chapter: "Sed si deus ut dicitur nullius est corporis amnique est incontig-ueus tactu, qui fieri potis est, ut corporalibus rebus nutritur incoporeum, quod mortale est ut immortale sustineat subdatque saluten rei quam contingere nequeat et motus subministrare vitalis?" (7.3.27-31). He then argues that the deities should not be moved by pleasure (voluptas), nor overcome by passion (libido), nor be, like animals, affected by sensations (sensus). A being that is affected in this way must be mortal:

Quod enim voluptate dissolvitur, id contraria necesse est tristitia contra- hatur, nec immune (est) existere ab anietate memorus quod laetitia trepi¬ dat et levitatibus extollitur gaudiorum. Utroque autem affectu debent esse dii liberi, si eos esse perpetuos et mortalium volumus fragilitate privatos.

We shall observe that we can be fairly certain that in this text, and in several others in Book 7, Arnobius is using Porphyry's sacrificial theory derived from Abst. against a contradictory sacrificial theory derived from Phil. or. The same method is used by Eusebius in PE 4.7-12 (v. Ch. VI). For the moment we move on to 7.5.5-22 (=R5b):

At si definitioenem teneamus iliam, quam pertinaciter maminissae convenit nos semper, universos animorum affectus ignotos diis esse, consequtaneum est credere nuncum decos irasci, quinimo nullum affectum magis esse ab his longe quam qui feris et belius proximus turbar tempestatis patientes et ad periculum intemperieis inducit. Quicquid enim vexat rei ali- cius et motus, possibile esse constat et fragile: quod passioni fragili¬ tatique subiectum est, id necesse est esse mortale: ira autem vexat et patientes se solvit: ergo mortale dicendum est quod passionibus subiec¬ tum est irae.

Divine anger is the specific emotion upon which he concentrates because he is refuting the sacrificial theory related to the appeasement of the deities with animal victims. There is no need to insist that he is indebted to Epicurean philosophy in this text, and indeed R51 demonstrates the opposite: Epicureans believed that the blessed and happy immortals expressed voluptas in the intermundia. We shall come back to this. Note his use of "definitionem" above which implies that he has in¬ deed planned his attack according to a definite philosophical doctrine (v. the fol¬ lowing section). All agitation of spirit ("universos animorum affectus") must be un¬ known to a being in order that it be classified "divine": otherwise it is mortal.

Arnobius has inserted his final résume in 7.35-6. These chapters appear at the climax of the attack upon pagan sacrifices which, as we have noted, receive a longer refutation than any other pagan religious practice. If indeed Book Seven

138 Henceforth="R6." 139 V. pp.52-7 supra (Ch. I)."
was written before the end of 305, when Christians had already been forced to sacrifice/burn incense to the gods, the length and impetuosity of the attack are understandable, especially since there would appear to be a good possibility that the State Persecution might have been given some prominent intellectual support by Porphyry's anti-Christian propaganda. He asserts in 7.34.1-6 that the pagans do not know what a god is, his nature, substance, character, and whether he has bodily form or not. We recall that in 1.36.16ff. (v. p. 175 supra) Arnobius attributes to Christ alone the revelation of what a true God is, his greatness, character, depth, and indescribable profundity, and this statement appears to be anti-Porphyrian (v. pp. 283f. supra). Ignorance of these characteristics of a deus verus have caused the pagans to fall into these concepts of deity (3.34.10ff.: "in eas sunt opinatioes lapsi"). After making a detailed comparison of pagan and Christian concepts of deity in 3.35ff., he again gives the same conclusion as he did in 1.18, 3.12.13-22, 4.28.25-31, 6.2.22-7, 7.4.7-13, and 7.5.5-22 in respect of the anthropopathic behaviour of the gods:

Ira et perturbari vos numina ceterisque animorum affects mancipata esse atque obnoxia ludicatis: nos humusmodi motus alienos existimus ab his esse; sunt enim ferocium generum et mortalitatis obunctum functiones. (Adv. nat. 7.36.8-13)

The "huiusmodi motus" include other human emotions and cohere with "ceterisque animorum affectibus." A similar argument is found in 7.4.1-13. Ira is not mentioned at all. He is there attacking the pagan idea that sacrifices give the gods pleasure (voluptas). This is an incorrect notion of deity, he claims, for whatever is subject to pleasure must also experience its opposite, sadness (tristitia). A true god thus cannot display either emotion, and the familiar conclusion is (as noted): "Utroque aurtem affectu debent esse dii liberi, si eos esse perpetuos et mortalium volumus fragilitate privatos" (7.4.11ff.). McCracken maintains that this passage betrays Epicurean influence. This interpretation is inaccurate: Epicurus, Philodemus, Torquatus, Velleius, and Lucretius, in short a vast majority of Epicureans of any repute believed that the gods enjoyed (katastematic and kinetic) "pleasures in every part of their being." 148

140 Henceforth="R6." 141 This text includes R5a. 142 McCr, 605, n.9, simply states: "The Epicurean view."

Amobiush Attack Upon The Anthropopathic Behaviour Of The Pagan Deities:

Source Criticism.

In Book Three of Cicero's De finibus, where we find an exposition of Stoic ethics given by M. Cato, there appears (3.x.35) a definition of human emotions which has apparently not only informed Amobiush polemical argument related to the anthropopathic behaviour of the pagan deities, but it also was significant in Augustine's anti-Porphyrian criticism. The text is:

Nec vero perturbationes animarum, quae vitam insipientium miseram acerbaque reductae (quia Graeci aetos appellant, poteram ego verbum ipsum interpretari morbos appellare, sed non conveniret ad omnia; quis enim misericordiam aut ipsam iracundiam mortem solet dicere? at illi dicitur ὁμοίος; sed igitur perturbation, quae nomine ipso vitiosa declarari videtur; nec eae perturbationes vi aliquae naturali moventur; omnesque eae sunt genere quattuor, partibus plures, aegritudo, formido, libido, quamque Stoici communi nomine corporis et animi ὁμοίος appellant, ego malo laetitiam appellare, quasi gestentis animi elationem voluntariam:) perturbationes autem nulla naturae vi co- moventur, omniaque ea sunt opiniones ac iudicia levitatis; itaque his sapiens semper vacabit. (LCL: Rackham)

In Book Eight of De Civ. Dei Augustine demonstrates the vanity of Apuleius' demonology which followed the Platonic tradition by affirming that the demons were intermediaries between the gods and men. His main goal is to show that Christ is the only mediator between man and God. In 8.17 he follows closely the above text from the De fin. The Greeks believe that perturbationi=pæsio diceretur motus animi contra rationem." Augustine wonders why the demons' minds ("animis daemonorum") can be affected by these emotions, but they are not found in the beasts ("in pecoribus"). He continues:

In hominibus autem ut sint istae perturbationes, facit hoc stultitia vel miseria; nondum enim sumus in illa perfectione sapientiae beati quae nobis a hac mortalitate liberatis in fine promittitur. Deus vero ideo dicit 1stas perturbationes non perpetui, quia non solum aeterni, verum etiam beati sunt.

He is here attacking De deo Socratii, but who are the Greeks lying behind "dicunt"? In Civ. Dei 9.3 Augustine quotes De deo Soc. 12: Apuleius asserts that the demons - whom the poets thought were gods - express every kind of human emotion. Any such expression is alien to the celestial divinities: "Quae ommes turbelae tempestasque procul a deorum caelestiam tranquillitate exulant." In 9.4 he identifies the Greeks of 8.17 as either the Platonists and the Peripatetics, or the Stoics. He informs his readers that Apuleius' gods were located "in alta aetheria sede...procul a conversatione mortalium" (9.7). Demons are "animo passiva," but not gods (9.8); from the latter he separated entirely all the passions ("passionibus") to which the former are subject. According to the Platonists, the gods exist in "aetheria" to avoid being contaminated by contact with men (9.16: referring to Symp. 203A). He continues by using the Platonic concept of being like God ("Similem Deo fieri") to
show that Christ is the one true mediator because his divinity makes him equal with the father, and his humanity made him like humans (9.17). We realise the main target at whom he has aimed for two Books (8-9) when we come to his diatribe against Porphyry's mixed up theology in Book Ten. After giving a story from De reg. an. about the binding and loosing of the divine powers, Augustine asserts:

Quo indicio dixit apparere theurgian esse tam boni conficiendi quam mali et apud deos et apud homines disciplinam; pati etiam deos et ad illas perturbationes passionesque deduci quas committer demonibus et hominibus Apuleius adtribuit, deos tamen ab eis aetheriae sedis altitudine separans et Platonis aseerans in illa discretione sententiam. (Civ. Dei 10.9)

He again compares the concepts of deity espoused by the Platonists Apuleius and Porphyry in Civ. Dei 10.27:

Quanto humanius et tolerabilius consequaneus tuus Platonicus Apuleius erravit, qui tantummodo daemones a luna et infra ordinatos agitari morbis passionum mentisque turbelis honores eos quandem, sed volens nolensque confessus est; deos tamen caeli superiores ad aetheria spatia pertinantes, sive visibles quos consecratos lucere cernebat, solem ac lunam et cetera ibidem lumina, sive invisibles quos putatissent, ab omni labe istarum perturbationum quanta potentis disputationis secretit! Tu (sc. Porphyrius) autem hoc didicisti non a Platone, sed a Chaldæis magistris, ut in aetheriis vel empyriis mundi sublimitates et firmamenta caelestia extolleres vita humana, ut possent diei vestri theurgis pronuntiare divina...

The main battle lines drawn in these passages are clear. First, he demonstrates how far Porphyry has fallen from the true Platonic tradition. Apuleius was a purer Platonist because at least he did not attribute human emotions to the celestial deities, but only to the demons. Porphyry elevated human weakness to the ethereal heights. One purpose of this criticism appears to have been to turn Porphyry's insulth that there was a great disparity between the teachings of Christ and his disciples, against him. Second, Augustine refers to the celestial gods ("deos...caeli") to whom Porphyry attributed human emotions. Demons do not enter the discussion.

We should acknowledge that Amobius frequently informs his readers that it is the "caelites" (1.1.6) or "dii caelestes" (7.3.8) who are the principal objects of his attack upon the anthropopathic conceptions of the pagan deities, and unlike all the ante-Nicene apologists who preceded him, he never calls them demons. The latter fact about Amobius' polemical argument has puzzled many scholars who have tried to account for the rhetor's silence on this subject. Yet if he is turning the Neoplatonist's Oracle and commentary against Porphyry, it would be logical to expect that Amobius might directly attack the Neoplatonist's celestial gods, who were capable of suffering human passions/mental agitations, rather than the demons. And observe that Eusebius attacks the same concept of deity, immediately before quoting from Abst., where Porphyry exeges the meaning of the gods' names: Ἀλλα γὰρ πλὴν καὶ μᾶς καὶ ὑμᾶς φθορὰς τε γυναικῶν καὶ ἄνδρων ἐπιθυμοῦσα καὶ μυρία ἔτη, θνητὰ οὐκ ἄλλοις καὶ οὐκ ἅλλοις καὶ ἀλλοιμα, κόσμον ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τοῖς καθόλου σκοτεινοῖς αὐτὸν ἔμενεν.
tò ἀθανάτον καὶ ἀνθρωπομορφότατον ἔπεισινεύμενα; (PE 3.3). He admonishes the pagans to worship the High God beyond the universe with befitting thoughts, and to regard him not in a fleshly sense in awe of the elements of the cosmos, but as one Divine Power, impossible to describe or conceive, who pervades all things in an incorporeal manner (PE 3.6). In the Christians’ response to Porphyry we clearly see a polemical method which is more complex than a simple literal interpretation of the Graeco-Roman myths. On the one hand Porphyry contaminated the true Platonic conception of deity which rigorously separated any contact between the gods and men, by attributing to the gods the ability to experience passions/mental agitations; on the other hand he made it evident that they could not be of any salvific benefit to mortals because the gods existed on the same frail emotional level as they did. The question is whether Amobius depends upon Stoicism and the authentic Platonic tradition to develop his counter-attack upon the Hecatean Oracle and Porphyrian commentary.

The Anthropopathic Terms In Adversus Nationes.

If we move now from a view of the forest to an inspection of the trees, we may be able to get a clear picture of the way in which each anthropopathic term (1) serves the overall apologetical argument of responding to Porphyry’s rejection of Christ’s deity and (2) reveals the inter-relationship that binds the six résumés together. According to the number of passages in which it is found, the ira, irascor, iracundia group heads the list. Four groups of passages should be read in connection with the four recapitulations of 1.18, 4.28, 6.2, 7.35f. Amobius develops his argument that the anthropopathic depictions of the

149 Due purely to polemical purposes. The main pagan accusation of Book 1 stresses divine anger: the gods have left the earth and have sent innumerable misfortunes because of the existence of Christians in the world.

150 1.15.7f.; 1.19.5 (irascor).

151 3.36.10: the gods have just reason to be angry at pagans; 4.31.23 (irascor): the gods ignore grave sins, but in lighter moments threaten the empire; 4.37.6,10: the pagan myths should cause divine anger; 4.37.26 (irascor); 4.37.17 (iracundia).

152 5.7.10: Accestis’ anger; cf. the “mortale corpus” of Accestis in 5.14.32; 5.20.22: Ceres’ boiling with wrath; 5.36.16;5.37.20: he protests allegorising the gods’ anger (the latter has irascor); cf. 5.41.10,19; 5.15.11: pagans provoke divine anger; cf. 5.31.21;6.1.20.

153 And R5a-b (=7.4.1-13 and 7.5.12-7). All protest against the idea that sacrifices appease divine wrath: 7.7.2,8,14 (irascor): gods have established no laws and should not therefore grow angry; 7.8.9,14,17f.: gods sell wrongs like little boys; 7.9.50f.; 7.13.4;7.15.16: gods do not burn with anger; 7.18.16: an attack upon the sacrificial theory of appeasement, which is directly related to 7.3 and R5a-b, where his basic emphasis is upon the fact that an immortal being cannot be sustained/enticed by mortal (material) things.
mini-recapitulations of the boys the seriousness into tur, nec to explain divine upon stress Empire's enforcement of universal sacrifice.

The appeasement of Jupiter Elicius' wrath (5.2.33) signifies that he was made fun of by a mortal. Roman religious Heilsgeschichte provides the vicious attack upon Jupiter's display of anger at the games (7.38.1): this god, so says Amobius, is not of divine stock for acting like this because he did not even keep the laws of mortals.

The sub-human nature of the display of anger among the deities comprises the second idea. Amobius' goal appears to have been to go one step further than Porphyry. Not only could he not afford to reciprocate the latter's "piissimum" which designated Christ in his commentary (Civ. Dei 19.23), but also he does not have any compliments to give. Hence at times the gods' immorality, brought about by uncontrollable emotions, is described as animalistic. Thus if they really express anger as the myths relate, one can certainly attribute to them sexes like those of dogs and pigs. Pagans have claimed that the gods are angry at Christians (praecor), a concept which assumes that gods feel as the wild beasts do. Pagan sacrificial theories provide ample opportunity most vehemently to attack the anthropopathic concept. If sacrificial victims placate divine wrath, then pagans are proposing that Christians worship wild animals.

His third classification is specifically related to sacrifices. The section where Amobius treats this theme (7.1-38) is important for several reasons. It is the last Book of the work and contains the lengthiest attack upon a pagan religious practice. Literary retortion has basically been replaced by one based upon cultic practices, a fact which may suggest that he is drawing from experience, but we shall also observe in the following chapter that he appears to be using some of Porphyry's arguments against animal sacrifice which he develops in Abst. Also, as we have already noted, the attention which Amobius gives to this practice is explicable in light of the Roman Empire's enforcement of universal sacrifice. Finally, it provided a great opportunity to attack the anthropopathic concept of the gods, for in this section Amobius uses

The stress upon deorum ira against the Christians may suggest a regional (N. Afr.) interpolation into a Porphyrian anti-Christian argument. Augustine (Civ. Dei 9.5) was forced to explain divine anger expressed in the scripture as "Deus secundum scripturas irascitur, nec tamen ulla passione turbatur."

The initial group (7.5.3,9 (praecor), 15,17,19) is similar to Rt. There are three mini-recapitulations of his argument leading up to R6: Es6-a-b, and 7.15. This indicates the seriousness of retorting the pagan charge of 1.34-47. Cf. 7.8.9: gods act like little boys or brats (7.32.8); 7.25.32: they have stomachs and feast on victims; their hum-

154
1.20.6. 155 5.3.17. 156 7.41.29. 157 7.43.20. 158 3.1.4.20. 159
160 Adv. nat. 1.17.2.5, esp. 8-10. 161 7.6.5: The animalistic demonisation is present in R6, specifically 7.36.8,18,26.
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many terms that denote human emotions to prove the mortality of the gods.\footnote{163}

Amobius makes the same point with voluptas. The Adv. nat. displays perhaps one of the most rampant vilifications of the illicit sexual pleasures of the Graeco-Roman gods/goddesses found in ante-Nicene Christian literature.\footnote{164} Amobius uses this aspect of their anthropopathic behaviour to prove that the deities possess bodies, i.e. they are mortal.\footnote{165} By emphasising the immorality of the gods, Amobius is mainly concerned to nullify any salvific benefits supposedly derived from worshipping them: "Quis est enim mortalium tam pubedis moribus instititus, quem-von ad huiusmodi furias deorum documenta proritent?" (5.29.32ff.). Pagan religious culture is anti-salvific because it propagates the necessity to worship deities so obviously mortal. The same argument is made about Christianity in the Hecatean Oracle and commentary in respect of the worship of Christ. Cannot also the observation that Jupiter was born as a result of sexual voluptas (i.e., pagans worship a hominem natum born in an impure manner) be a thorn intended for Porphyry's side, thus showing that there is no human need for "ignitionem Iovis"?

Also in the voluptas group is found an emphasis upon the animalistic nature of the gods. Sexual pleasure causes them to act like filthy quadrupeds (3.10.8). Man's lust is not so incorrigible as Jupiter's (4.22.26). Even humans and animals know that they should not commit incest as he did (5.9.25).\footnote{166} As to the belief that sacrifices satisfy the gods' pleasure, this can only mean that they act "velut animal vile."\footnote{167} Forming the apex of his argument is the assertion that the deities derive voluptas from such stench in the sacrifices which even human senses find unbearable (7.16.9). It is apparent from this that the voluptas deorum, as in the case of ira, comes under especially severe criticism in the section covering animal sacrifices (7.1-37).\footnote{168} Voluptas appears in Cato's list of Stoic passions (De fin. 3.x.35).

an foolishness is accentuated: 7.32.2;33.15; and the main recapitulation of R6, specifically 7.36.8,18,26.

\footnote{163} E.g., ira, voluptas, libido, affectus, gaudium, tristitia, sensus, perturbatio, passio, cupiditas. This corroborates the present interpretation.

\footnote{164} I.e., within such a short space in one work. \footnote{165} V. 4.33.5;7.4.13,17; generally condemned in 3.10.8; the Great Mother enjoys sex (4.29.14), after R3; humanness stressed in 5.28.19 (Prosimum); cf. 7.15.17 in light of R6; Jupiter's lust for human women (4.22.17); mad lust of Acestis (5.5.16; cf. Amobius' criticism in 5.8); protests against allegorising the kidnap of Proserpina for lust (5.32.15).

\footnote{166} Other passages in the sexual lust category are: 4.35.5: poets' gods promote human lust; 6.22.22: anthropomorphic gods also; cf. 6.23.1; 4.7.4: Perfica perfects sexual pleasures (the latter two being related to R4 and R3, respectively); 5.29.22: Ceres' lust should not be repeated.

\footnote{167} 7.4.6f. \footnote{168} Taking delight in the sacrifices presupposes the possession of a body: 7.4.1,4,17,33,35; cf. 7.13.3;18.18;25.18;26.31;34.27. The soteriological aspects of Amobius' attack upon the pagan concepts of deity will be analysed in the following chapter.
Refutation of the psychological condescension of the deities to experience other human pleasures completes the voluptas group. Ignominious is the idea that the gods are supposed to take delight in theatrical performances and dancing, playing, frisking, writing obscene songs, and so forth. Not only should they not experience such ludicrous "terrenas voluptas," Amobius also explicitly asserts that any kind of display of voluptas is totally alien to any genuinely divine nature. A wise man laughs at these pagan beliefs, and only children and the semi-literate would find them charming.

Libido is similarly used to describe sexual lust, and it appears in M. Cato's list of the Stoic-classification of the emotions (De fin. 3.i.35: v. p. 304 supra). Emotional display of this nature proves that the deities are mortal. Due to this uncontrollable desire, the gods are born. Passion to procreate characterises the life of earthly creatures: it derives from an earthly and human race. Sensual features of the images of the gods only cause - and they certainly do not prevent - sexual passion among humans. Finally, the centrepiece of Amobius' attack is Jupiter. His immoral display of incestuous lust can only have similar effects upon humans. His name is associated with every kind of illicit libido:

Quis est enim mortalium vel exiguae humanitatis sensum ferens qui non ipse prevideat, qualia sint haec omnia, quam scoerata, quam foeda quantasque ignominias dii ferant ex ipsis mysteriorum sacris et ex sacrorum originibus indecoris? (Adv. nat. 5.22.4-8)

Note that the inseparable relationship between religion and morality which characterised the Christian religion and may have been one of the principal contributing factors to its widespread acceptance throughout the Roman Empire, displays itself as a significant feature of Amobius' new way of life. For in relating Christ's salvific mission, he uses libido to describe the vice which Christ helps his followers to overcome (e.g., 1.27.17; 1.63.27; and v. esp. Ch. VI infra).
Libido denotes the sub-human acts of the gods as well. In their lust for vengeance the gods act like wild beasts. Human libido is corrigible, but not that of the deities. As opposed to Jupiter, men and beasts know that they should not commit incest. The kind of lust which Attis displayed would necessitate a lawsuit if a man accused another human of the same act. Not for one moment will Amoebius concede even the possibility that any use of pagan religious literature can ameliorate man's moral conduct. For this reason he rejects the literary value of a deeper meaning to the myths made possible by an allegorical interpretation. Explaining away the immoralities of the gods is nipped in the bud by a philosophy of literary criticism that operates solely on the level of a literal interpretation. We should not think this too simplistic: although his method of attacking the deities could not afford otherwise, as we have seen in Civ. Dei 10.9 and 27 (p. 305 supra) the object of the attack appears to have been Porphyry's attributing human emotions to the gods. It was the same human emotions which were unable to affect the wise man according to Stoic philosophy. Only the foolish were harassed by them (De fin. 3.x.35). In the pagan literature about the gods, their mad passion is tantamount to that of filthy insects, from which even human wisdom bids one flee. Venus' libido is understandably compared to that of the beasts of the fields.

Cupiditas serves the same polemical purpose by signifying sexual lust. Thus the suasoria speech of the second Minerva depicts the goddess as a human harlot painted with rouge, even enticing her father. Emotional excitement of this kind classifies the deities among the insects or field animals. A simpleton would not attribute such filth to Venus. Apollo's passion proves his terrestrial weakness, and Jupiter's incestuous affairs betray an earthly lowliness like his mother's. The excess of human wisdom bids one flee. Above all, the examples of the deities would be enticed to commit similar immoralities.

180 1.17.6. 181 4.23.1. 182 5.20.19; 5.9.30. 183 5.5.20. 184 Cf. 5.32-45.
185 3.9.15; 3.10.6. 186 4.9.8: Libentina and Bumus are the guardians of libido.
187 3.28.3ff. Cf. 5.28.16, concerning Proserinus' lusts: even a mortal trained in morality (5.29.32ff.) would be enticed to commit similar immoralities.
188 4.16.27. 189 3.10.7; cf. 5.5.24: Jupiter's behaviour is below human ethical norms.
190 3.26.6: Venus. 191 3.26.1ff.: "Quisquamne est hominum rationis alicuius primum indicus, qui divinitatis constantiam tam foedis polluat aut contaminit moribus?"
192 4.26.5; 4.28.7f. (R3). 193 5.9.7; cf. 5.20.10: Diespiter's incest with Ceres (related to R4); Jupiter is attacked in this way in 4.22.21, which builds up to R3 (4.28); cf. 6.13.30: filthy passion of Jupiter, named after a male harlot; note the mortality theme of 11.43-6: "quod inter omnia primum est, sui esse beneficium muneris, quod natus ipse atque in rebus adoraretur humanis?": 6.23.4 attacks the sensual representations of the images and their adverse ethical effect upon humans; 5.41.10; 43.13: rejects the allegorical interpretation of the passion of Venus and Mars.
pression of sexual passion among the gods proves their mortality and that they are therefore subject to the laws of mortality.

Amobius demonstrates the humanness of the gods by using _sensus_ in two ways. First, it denotes the five senses. The best example of this use is the portrayal of a very human Latarenus as a _maître chef_ tasting the savoury sauces of pagan kitchens. Sensual experience of this kind presupposes the possession of a body. It is also used to denote a mental apprehension of a moral truth. Again, he has a special Jewish use to grind. This deity has no sense of wrong. Amobius asserts, emphasising his human/sub-animal nature. Finally, the idea that sacrifices sensually stimulate the gods either by the odours of the burnt victims or the incense, can only point to the fact that they possess human or animal natures.

_Affectus_ is employed to prove that any deity which experiences such mental dispositions is mortal. _Affectio_ serves the same purpose. For example, disturbing emotion resulting in sexual lust causes Venus (who we recall was the patron deity of SV) to behave like a beast or a cheap human harlot. A classification of all beings who experience affectus among human or animal genera is present in the attack upon sacrifices.

Emotional disturbance variously denoted by _perturbatio_, _perturbo_, and _passio_ is completely alien to any divine nature. Any being who expresses the emotions that these terms describe is mortal. Finally, although they do not occur as frequently

194. 4.28.22 (R3). 195. 6.2.10 (R4). 196. 4.6.13. 197. 7.4.6,14,17 (R5a); cf. 3.19.16: the nature of the Christian God is totally above the sense of mortals.

198. He did not have the sense common to humans and animals to know that incest is morally wrong (5.9.12); a mortal with a little sense can perceive Jupiter's wickedness (5.22.5); he has no sense of wrong (5.23.6).

199. This should be alien to a divine nature (7.1.7,12;7.28.49); on the human theme: gods behave like bricked boys (7.8.6); they smell incense with their noses (7.28.3,7); anthropomorphic gods derived from human senses (sensus: 7.34.13); the animal theme: deities behave like barking dogs (7.17.4); sub-human sense related to sacrificial odours (7.16.8).


201. V. n.199 supra. 202. 1.18.5 (RL);6.2.9 (R4); cf. 4.37.7 (qualifying _ira_); 1.17.4.

203. _Affectio_ used to prove the gods' mortality: 4.28.4 (R3);6.2.23 (R4);7.30.4: the deities do not taste wine in the sacrifices.

204. Initially delineated in 3.27. 205. 3.28.7. 206. 4.35.17. 207. They act like little boys (7.4.11); cf. 7.8.4; the pagan reference to Roman _Heilsgeschichte_ in 7.36.2 is to be compared with 7.35f. (R6).

208. Qualifying anger in 7.5.8,9: against the appeasement theory; cf. 7.36.9 (R6): such mental dispositions belong to savage beings and those that are mortal.

209. _Perturbatio_: 4.28.5 (R3);6.2.9,26 (R4); _Perturbo_: 7.36.8 (R6); _Passio_: 7.5.14,16 (R6=whatever is subject to passio is mortal); cf. 1.18.2,7 (RL: _perturbatio_); and 1.18.6 (RL: _passio_); cf. 5.20.23: Brimo's emotional disturbance (_perturbatio_: qualifying
as the aforementioned terms, _agritudino_, which appears in Cato's list (De fin. 3.x. 35); 

210 _tristitia_; _gaudio_; and _indignatio_ are all similarly used to demonstrate the humanness and mortality of the gods depicted in pagan religious literature and worshipped through various cultic practices.

The general vituperation of the deity of the gods continues beyond R6, however, and in the final section of the Adv. nat. we are again confronted with evidence that Porphyry is the antagonist to whom Amobius is responding. Indeed, this rejection of divinity represents one of the predominant themes that binds together the attack upon Jupiter, Aesculapius, and the Great Mother in Adv. nat. 7.38-51, which forms the last quarter of Book Seven. After prefacing his own argument with a lengthy speech glorifying Roman Heilsgeschichte found on the lips of a pagan, Amobius cannot accept that Jupiter is deus. This is the main idea of his argument and appears in every chapter of the commentaries upon the story of T. Latinus. He begins by noting that it is incredible to believe a god enjoys horse racing. 220 Jovian epithets which appear in the text should be contrasted with

210 In light of R4-6.2; the animalistic theme is also found in 3.28.6; 7.6.1.

211 7.4.8 (R5a): it must be foreign to a divine nature "si eae esse perpetuos at mortalium volumus fragilitate privatos."

212 7.4.5,11,18 (R5a): the same context as the preceding note; 7.18.19: one god's joy about a sacrificial victim is different from another's; 7.42.18: joy of human holocaust at games was a childish show.

213 If deities display this, why not assign them sexes like dogs and pigs? (3.11.5); they behave like wild beasts (7.5.5=R5b; 7.6.6); or little brats (7.32.12) in expressing this foul emotion.

214 Jupiter's tantrum at the games (7.36ff.); commentary in 7.41-44.48.

215 Importation of the snake from Epidaurus (7.44.49-7.48: attack included).

216 7.49-51: importation of the Great Mother climaxes in a strongly anti-Roman statement which ends the work.

217 This is another fine example of Amobius' use of the rhetorical _susaoria_ to develop his argument. V. Ch. II, p.94 supra.

218 The literary retortion is based upon the "histories" and annals. Q.F. Pictor may be the source for the story of Jupiter. Amobius' attack upon this story from pagan (Roman) sacred history recalls Porphyry's criticism of Daniel in the CC. Note the reference to the crop failure in the pagan's _susaoria_ speech in 7.38.5f. ("frugum inociant") which may suggest (1) a close connection between the agrarian life and religious beliefs (v. Ch. II, p.76, n.84; and Ch. IV passim, supra); and (2) the immediate historical situation of North Africa may have been characterised by crop failure and scarcity of grain (e.g., Adv. nat. 1.9). The passage should not be read alone, but should be compared with other texts which strongly suggest hard agrarian times. The reader is reminded to review Ch. IV passim, but especially pp.207ff. supra. I use the term Heilsgeschichte because it is clear that from the religious point of view of the pagan, the correct celebration of the games, proper method of sacrifice, and veneration of foreign deities imported into Rome have (1) averted imminent dangers, (2) conquered enemies, and (3) increased the number of provinces of the Roman Empire.

219 V. McR., 615f., n.130. 220 7.41.10-3.
those that describe the Christian Supreme God. He then notes that even the less serious-minded consider such action as childish ("puerilia") and rejects it as follies ("ludicra"). He asks who could believe Jupiter was a god for seeking vengeance on a slave. He next expounds the story's inconsistencies, the same method Porphyry used in his criticism of the Bible in the OC. He again vilifies the deity of Jupiter, whose childish show and passion for pleasure produced a human holocaust. Jupiter should have pardoned human feelings and ignorance, and certainly should not have killed innocent people.

These details of Amobius' commentary upon Jupiter, his stupidity, vile and destructive vengeance, his criminal personality, childishness and inconsistencies, and above all his mortality, provide irrefutable evidence that he is not deus. His argument may represent a retortion of Porphyry's Hecatean Oracle and commentary upon it found in Phil. or., but some elements of Amobius' criticism are reminiscent of the attack upon Christian "salvation-history" which characterised the OC as well. If the last quarter of Book Seven demonstrates anything about Greco-Roman religious paganism (7.38-51), it is that (1) the gods/goddesses were believed to have actually intervened in humankind's history and (2) these theophanies of the past could be used to give "spiritual" meaning and purpose to human existence of the present. The appeal to those ancient religious traditions which preceded the advent of Christianity by hundreds of years was an important fact used by Porphyry often in his anti-Christian propaganda. And it was because of their abandonment of these traditions that the great enemy of the Church argued that Christians should be executed. If we ask how these concepts might have taken upon themselves some political meanings, the answer would undoubtedly be that the deities were thought to have worked within and throughout history to make the great and glorious Roman Empire. We find this concept efflorescing into something that approached a political theology in the later Roman Empire. It is clearly present in a number of the persecuting efforts, as well as Diocletian's Edictum de pretiis rerum venalium (v. Ch. I, pp. 58f., supra) and Edictum de incestis nuptiis (v. Ch. I, pp. 33-9, supra). We do not have any reason to think that it was not found in the Edictum de Christianis, for in the preface of the Edict Against the Manichees we hear that "it is the height

221. 7.41.13-6: "Immo illum fuisse quis est qui adsentiatur Iovem, quem deum principem dicitis et rerum quecumque sunt conditorem...". V. Ch. III, pp.127ff. for the Amobius divine epithets.

222. Ibid., 23-6. The change using the term "puerilia" corresponds to Apocr. 3.6: childish records of Christian literature; for "ludicra" cf. Apocr. 3.4.

223. Ibid., 28. V. pp.286-9 supra. 224. 7.42.14-20. Note that the "puerilis" (1.15) describing this story (cf. "puerilia" of 1.41.25) is a direct retortion of "puerili adserione" describing Christian literature in the pagan attack of 1.54.14.

225. 7.42.20-32. 226. Ibid., 28. 227. PE 1.2.2.
of criminality to reexamine doctrines once and for all settled and fixed by the ancients, doctrines which hold and possess their recognized place and course" (RCS 2.580f.). Porphyry had the same high respect for ancestral religious customs. One of his objections to the Christians was their insistence upon the fact that their God had uniquely revealed himself, from Moses and the prophets to the incarnation and the apostles, for the redemption of humankind. Hence the need to set right the falsehoods of prophecy as in the case of Daniel, and to make it perfectly clear that Jesus was simply a man, the disciples were lying magicians, the Bible was inconsistent, and the credibility gap between the teachings of Christ and his disciples too great to believe in either. Besides, Christians could not offer any proof which might convince the intellectual that the tenets of their religion were true. They were fated not to receive the gifts of the gods, and they were therefore unable to acquire "agitationem Iovis." It is understandable in light of the above that Amobius has sought to prove that Jupiter was not deus (7.38-44,48).

It will also be recalled that Porphyry emphasised the ignorance of Christ’s disciples. The gist of the critic appears to have been that a god would not reveal himself to (i.e., or act in history through) the simple-minded numskulls from the working classes as recorded in the Bible. Amobius may have selected the T. Latinius myth intentionally to retort these specific accusations back upon Porphyry. Jupiter selects a backward man from the country to be his messenger, both unknown and obscure, unacquainted with city life, who probably does not know what a dancer is. It is obvious that Amobius is emphasising the utter ignorance of the spokesmen of Jupiter. If the “rusticus senior” delayed in responding to Jupiter’s revelation due to his ignorance, why did the “god” kill his children? Three more times he offers evidence that Jupiter was not deus by demonstrating his subhuman morality.

Aesculapius is the rhetor’s next victim. He seeks to prove that he was not divine, but one born in the womb of a woman, and according to pagan literature, a bolt of lightning killed him. This is undoubtedly a retortion of the pagan (Porphyry) re-

V. pp. 297ff. supra. 7.43.8-12: “Quae fuerat ratio, ut ruri hominem suetum, obscuritate incognitum namin, uritarum insicum rerum, qui sit praesul fortasse nescientem, voluntatis suae deliget nuntium et expetitiae satisfactionis auctoren?” In 11.1-11 he argues that Jupiter should have gone directly to the consul, a priest, the pontifex maximus, or his own flamen dialis. This is undoubtedly a response to the Porphyrian charge that the Christian God should have selected more prominent persons to be his spokesmen.


Ibid., 22-7: “Et quiesquant hominum qui fuisse illum deum credat tam nius, tam impium nec mortalium saltam constituta servantem,...”; cf. 7.44.44-48; 7.44.24-7.

7.44.57-61: “minime illum fuisse divum, qui conceptus et natus muliebri alto esse set, qui annorum gradibus ad eum finem ascendisset actatis in quo illum vis fulminis, vestris quemadmodum litteris continetur, et vita expulisset et lumine.”
jection of the Christian belief in Christ's deity because he was born as a human being and died an ignominious death. It will be recalled that Porphyry specifically named Aesculapius and "other gods" in the CC who had vacated Rome since the Christians began to exist, and they had not revealed any public blessings. Arnobius then begins to analyse the ludicrous theophany of Aesculapius: a snake was imported to Rome from Epidaurus. This pretentious theophany was of a creature that crawls like worms born in the mud. Quite vividly the biological and physical features of the snake are described, facts which prove it was of a terrestrial species. Inconsistencies of the myth are detailed. An appearance in the form of a repulsive animal poses doubts as to whether Aesculapius was a verus deus, an apparent retortion of Porphyry's rejection of the form of Christ's theophany (e.g., 1.42.1: "hominem natum"; cf. 1.60). Arnobian grapes were a little more sour than the Porphyrian variety. Pagan literature itself asserts that Aesculapius was simply a snake. The fact that the veracity of this is based upon "oculorum sensibus" should be contrasted with the miracles ("dona") of Christ's earthly theophany "quae populi gentesque suo (i.e., the former question) is that if it had such features enumerated in 7.45f. (v. n. 237), it could not have been a god. Arnobius uses the same kind of evidence to disprove the deity of Aesculapius: the theme of the entire chapter is developed around the beginning question: "Sed si deus (sc.: Aesculapius), inquit, non erat?". It would appear certain that this question is a retortion of 1.42.8f., which we have concluded is a response to the Hecatean Oracle: "Ergone, inquiet aliquidum iratus et percitus, deus ille est Christus?". His answer (i.e., 241) is that if it had such features enumerated in 7.45f. (v. n. 237), it could not have been a god. It was a snake and nothing more. Generally, Arnobius does appear to be turning the tables against the Hecatean Oracle and Porphyry's commentary upon it, which was apparently being used by a

233 Adv. nat. 1.36.1-6. 234 PE 6.1-Ham. CC fr. no. 80: v. p. 278, n. 74. 235 7.44.64f. 236 Ibid., 65-75. 237 7.45f.: such facts are noted as eating food with a mouth; having a belly; digestive and blood systems; excreting waste; a dumb animal was dependent upon humans for the voyage to Rome; it crawls on its belly, possesses a head, tail, multicoloured hide, fangs, etc. 238 7.46. 239 7.45.21-30: (1) If he avoided being seen by men, the theophany should not have been in the form of a snake, since in any form he would have been himself. (2) If he intended to be seen, why did he not show himself with the power of his divinity? 240 Ibid., 34. 241 V. pp. 289f. supra. 242 7.46.15. 243 1.42.17f. 244 V. pp. 288f. 245 7.46, esp. 11.45-9: "Argumentatio flaccida est, ea re suspiciari deum illum fuisse serpentem, quod ab oculis sessa proponebat omnia festinatim subtransit, cum deum non fuisse eadem parsus possit argumentatione monstratur." We shall observe infra that the last two deities attacked by Arnobius in Book Seven were dealt with by Porphyry in De reg. an.
Porphyrian Neoplatonic group in North Africa. In what follows fragment number eighty of the CC appears to be in mind. It has already appeared as a possible connection with the beginning of Adversus nationes.\footnote{246} This evidences the skillful intertwining of counter-attacks upon Porphyrian arguments derived from more than one work. In the CC fragment Porphyry asserted that since Jesus began to be worshipped, there had been no public aid given by the gods (δημοσίας διαλείται: cf. also Adv. nat. 5.15). One should not marvel at the persistence of the plague in Rome because Aesculapius and the other deities have left. Note that Amobius appears to be responding to this remark in his comment: that if the deity had been summoned to drive out the plague many years ago, then Rome should have been made forever immune to "any injurious breeze."\footnote{247} He refers in 7.47.20 ("oraculis venerabilibus"), as he had done in 1.1.3 ("et velut quidem promptum ex oraculo dicere"), to the authority of oracles, and in both cases CC fr. 80 appears to have been the accusation which he attacks. He continues by acknowledging that from this snake’s importation to the present, Rome has often been broken by diseases. Where was Aesculapius during these periods, why has he not protected Rome since then, and why did he not prevent any dreadful thing creeping upon it?\footnote{248} Either the snake arrived at Rome when the plague had already dissipated, and therefore Aesculapius is a pseudo-saviour, or the hymns of the fates do not provide any true predictions because the prescribed remedy in them demonstrates that Aesculapius' auxilium (7.48.28) to Rome was restricted to his initial arrival. Thus all periods since then have not benefited from his aid.

Amobius closes the work with the same object, viz. he offers proof that the Great Mother is not divine. He had already argued that "hominem illam fuisse, non divinam" in 5.8.22f., and this appears also to have been written in response to the pagan (Porphyrian) rejection of Christ’s deity in 1.42.1: "Natum hominem colitus".

Four passages highlight his position.\footnote{249} Amobius begins by referring to the histories

\footnote{246} V. p.315, n.234. \footnote{247} 7.47.12-6. \footnote{248} 7.47.19-25: "ubi ergo Aesculapius fuit, ubi ille promissa oraculis venerabilibus? Qua templo post condicta sibique excedificata delubra gladiator habebere perpassus est bene meriitae civitatis lucem, cum in id esset aditus, ut et melius moderetur instantibus nec sinneret in futurum tale aliquid quod metuere tur irrepere!"

\footnote{249} Cf. 7.49.11-9, esp. 11-4: "Si verum locuntur historiae neque illae inscrutum rerum conscriptionibus falsitatis, adlatum ex Phrygia nihil quidem (qui) alius scribitur missum regae ab Attalo, nisi lapsi quidem non magnus..."; 7.50.13ff.: "Et quis hominem credet terrae sumptum lapidem, senae astitabilium nullo, fulginei coloris atque atri, * corporis, deum fuisse matrem?"; 7.51.1-5: "Sed fuerit praesens, ut exopiscitis credi, illo ipso numer in lapide: et mortalium quisquam est, quemvis ille sit credulus et facillimes aures quibusilibet fictitionibus praebet, qui eam judicet fuisse aut tempore illo deam aut hodie dici apellargique debere..."; 7.51.15f.: "*generis eam fuisse divini quisquam-ne hominem (credat) aut habuisse aequitatem diis dignam...". We know from an inscription found at Le Kef that the Great Mother was worshipped at Sicca during the Roman period. V. the epitaph of a priest of the goddess, Q. Valerius Severus Platienses, in CIL 8.1649 (Ch. II, p.78 and n.101 supra).
which relate that King Attalus sent a small stone and nothing else from Phrygian Pessinus. And it may be in the form of personal retractions that his vilification of three pagan gods who progressively degenerate into an idiot fond of horse racing, a snake, and a stone, has been made. He thus closes seven admirable books written during a very difficult period in the history of the North African Church under the Roman Empire, by noting that such imbecillities have caused the perdition of mankind under the auspices of the great powers responsible for Rome's imperium. Perhaps there could not have been a better way for a North African Christian to end his work: he was writing when the Tetrarchy, probably in collaboration with Porphyry, the most formidable enemy of the Church in antiquity, was attempting to eradicate the Christian religion. The ball had been well served to the Porphyrian court.

We must make a final observation about the last two deities mentioned by Amobi in Book Seven, Aesculapius and the Great Mother. Augustine's principal opponent in Book Ten of De civitate Dei is Porphyry. His main literary source which he attacks is the Neoplatonist's De reg. an., and some of the details of his argument shed further light upon the Amobius-Porphyry connection in Adv. nat. generally, but specifically Book Seven. (We shall observe other parallels in the following chapter.) In 10.1-8 Augustine demonstrates that the miracles recorded in the Bible confirm God's promises and show that the Christian religion therefore offers proof that it alone can show the way of true worship and sacrifice to man. He then finds repugnant Porphyry's illicit Chaldaean arts (=theurgy) which led him to the disastrous belief that gods are subject to emotional agitation (10.9f.), and he uses Porphyry's Ep. An. (10.11) to demonstrate how the Neoplatonist could contradict himself in his works. Miracles are the centerpiece of his argument for seven chapters (12-18). In 10.12 Augustine refers to the Platonists who offer miracles as proof of their belief. The word which he uses for proof, "testantibus," corresponds to Amobi's assertion that Christian belief derived from scripture is based upon witnesses (1.57.22: "testibus"), while pagans only have opinions (Ibid.: "opinionibus"). Three chapters deal with Christian miracles (Civ. Dei 13-6) in this way. He then turns to the subject of sacrifice in 10.16, specifically to the Platonists who practice theurgy. Two of the miracles which these pagans use as convincing evidence that their deities deserve sacrificial worship are: the accompaniment

This is an example of Amobi's acceptance of the historicity of the myths when it will cohere with his overall polemical purposes. Again, the direct attack upon the sacred history of Roman religious paganism recalls Porphyry's polemical method in the CC.

V. pp.101-5, and 113f. supra. V. pp.83f. supra for anti-Roman sentiment in the Adv. nat. V. the following chapter and the conclusions to the present study.
of the god Asclepius with the serpent on the voyage to Rome, and the importation of the statue of the Great Mother from Phrygia into Rome. Both are given in the same order as they appear in Amobius. Note that Amobius and Augustine are both attacking pagan notions of sacrifice, and we shall observe in the following chapter that there are a good many parallels between Amobius and Porphyry in Adv. nat. 7. Also, Augustine names Porphyry as the principal advocate of the sacrificial beliefs which he has been attacking (10.26) in the section which precedes his second detailed account of the Neoplatonist's belief that the gods are subject to passions and mental agitations (10.27).

Conclusions.

Taking all the aforementioned evidence into consideration, we may be pretty certain that three of Porphyry's anti-Christian works were current in Roman North Africa during the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Diocletianic Persecution in February 303. These were the CC, the De reg. an., and Phil. or. In the next chapter we shall observe that Amobius was familiar with De abstinencia. The three works were used as pagan propaganda and were undoubtedly understood as giving intellectual justification to the official State programme against the Christians. Yet as in the case of both Augustine's and Eusebius' response to Porphyry's anti-Christian propaganda (Eusebius more than Augustine), Amobius appears to have paid the most attention to Phil. or. with its rejection of the deity of Christ, as being possibly detrimental to one of the basic tenets of his new religion.

The CC appears to have exerted its influence upon the rhetor's polemical argument principally in the general response which he gives to the pagan attacks upon the inconsistencies of the Bible; its very poor quality as a piece of literature; the fact that its authors were semi-illiterate men of the working classes who were not trustworthy, and they were liars; and the assertion made by Porphyry, which we shall investigate in detail in the following chapter, that Christians could not prove anything. "Faith" was intellectually disreputable. The CC may also have inspired Amobius in respect of the development of his method of attacking the pagans primarily from within their own religious traditions. He bases his attack upon the pagans' beliefs and practices, as Porphyry had done in the CC in attacking the Christians, firmly and almost exclusively upon their own religious literature. Literary retortion is used as his main method of attacking the false notions of deity espoused by the pagans. Also, both the selection of his work's title and the organisation of his Books may have been due to the CC. If Porphyry was as merciless in his attack upon the Christians as Amobius is in his criticism of the pagans, we can better understand the Adv. nat. as an historical
document. More about this will have to be said when we come to the conclusions to this thesis. And we may also get an indirect indication of the reasons that so many Church Fathers responded to Porphyry's anti-Christian works, and with so much hostility. Finally, the CC may help to explain a chronological problem related to the references to the persecutions of Christians in the Adversus nationes. In chapter one we concluded that all such references which precede Amobius' allusion to the First Edict (4.36) do not provide convincing evidence that they describe the persecution of Christians under Diocletian. Porphyry argued that Christians should be executed for their abandonment of religious ancestral customs (PE 1.2.2). We may perhaps best explain the discrepancy as follows: all references before 4.36 are made in response to Porphyry; those that come afterward (including 4.36) are made in response to Diocletian's edicts.

We should acknowledge Phil. or. as a much more dangerous threat to the Church than has hitherto been claimed. Eusebius, Augustine, and Amobius reveal its threat to their religion because of Porphyry's subtle but vicious attack upon the deity of Christ. Christ was indeed very wise and pious, but only as a mortal. Hence Amobius' (and to a certain extent also Eusebius') emphasis upon the supernumerous knowledge of Christ in Adv. nat. 1.38; and insistence upon the divinity of Christ in his being, teaching, and miracles. Concerning the latter, the fact that Amobius and Eusebius make it clear that Christ and his disciples performed miracles without using any material aids strongly suggests that the object of both attacks is Chaldaean soteriological practices related to physical health. Both Eusebius and Amobius show evidence also that they have responded to Porphyry's angelology which is indebted to Chaldaean theology. Although the response of both is quite different (as we noted, Eusebius was able to draw from his knowledge of Judeo-Christian angelology: thus his similarity with Porphyry's angelology is more striking), they are in agreement that Christ alone is the mediator and revealer of any knowledge of the divine world. Finally, considering Amobius' use of technical Chaldaean theological language, we may conclude that it is a Chaldaean-Neoplatonic group whom he is attacking in Books 1-2 (for the latter v. Ch. VI infra); which is what we exactly would expect from the date of the Adv. nat. which we have suggested and the Porphyrian connection with Amobius' overall polemical argument.

We may conclude also that there is a close relationship between the pagan attack upon Christian concepts of deity in Books 1-2, and Amobius' counter-attack upon the pagans' notions of deity in Books 3-7. If the aforementioned evidence proves anything significant for Amobiana, it undoubtedly is that it has shown the grave danger inherent in attempting to interpret an Amobian text out of its natural context. Thus it is prudent to dispense with an approach to a particular text which has the main
objective of ascertaining the extent of Amobius' orthodoxy. It is the pagan polemical argument which addressed the basic tenets of the Christian Church for the main purpose of seeing the whole complex fall to pieces, that has been the principal determining factor both in the development of Amobius' "theological" statements about Christ and in his criticism of Graeco-Roman concepts of deity. And both in respect of its general tone and specific details, that polemical argument is Porphyrian-Chaldaean.

The Stoic list of emotions (in four main classifications, containing many subclassifications) found in Cicero's De fin. 3.x.35 and commented upon by M. Cato, has certainly informed Augustine's polemical argument concerning Porphyry's attributing to the celestial deities (and not to the demons as Apuleius did in De deo Socratis) an ability to be subject to emotional disturbances/mental agitations. In respect of the technical language employed (e.g., voluptas, aegritudo, perturbatio), the principal opponents attacked in the work, and his insistence that any emotional expression proves irrefutably its mortality, cause the present writer to conclude that the same philosophical tradition is the immediate source of Amobius' polemical argument, made in response to Porphyry's rejection of Christ in Phil. or., that the anthropopathic behaviour of the Graeco-Roman deities establishes that they are mortal. And the definition of a verus deus, and the fact that Christ alone has revealed knowledge of what a true God is, especially delineating the divine remoteness from man (which too many have misinterpreted as Epicurean), has evidently served the same purpose in Amobius as it has in Augustine (e.g., Civ. Dei 9.16: depending upon Symp. 203A), viz. to establish how very far from the pure doctrines of his master (Plato) Porphyry had fallen.
THE SOTERILOGICAL ARGUMENT: CHRIST THE 'VIA UNIVERSALIS ANIMAE LIBERANDAE.'

Introduction: Definitions And Brief Overview Of The Soteriological Argument In Early Christian Apologetics.

Easily discernible are the soteriological implications of the aforementioned argument. Deities depicted as being anthropomorphic in form and anthropopathic in behaviour both animalistic and immoral, are certainly mortal. They therefore cannot help mortals in time of need. Why pray to gods who are unable to help when sickness strikes, when the mice invade the crops (1.3), when that irritating demon will not simply go away? The next stage in the argument would be to establish that Graeco-Roman religious paganism in toto is anti-salvific. It is not the Christians who are responsible for the world's disasters because they are not atheistic, nor have they abandoned the religious mos maiorum without a very good reason. Christians have the true concept of deity, the pagans only false and foul notions derived from those filthy and stupid myths. If it is the Christians who have the right concept of deity, then the only way to "salvation" - a pregnant term in almost any context ancient or modern, which will need unpacking - lies in their beliefs and practices. Conversely, the pagans are responsible for the evils which presently ruin the world. Generally, this is Amobius' soteriological position. We must offer a few definitions.

"Soteriology" can be defined as comprising that system of beliefs the central concept of which is that there is something malevolent within one's existence/world from which one needs to experience deliverance. It might have to do with averting the occurrence of some danger in order to experience happiness, safety, or deorum pax. For the early Christians this deliverance was generally thought to occur through the confession and forgiveness of sins, repentance, baptism, and (hopefully) a firm adherence to the doctrines of the Church. The gist of the Christian understanding of salvation was this: to believe in Christ naturally resulted in following Christ as the great example of the virtuous life. Thus the beliefs of the faith had direct bearing upon the quality of the moral conduct of its adherents. Living this virtuous life was inherent in the experience of salvation as the early Christians understood it. Only when the correspondence of religious belief and ethical norms materialised into a harmonious succession in the personal and interpersonal life of the believer, could the deliverance from sin which Christ offered realistically transpire. The in-
individual then and only then began to be "saved."

In general terms, due to the early religious beliefs of the Romans which go back to the regal period (and undoubtedly beyond that), but also due to the religious syncretism of the early imperial period when foreign cults were imported into Italy, the emphasis upon living the virtuous life and being a religious person were not thought to be inseparable. As Liebeschuetz has observed, "Roman gods are called upon to help men in difficulties or to assure their well-being, not to make them morally better."¹ Like the apologists before him, Amobius has seen an inherent weakness in this lack of emphasis upon moral codes of conduct in religious paganism (e.g., Adv. nat. 3.43; 6.16; 7.10; 7.11). Indeed, one of the main characteristics of Roman religion which thwarted Octavian's attempts at a moral reform in Italy during his reign was the fact that ethical norms and religious practices were in large measure divorced from each other. The fact that the individual's conception of the gods via the myths and historical annals did not have a direct influence upon the quality of one's moral behaviour, means that we must not forget that for the pagan to experience salus deorum, he did not see the need to be delivered from "sin" in the strict moral sense. Salus deorum in a non-philosophical context entailed the constant well-being which the pagan believed he received as the result of the observance of the rites and ritual practices of his particular cult(s). It follows that the soteriologies of religious paganism generally did not incorporate a rigid, well-defined ethical system which its adherents could follow as they began to experience this sense of well-being/safety in the world. Some of the philosophical sects, especially Stoicism which had a positive ethical influence upon Christian doctrine, indeed incorporated such a dogma into their beliefs. Perhaps this is why we find Christianity referred to as a philosophy in some of the early documents of the Church (cf. Justin Martyr's account of his conversion). But in respect of the religious cults, believing in the gods and experiencing their well-being did not directly affect the moral behaviour of their adherents. Thus in reverting to our first statement, that which the pagan thought he needed to be delivered from was the feeling of being forsaken by the gods and thus not experiencing a sense of well-being in life as the result of not devoting himself to the ritual practices which his cult espoused. The possibility of his divine abandonment, then, was that malevolent condition from which deliverance was needed. And the possibility that this might happen generated a great awe and reverence for the gods. Hence the first problem involved in analysing the meaning of soteriology in its ancient context is concerned with a thorough investigation of the necessity for this deliverance: salvation from what and why?

Secondly, soteriology explains what one must do to experience such deliverance,

¹Liebeschuetz (1979), 39.
or for the pagan, how to avert the possibility that the gods might indeed abandon him. The difference between the two may generally be explained as follows. The pagan was concerned about how he could prevent external calamities, over which he otherwise had little control, from adversely affecting his existence in the world. This was brought about via the aid of the gods, realised in the proper practice of cultic regulations. Strict adherence to these regulations would thus guarantee the devotee's sense of safety in the world and well-being with the gods. On the other hand, the Christian was concerned about that which existed within himself which affected his and his fellow man's existence in the world. The malignant aspect of his life was not understood as that bad thing which happened to him of an external origin, but rather as that bad thing which he did which sprang from his inner nature to do evil. Hence the problem of ancient soteriology is concerned with how one goes about experiencing salus: how it was that the pagan experienced preservation from external calamities; and the Christian, the deliverance from the inclination to do evil.

Finally, soteriology demonstrates what one should do to continue experiencing an amelioration of one's existence/well-being derived from pax deorum. Here we are concerned with the "salvific process," which for the Christian signified a development in faith, and for the pagan it was concerned with the continual experience of well-being with the gods, especially in a cultic context. Ultimately this process might lead to a conceptual convergence of soteriology and eschatology. For the early Christian life after death entailed that kind of atemporal redemption which guaranteed him an eternal life of some kind with the one whom he had followed (Christ) while living in the world. This frequently included a belief in the resurrection of the human body, as man qua man, in the hereafter. Non-Christians usually were thought to be condemned to a burning hell. The pagan was (generally speaking) concerned about the life after death, and his understanding of the salvific process often (but not always) included a hope of some kind of life beyond the grave. Although it may often be quite ambiguous, one sometimes finds a direct relationship between temporal and eschatological understandings of redemption. The relationship is there, for example, in the Saturn cult (v. the conclusions of Ch. III supra), but one wonders what the devotee of the great god of North Africa thought in his mind would happen beyond the grave. It is necessary, therefore, in the study of ancient soteriologies to analyse the institutionalised aspect of the salvific process and its relationship with the eschatological concepts which a particular cult espoused. How does the distinctive eschatology of a particular cult affect the temporal understanding of salvation? How does one's experience of redemption in the world relate to one's understanding of redemption beyond the world? Does this conceptual relationship in any way affect the way in which the individual deems it necessary to live the religious life? Hence the third problem of ancient soteriology deals with the analysis of the continual development
and ultimate consummation of the redemptive process.

The above generalisations do have exceptions, but we have given them only for the purposes of possessing some general guidelines to follow. Two points must be kept in mind: they apply to ante-Nicene Christianity and in the case of paganism they are non-philosophical.

Turning to the early Christian apologists, in respect of religious paganism they invariably attacked both the immoralities of the gods, and any pagan attempt to explain them away. The soteriological significance according to the Christians was found in the inseparability of religion and ethics, and the fact that in the incarnation a human being now had a model to live by in the imitatio Christi. A real God became man, so they argued, and showed men how to escape the ultimate malignant power, death, and the importance of preparing for this by becoming, as Clement of Alexandria says, both an imitator (μιμητής) and servant (θεραπευτής) of the Highest of all beings (Protr. 11.90; LCL: Butterworth). Through the blessed and sacred power of the incarnation, God had become an actual fellow-citizen with men. It was this incomprehensible divine power condescended to man, for the purposes of aiding him, combined with its close connection with morality, with which the apologists contrasted the absence of both in the religious paganism under the empire.

Thus Aristides could ask about the gods: οί θεοί τοις υπαρχόντις σωφρόνες ουδέν λογοσθενείς, μης των ανθρώπων πρόωναν ποιήσαντας; And Clement Alex., admonishing pagans to abandon the error of custom, is convinced that those who worship the gods recorded in the myths will be persuaded to live immoral lives also. God promised the kingdom of heaven, writes the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, to those who receive it by loving him. And loving him, he adds, you will be an imitator of his goodness: Δι' αυτού την καρδιά της καθιστάται. He then adds, as if realising that he is writing to pagans: καὶ μὴ διαφθείης εἰ δύνασται μιμητής ἀνθρώπως γενεσθαι θεόν. Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἀνθρώπως αὐτοῦ.

Salus/σωφρωσύνη in the Christian tradition, in the sense of following Christ, meant living according to the commandments found in Exodus or the Gospels (etc.). Religious paganism did not have any such commandments. The former concept is admirably expressed by Theophilus: Καὶ νῦν τίνος ἁγίου μεταμφισμένος ἀιλ' νομοθετημένος ἔχομεν τῶν δυνατῶν θεῶν, ὥς διδάσκει ἡμᾶς δικαιοποιείν, καὶ ἔστελλεν, καὶ καλοποιεῖν. Arnobius could put it negatively: "neque enim caelo deus aliquis lapaeus est aut suis res vestras commentatus est manibus aut ratione consimili nostris rebus et religionibus derogavit" (Adv. nat. 1.57.3-6). There is overwhelming evidence from our sources that this close connection between religion and morality invariably entailed the practice of extending salus to others. According to MacMullen, the expression of such concern for the well-being of others.

2 Protr. 11.90. 2a Ibid., 4.53. 3 Ch.10. 4 To Autol. 3.9.
others (i.e., non-Christians) usually took place in a face-to-face encounter. 5 Christians wanted to take the message of salvation to pagans because this in itself was in obedience to the commandment of Christ to go and make disciples. Yet we can be certain that the way in which each Christian put this into practice in his daily activities differed. In Justin we hear an emphasis upon the inseparability of being virtuous and being Christian; a necessity to repent of one's sins; the influence of Christians upon others in word and deed; Christ as example via the sacred tradition; and the centrality of the cross for man's redemption. 6

One example given by him (I Apol. 2) is the Christian woman condemned by Urubicus. When she came to know Christ's teachings, she tried to persuade her husband by using the same teachings, that those who live intemperately will be eternally punished by fire. She desired that he give up drunkenness and every vice. In Ep. Diog. we read that one cannot imitate God by lording it over one's neighbours, desiring to have more than those who are weak (etc.), for these things are foreign to God's greatness (Ch. 10). It is a theme that we often find in the North African Fathers. Note Cyprian's affirmation of faith, addressed to the pagans of his day: "Quod est Christus erimus Christiani, si Christum fuerimus imitati." 7

And most of all everybody, Christians and pagans, prayed for physical salus. We have noted this fact in the preceding chapter, particularly noting Amobius' acknowledgment that pagans pray to their images of the gods in the temples for many things, but health heads the list. 8 Demons were usually thought to be the cause of bodily disease. Thus Tatian writes to the Greeks and with confidence affirms that the word of God can smite any demon that disturbs the body: after this it departs in terror, and the sick man is healed. 9 Of the many examples from religious paganism that can be given, we may refer to the acute and consistent concern to attain physical health which we find in the Golden Tales of the second century rhetor Aelius Aristides who was a faithful devotee of Aesculapius the healing deity. Because of a nervous condition, the god's prescription was that he drink unsalted olive oil three times daily (50.15); for stomach disorders, the god told him to eat a whole chicken (50.34); and during the Smallpox plague (summer of 165), after his doctors had already announced his inevitable death, Aesculapius prescribed an enema, a goose liver, and sausage (49.2). Later he was cured of constipation by the god's "grace" (51.9).

7 Quod idola dii non sint: PL 4.582. 8 V. p.287, n.99 supra: commenting on Adv. nat. 6.16.
9 Ad Graec. 16.
The Philosophical Approach: Platonism.

The Platonic tradition always viewed as antagonistic two aspects of human existence: on the one hand, there was the spiritual life, nurtured and informed by contemplation of the world of Being; on the other, there was the corporeal life from which the contemplator had to separate himself in order to be pure. Already in Plato we find the importance to separate soul from body to attain to pure knowledge. This could not be realised through the bodily senses, but only by thought. Avoidance of contact with the body was rigorously affirmed as the principal method of such contemplation. Mind must be divorced from body to behold the actual realities in the world of Being with the eye of the soul. Purification (καθαρσις) thus entailed the separation, as far as possible, of the soul from the body, by training the soul to avoid having intercourse with the body and to live freed from the latter's fetters. One had to practice self-restraint (αυνομοσυνη) which controlled the bodily passions, so that the soul which is most like the divine, immortal, intellectual (etc.), can live by gathering itself to itself alone, and not associate itself with the body. If the philosopher remains aloof from pleasure, lusts, griefs, fears, passions of any kind, when death comes his purified soul goes to live with the gods happily ever after. This is brought about by the release of the soul from its corporeal prison by contemplation upon the world of Being and self-training in the virtues. The soul which leaves the body still besets due to its close association with the body, is weighed and dragged down back to the world of Becoming. Those who purified themselves by philosophy henceforth live without bodies. They find the gods as companions, no doubt because, as we saw in the preceding chapter, according to the doctrine of Plato οδος δε ανθρωπος ου μηνυοει (Symp. 203A). Hence in the temporal realm of Becoming it was of utmost necessity to acquire, and be nourished by, virtue and wisdom (δρεν και φιλοσοφεω). Turning to Plotinus, we may give the translation of Mackenna-Page of an important text: "This is the life of the gods and the godlike and blessed among men, liberation from the alien that besets us here, a life taking no pleasure in the things of earth, the passing of solitary to solitary." Plotinus also emphasised the need to bring about a flight from the body to the immaterial existences. Contemplation upon the world of Being was also important (Enn. 1.3.1; 2.9.18), and the antagonism noted above between the mortal body and immortal soul is present in his thought as well.

14. Ibid., 60B-61A. 15. Ibid., 81A. 16. Ibid., 114C. 17. Ibid., 100C.
He often seemed ashamed of being in a body (Vit. Plot. 1). The real person, the nous, was in the body, and the body was a bond (Enn. 2.9.7). Hence we must fly from here (Enn. 1.3.9: ψυχον έν αρπαγή γεί) and separate ourselves from our bodies, the tombs of our souls (Enn. 4.8.3; cf. 6.4.15). Life in a body, the home of passions, fears, desires, etc. (Enn. 1.2.5) is an evil in itself (Enn. 1.7.3: τῆν έν αρπαγή γεί ταμήν κακόν). It would be absurd to extend to the body any participation in well-being (1.4.14). Plotinus, like Plato, speaks of the virtues as καλός, a process which we may call "salvific." It entailed separating the soul from the body by a contemplation designated as intellectual activity (1.2.3). He was always involved in thought (Vit. Plot. 8). The goal of the latter was to become like God, to escape corporeal bondage with the help of wisdom and virtue (Enn. 1.2.1). Self-control (σωφροσύνη) enabled the philosopher not to keep company with the ἱλία τού οὐρανοῦ (1.6.6). One must despise things here. This state of being is properly called δυσμοιρία εἶναι θεόν (1.6.6).

Yet Plotinus can often be found speaking in traditional religious language and referring to the traditional gods of the myths. Man, he insists, is to be made like the gods (1.2.7). The human soul can become pregnant when filled with 'God' and in virtue of that converse it brings forth 'gods,' beauty, righteousness, and all moral good (6.9.9). We see in Plotinus an inclination to allegorize the deities: Zeus and Aphrodite are on the levels of intellect and soul, respectively; so too, the male (with Zeus) and female (with Aphrodite) deities (3.5.8). Kronos is Intellect (3.5.2). Zeus is sometimes called the Demiurge, at others the principle conducting the cosmos (4.4.10): this god orders all as governor, brings all into being by his providence, etc. (4.4.9). A man who is filled with a god, Apollo or the muses, may experience a vision of the divine for the purpose of finding the divinity within. When the vision is completed, he is pure and remains very near to God, the latter idea apparently being attacked, as we have suggested (p. 165, n. 246, supra), in Adv. nat. 2.15.4f.

A central concept is the impassibility of the soul. In all affections and movements, the soul remains the same in substance and essence (3.6.3). The soul is immortal, the body mortal. If the former were corporeal, there could be no sense-perception, mental act, knowledge, moral excellence, in short, nothing noble (4.7.6). If the soul were not impassible, the philosopher would not be able to overcome bodily affections and thus aspire to the virtuous life (4.7.8). The soul is of the family of a diviner nature because it is immaterial (4.7.15). Wisdom and authentic virtue are divine and could not be found ever in the mean and mortal chattel (4.7.15). The impassible soul is essentially divine because of its incorporeality, virtue, and wisdom. Plotinus' system, like that of Plato, was exclusively designed for the philosopher. There was little in it that benefitted the ordinary pious pagans.
Porphyry.

Whether it was directly related to his attempt to disqualify the Christian religion as a "via universalis animae liberandae," Porphyry sought for a way to offer the non-philosopher a way of salvation, while at the same time attempting to be true on most points to the Platonic system outlined above. Yet it was only a natural result of his formulation of a soteriological programme for the common man, made during the general period when he was attempting to prove that Christ was not divine and could not offer any salvific benefits to humankind, that both his opponents in the Church and his supporters in religious paganism would infer that Porphyry's critical and constructive approach to the Christian problem might precipitate the Church's destruction. Responding to the Hecatean Oracle and commentary, Augustine recognizes the main objective of Porphyry's 'praise' of Christ through the goddess, and his condemnation of him through Apollo: "Una est tamen et illius et huius intentio, ut nolint homines esse Christianos, quia, nisi Christiani erunt, ab eorum eri potestate non poterunt" (Civ. Deli 19.23). Although we are totally dependent upon Porphyry's enemies for our information regarding the contents of Phil. or., we can be fairly certain that a main objective of the work was to prove that Christ was mortal and could not give any done deorum to man. And in the preface to Phil. or. (PE 4.7) it is clear that Porphyry was offering not only doctrines to the philosopher, but also giving a proof of the excellence of the deities; an encouragement of theosophy, which is put in contradistinction with philosophy (PE 4.6 and 7); a via salutis to all, affirming the Phil. or. to be the one sure source of salvation; and truth revealed directly by the god (PE 4.7). Porphyry specifically encouraged the sacrifice of animals to the etherial and heavenly powers in Phil. or. (PE 4.7), a concept which will deserve our scrutiny in the last section of this chapter. Finally, his De reg. an. offered to the non-philosopher a via salutis animae by the use of theurgy and sacrifice, and this will be dealt with when we come to Augustine (infra).

It is important now to give an overview of Porphyry's philosophy. First, there is more emphasis placed upon the flight from the body in him than in Plato and Plotinus. One must separate oneself from acts of the flesh and the attraction of the passions. Otherwise one remains nailed to them. This latter concept receives sharp criticism in Adv. nat. 2.13.32, as Fortin has noted (v. p. 159, supra: v. Abst. 1.31.5). Porphyry's method of doing this is by turning to thought (tā wοντα) in a permanent inactivity (δυσληπτης) away from sensations that awake passions; man nails himself to God and denails himself from the body and sensitivity. Salvation is obtained by such acts and not by understanding discourses (Abst. 1.57.1). The philosopher must die to the things of this world (Abst. 2.61.8). His real being is that aspect of his being most estranged from the body which hands cannot touch and only thought can know (Ad Marc. 8). Man must
out himself off from sensible things (διὰ τῶν δοξημάτων) and passions (τῶν παθῶν) and be elevated to the intellectual life (πρὸς νοσοῦν: Abst. 1.30.1). Everything acquired of a mortal nature (τὰς δύναμις φύσεως) in the world of Becoming must be indeed entirely abandoned (Abst. 1.30.4). Hence the importance of keeping one's soul purified of any kind of sensation and passions (Abst. 1.31.1ff.; 33.2f.; 36.3; 53.2; Ad Marc. 9). The gist is that the soul is in an alien state of existence when it is in a mortal body. In his Epistle to Boethius he used the Platonic argument from similarity: the soul is like the divine (δύος τῷ Ὀσίῳ), and immortal (ἀδιάβατο), invisible (διεισὶ), inseparable (ἀδιαφάσμα), indissoluble (ἀδιαλείπτη), essential (οὐσιαστή), and firmly established in incorruption (συνεσχέντο ἐν δημοσίᾳ: PE 11.28). There are two things to be done to return to that Being to whom men is essentially related: μήν μὲν ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ οίνῳ τὸ νιετόν καὶ θυτικόν ἀμφοτέρως, ἵνα ἐν τῷ εὑρίσκεται καὶ περιγενέσθαι, ἐναντίον ἐν τῇ αὐτῷ ἀναμίαντος ἢ ἐναντίον καθίσματεν (Abst. 1.30.5). Flee everything mortal and corporeal, contemplate the truly intellectual life. It is a recurrent theme in Porphyry's philosophical way of salvation: "urne corpus esse fugiendum ut anima posset beatam permanere cum Deo" (Civ. Dei. 10.29).

Another feature of Porphyry's philosophical method of saving the human soul is his stress upon the Platonic concept of being like God. Let the nous, so he writes to his wife, follow God by reflecting him by its effort to resemble him. Otherwise it becomes spotted by passions (Ad Marc. 13). To become like God one must be freed from the slavery of the body and service to passions (Abst. 3.27.11). Suppressing the bodily pleasures is conducive to obtaining the good, and this is done by maintaining an impassibility in the soul and an assimilation to God (Abst. 1.54.6). For it is only in the impassibility of the soul (δι' ἀμοιβής: Abst. 2.43.3) that this assimilation can take place. And to do this one must extirpate the passions. Porphyry can also speak of the importance of honouring the 'gods' in the plural. One honours them in virtue (ἄρση) and wisdom (οὐφία: Ad Marc. 22f.). Smith is correct to say that "Porphyry retains an intellectualist and anthropocentric view of human relations with the divine."21 The reason appears to have been that Porphyry, more than Plato and Plotinus, associated himself closely with his Greek religious tradition: ὁ θεός γὰρ μέγιστος καὶ παλαιός εὐσεβείας, τιμῶν τὸ θεῖον κατὰ τὰ πάρμα (Ad Marc. 18). It will be recalled that he wrote these words c. A.D. 300, not many years before he died. And this basic concept is present in each of his anti-Christian works. Another important theme in Porphyry which relates to the Platonic concept of being like God, and which will demand our attention when we turn to Arnobius, is his insistence upon the individual's having the right notions of the gods (e.g., PE 4.22; Abst. 2.34; 2.36).

There exists also a Supreme Deity in the intellectual realm (δὲ εἰς τῶν θεῶν: Abst. 1.57.2; 2.34.2; 3.5.4). He is often called the First God (ὁ πρῶτος θεός: Abst. 2.37.1; Vit. Plot. 23) who is incorporeal (τὰς οὐσίας φύσεως: Abst. 2.37.1; 1.57.3), without

21 A. Smith (1974), 104.
shape (μὴ τε μορφήν: Vit. Plot. 23) or intelligible form (ἰδέαν ἔχων: Ib.), enthroned above intellect and intelligible form (ὑπὲρ δὲ νοὴν καὶ τοῦ νοητοῦ ἱδρυμένος: Vit. Plot. 23). He is immobile (ἀκίνητος), indivisible (ἄμερος τοις), not contained in anything (καὶ οὐκ έν τινι ὦν οὐτί' ἐνδεδεμένος κις διανυστικού) and is in need of nothing external to himself (χρήζει αὐτὸν τῶν ἑξών Abst. 2.37.1). He is the Father of all beings (τῶν πάντων ματηρίων), simple (ἁμαρτανόμενος), pure (καθαρωτάτους), and entirely self-sufficient (ἀυτοκτόνως: Abst. 1.57.3). One who approaches Him must be really and ritually pure (Abst. 1.57.3). The ritual purity is brought about when man has extirpated his passions, "begins to be nourished by knowledge of divine things, which make him like the divine because of his correct notions of the divine: man is sanctified by an intellectual sacrifice:

"Αυτός τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ένα καὶ τοῦ δύναμεν, λόγος μὲν καὶ άληθεία, ἀποτελοῦτω τοις ἐκ παλαιάς ψυχῆς στουδιζόμενος εἰσί, διότι δὲ καὶ γενόμενοι τοις παύσις κινούμενοι, τιμοῦμεν δὲ θεοφιλάτταν καὶ διομοιοτείνου ταῖς προς τοῦ θεοῦ διανοούσις διανοούσις καὶ δυνάμεως ἑρμοτείνου τῷ νοστρῳ θεοτάτῳ..." (Abst. 2.48.4)

To be mortal means to exist in a body: already in Phil. or. (if it indeed was written before De reg. an.) Christ is disqualified as a deity. He was a good and wise mortal (Civ. Dei 19.23). In De reg. an. we find that Porphyry hated the concept of the incarnation (Civ. Dei 10.28f. passim), and the reasons why he did are clear in light of the above. Thus he could easily dispense with Christ as the "via universalis animae liberandae." Yet he searched for such a universal way in "philosophia verissima," the moral practices of the Indians, and the Chaldaean initiations, and concluded that it exists but simply had never come to his attention (Civ. Dei 10.32).

His own solution to the problem appears to have been to retain with some modifications the Platonic way of salvation outlined above (he rejected the concept of the transmigration of the soul into the bodies of animals) for the philosopher, and theurgical purifications indebted to Chaldaean theology for the non-philosopher. The latter did not enable the soul to return to God. These rites purify only the spiritual part of the soul which receives images of corporeal things, but they do not lead to immortality (Civ. Dei 10.9). Finally, Porphyry paid more serious attention to the religious literature of his cultural heritage than both Plato and Plotinus had done. This was probably due to his philological training and his interests in comparative religious studies. We find an acute exegesis of the myths, using the allegorical method of interpretation, in Phil. or. and other works cited in PE (cf. PE 3-4). Perhaps his views towards the myths can best be summed up in a text from De ant. nymph. 18: "...but when we consider the great wisdom of antiquity, and how much Homer excelled in intellectual prudence, and in an accurate knowledge of every virtue, it must not be denied that he has obscurely indicated the images of things of a more divine nature in the fiction of a fable." It is this great respect for τὴν λογικὴν σοφίαν whether in the form of his
philosophical treatises or his religious concepts, that is a constant theme in Porphyry's beliefs. We may delineate six principal features of his system which are important for the present enquiry:

I. An emphasis upon human need of the divine in the salvific process.
II. The necessity to flee all contact with the body.
III. A respect for the religious traditions of the past which includes the Greek religious literature.
IV. An attempt to provide a via salutis animae to all people everywhere (v. infra under Augustine).
V. A total rejection of Christ as divine and therefore as saviour of man.
VI. The importance of having the right concepts of deity.

Eusebius' Response To Porphyry: General Observations.

As we noted in the preceding chapter, a principal opponent of Eusebius in PE and EE is Porphyry. We desire briefly to outline the principal themes inherent in Porphyry's anti-Christian position in PE 1-5, and Eusebius' response to it in the same section. In PE 1.2 the pagan accusation appears that the Christians are atheists and impious for apostatising from the ancestral gods sustained by every nation and state. Eusebius then observes, after quoting from the CC text that praised Sanchuniathon's history of the Jews, that the latter writer did not treat God or the heavenly powers as divine, but mortal men and women who were also wicked (PE 1.9). After citing from Philo's History of the Jews covering the history and names of the Phoenician gods (PE 1.10), and taking information from Diodorus (PE 2.1f.) and Clement Alex. (2.3) to criticise Egyptian concepts of deity, he turns to Greek theology. He first affirms that Christians have been rescued from such delusions as if from a disease by the grace of Almighty God, the ineffable power of the saviour's teaching, and sound reasoning. The latter is a response to Porphyry's remark that Christians only have an unreasoning faith (cf. PE 1.2; 1.3). The purpose of this divine deliverance is to prevent the adorable and divine name of God being honoured with dead mortals who were not even virtuous, but were incontinent, wanton, cruel, even insane. It is impious to degrade God's name to male and female parts of the human body, to the nature of brute beasts, and to honour as divine inhuman crimes which result in severe penalties if they are committed by humans (PE 2.4). An announcement that he will consider the Greek interpretations of the gods to ascertain whether they carry anything worthy of the gods ends Book 2. Before citing a Porphyrian text and after he has criticised the physical explanations of the gods given mainly by Plutarch (3.1-3), he concludes that the names of the elements are those of dead mortals. He again introduces into this theme the immoralities of the deities, which we have given in the Greek above (pp. 305f.), and wonders why the Greeks have given to the elements the immoral practices of mortals, "acts
which bear upon their very face mortality and human passion?" (Gifford: PE 3.3).

It is obvious that Eusebius is offering to his pagan opponents evidence as to why Christians do not worship their deities, resting his case upon the mortality and anthropopathic behaviour of the deities. In PE 3.5, after citing Abst. 4.9, he argues against Porphyry's position in this work that men and animals have a share in reason: this is important to note for Amobius responds (albeit differently) to the same concept (v. the last section infra). Porphyry's allegorization of an Orphic hymn to Zeus, which enumerates the god's bodily parts, receives criticism in 3.10. What "rational men would address god in this way, asks Eusebius, because such is every material body: "μανίς ωμάτως φύσις. God is incorporeal (δομω-άτας). Attacking Porphyry's allegorical interpretation of the bodily parts of Zeus, he asks:

Τή δ' ἐν χρόνι οὐκαὶ ἀνθρώπων ἤμερος πρὸς τοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ νοῦν; Ἐν μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲ πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπων ἔχουσαν, ἐπεὶ δὲ μὲν ἄκεις καὶ ἀσύμμετρα καὶ ἀδιάλειπτα καὶ ὑμετέρα, τὸ δὲ θανάσιμων ἀνθρώπων ἐχθρόνος ὑπηρετού ωμάτως φύσιν ἀπο-μεμείνηται, καὶ ἕκαστα σαρκος ἀγαθως καὶ νεκρὸς ἦλθεν καὶ ἀνθρώποι εἰ-κόνως καταγράφεται. Φυσικὴ μὲν ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀκειμένος καὶ νούς ἀκειμένος ἐν ἀνθρώπων φύσις, εὑ ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ὑπηρετοῦ νοοῦς τῇ καὶ λογικῇ τῇ ὑπηρετοῦ θεοῦ ὑπηρετοῦ νοοῦς τῇ καὶ λογικῇ ὑπηρετοῦ θεοῦ νοοῦς τῇ καὶ λογικῇ τῇ ὑπηρετοῦ νοοῦς. The complete separation of the nature of God from all perishable matter and the necessity to contemplate him in thought and silence, make clear that Eusebius is employing Porphyrian/Platonic concepts against Porphyry to establish that the Christians have the right concept of God, and they therefore rightly worship him. We shall note similar concepts in Amobius, especially his use of Porphyry's Pythagorean silence as a means of contemplating the divine. Note also that Eusebius had made the same assertion in PE 3.6: Jesus has taught mankind to worship God with the right notions, viz. that his nature is incorporeal and intelligent. He began the passage by affirming that the Greeks and Egyptians did not know anything about the truly divine, incorporeal, and intelligent natures. After giving lengthy quotes from Porphyry's On Images (PE 3.11f.), he again stresses the divine incorporeality, Porphyry's attempt to allegorize the gods of the myths, and wonders why his opponents do not reject the myths if they claim that they rightly worship God (3.13). He again concludes that right worship of God manifests itself in purified thoughts, correct doctrines, the impossibility of the soul, and by growing as far as possible like God. The gist is that the fundamental concepts inherent in the myths are incompatible
with the right conception of deity, and are therefore not conducive to growing like
God in contemplation. Using Porphyry’s oracles enumerating the births of various
deities (v. p. 279 supra) derived from Phil. or., he accentuates their births from
human women (PE 3.14) and their human passions (PE 3.15). He contrasts these ideas
with the fact that men everywhere now offer true sacrifices to God, viz. holy prayers,
purified thoughts, and a soul free from all passions (4.4).

He now begins to show how inconsistent Porphyry was on the subject of sacrifice.
He specifically used the oracles of the gods in Phil. or. to defend this practice
(PE 4.7-9: mainly 9), but he argued against it in Abst. (PE 4.10-2). He quotes Abst.
2.34 in PE 4.11:

θεῶν μὲν τὰ τῶν, ὥστε τις ἄνηρ σοφὸς ἔφη, μηδὲν τῶν αἰτητῶν μὴ τιμῶντες
μὴ έπουρανήστες· οἴδας γὰρ ένυλον, δὲ μὴ τῷ ἄλλῳ εὐθύς έστιν ἀκάκλαστον.
Διὸ οίδα λύγος τούτων κατά φυλήν οἰκείος· οἴδας δὲ ένυλον, δια τοῦτο ψυχής
ή μεμυλομένης· διὰ δὲ σιτίς καθαράς καὶ τῶν περί αὑτῶν καθαρῶν ἐνυκρινής
θρηκτουμένης αὑτῶν Διὸ δρα συναρθήσεται καὶ διομιθήσεται αὕτη τήν αὐτῶν ἀνά
φυγήν θυσίαν ἵνα προσκάτεῃ τῷ θεῷ, τὴν αὐτήν ἐν καὶ εὖμαν οὐκοῦν καὶ ταὐτά
αὐτῇ. Ἐν αὐτοίς δρα τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦ δὲ θεοῦ θεώρημα ἡ ὑποτάσια αὕτη τελεί-
ται.

The basic elements of this definition of correct worship are: nothing related to
the senses can be offered to the High God; an apophatic understanding of the divine
(cf. Adv. nat. 3.19); and worshipping him in the impassibility of the soul with
pure thoughts and silence. In what follows in PE 4.12-5, Eusebius contrasts Porphy-
ry’s defence of the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic deities in Phil. or. There is
nothing worthy of the divine in the concept of deities who can be dragged down by
mortals; who are capable of compulsion by humans (PE 5.9); Porphyry proves that his
gods are enslaved to passions (PE 5.15); if they were real deities, they would only
enter the thought in the human soul (Ib.)! That thought should be purified from every
filth and stain (Ib.).

Augustine’s Response To Porphyry: General Observations.

We turn now mainly to De Civitate Dei 8-10 to observe the principal features of
Porphyry’s attack and Augustine’s counter-attack. Platonists believe in the divine
immutability (8.6). The corporeal-spiritual antithesis is dealt with (8.6ff.). Plato
thus defined the good as living in conformity with virtue, to know God and copy him
whose nature is incorporeal (“cuius natura sit incorporealis”: 8.8). In 8.12 the pur-
pose for writing is given: should one worship one God or many? After giving Plato’s
conception of the gods as good beings, honourable and allied with the wise in the fel-
lowship of virtue (8.13), Augustine further defines them, following the genuinely
Platonic doctrine, as not being subject to human emotions; as being far-removed from
and strangers to them: "Habent (sc. daemones) enim cum diis communem immortalitatem
corporum, animarum autem cum hominisbus passiones. Quapropter non est mirum, inquit, si etiam ludorum obscenitatis et poetarum fignentis detectantur, quando quidem humanis capiuntur affectibus, a quibus dii longe absunt et modis omnibus alieni sunt" (8.14). All passions are alien to the nature of a divine being, an argument which we have already seen (v. Ch. V supra) clearly developed by Amobius in Adv. nat. 1, 3-7 (i.e., RI-6). We have already noted above (pp. 304ff.) that Augustine deals with Apuleius' demonology in De deo Socratis next: demons are "animo passiva" and thus experience all kinds of passions/mental agitations; gods are not, being wise and virtuous (8.16): "Deos vero Ideas dicit istas perturbationes non perpeti, quia non solum aeterni, verum etiam beati sunt" (8.17). Augustine continues his analysis of Apuleius' demonology throughout Book 8. In 9.6 he begins to prove why such demons cannot be accepted as genuine intermediaries between the gods and men:

Subiecta est ergo mens daemonum passionibus libidinum formidinum irarum atque hulmiocodi ceteris. Quae igitur pars in eis libera est composita sepientijne quae placeant diis et ad honorum morum similitudinem hominibus consulant, cum eorum mens passionum vitis subiugata et oppressa, quidquid rationis naturaliter habet, ad fallendum et decipienda tanto acrbus intentat, quinto eam magis possidet nocendi cupiditatis?

Why turn to such disturbed beings, when they obviously cannot help man to improve his moral conduct? Amobius, we shall see, similarly argues in respect of the gods. The main problem with Apuleius' doctrine is that although he got the incorporeal and intellectual-corporeal and tangible antithesis right, he nevertheless showed that by their anthropopatich behaviour demons could not give humans any moral help:

Si ergo deo quanto similior, tanto fit quisque propinquior, nulla est ab illo alia longinquitas quam eius dissimilitudo. Incorporeli vero illi aeterno et incommutabili tanto est anima hominis dissimilido, quanto rerum temporaliis mutabiliumque cupidior. (9.17)

Thus Apuleius' demonology, in so far as it applies to soteriology, is actually incompatible with the Platonic doctrine of being like God.

We have also noted above (v. pp. 304ff.) that Civ. Dei 10 principally attacks Porphyry's soteriological concepts. True sacrifice is a central theme. For the non-philosopher Porphyry envisaged a way of salvation employing the use of theurgy. This wins the favour of gods, angels, and demons. Amobius gives the same three in Adv. nat. 2.35. 17f., and Festugière has already suggested the connection between this text and Civ. Dei 10.9 (v. McCr, 326, n.222). He then finds particularly objectionable Porphyry's attributing to the gods the ability to be subject to "perturbationes passionesque" (10.9). He then compares Porphyry's doctrine with that of Apuleius to prove how far from the true Platonic tradition the former had deviated:

Ecce nunc alius Platonius, quem doctoriorem ferunt, Porphyrius, per nescio quam theurgicam disciplinam etiam ipseos deos obstrictos passionibus et perturbationibus dicit, quoniam sacris precibus adiuvari tenerique potuerunt ne praestarent animae purgationem... (Civ. Dei 10.10)
Bidez noted years ago the following: "Indépendamment d'Augustine, Amobie est le seul écrivain chez qui l'on découvre peut-être quelque vestige des doctrines du De regressu."\(^{22}\) Courcelle, Fortin, and O'Meara have agreed, the former two offering convincing evidence that Porphyry is the principal adversary behind Book 2 (O'meara's work was not directly related to Amobian studies).\(^{23}\) The texts given be Bidez which appear to establish that the theurgical practices mentioned in Civ. Dei are being criticised are:

\textbf{Adv. nat. 2.62.6-9}: "...neque quod magi spondent, commendaticias habere se precas quibus emolitae necisco quas potestates vias faciles praebant ad caelum contendentibus subvolare...;"

\textbf{Adv. nat. 2.13.33-6}: "Quid illi sibi volunt secretarum artium ritus, quibus adfamini necisco quas potestates, ut sint vobis placidae neque ad sedes remeantibus patrisies obstaculis impeditiones opponant?

\textbf{Adv. nat. 2.62.1-6}: "Neque illud obrepit aut spe vobis aeria blanditatur, quod ab scisidis normullis et plurimum sibi adrogantibus dicitur, deo esse se gnatos nec fati obnoxios legibus, si vitan restrictius egerint, aulam sibi eius patere, ac post hominis functionem prohibent te se nullo tamquam in sedem referri patrum."

The use of "aulam" in the third text, as we noted above (p. 181), has a number of parallels with Chaldean texts. Also, the fact that Amobius appears to be attacking Chaldean-Neoplatonic theurgical practices above sheds further light upon his argument that a divine being ipso facto cannot experience any passion/mental agitations (Ch. V supra). Hence Augustine in Civ. Dei 10.11, and Eusebius in PE 5.10, after both have attacked Porphyry's concepts that gods are capable of suffering such passions derived from Phil. or., can use his Ep. An. to show that Porphyry held the opinion that an incorporeal divine being cannot be enticed by mortals, i.e., it is impossible. And we recall from Chapter III (p. 123: Methodius, Contra Porphyrium, Ham. OC fr. no. 84 ap. GCS 27, 503: Bonwetsch) that Porphyry used the concept of divine impassibility in the CC to argue against the doctrine of the incarnation: Jesus was not impassible, he therefore was not divine. As we have seen in Eusebius, Augustine, and Amobius, the argument could easily be turned against the Neoplatonist by using his own works/concepts.

It is understandable why Porphyry thought that he had good reasons to despise the incarnation of Christ. His soteriological system demanded one to flee the body, to overcome the passions, to involve oneself in pure thought of the divine (Civ. Dei 10.29: "omne corpus esse fugiendum ut anima posset beata permanere cum Deo"). But the Christians claimed that their saviour was born with a human body. Augustine responds by showing that God's love provided a way by the incarnation for men to come to him who was so far from the mortal, being immortal ("qui tam longe erat immortalis a mortalibus": 10.29). And his response to Porphyry's search for the "via universalis animae liberandae" is to demonstrate that (1) Christ is the one way of salvation for the whole person, soul, mind, and body: "Haec via totum hominem..."\(^{22}\) Bidez (1913), 160.\(^{23}\) Courcelle (1954), 257ff.; Fortin, art. cit.; O'Meara (1959), 8f.
Amobius' Soteriological Argument.


We begin with observations of the general tone of the attack upon Porphyry that appears in Eusebius and Augustine, and the similarity of this with Amobius' method of argumentation. A basic method of Porphyry in combating Christian ideas, according to Eusebius and Augustine, was the use of his opponents' religious texts against them to prove the falsity of the Christian claim to the truth. We have seen (Ch. V) that Amobius uses the same method against the pagans. Yet due to his recent conversion, his 'apology' is not as theologically sophisticated as those of his fellow Christians are. Generally, his soteriological argument related to the pagan deities attempts to prove that his opponents' concepts of deity are anti-salvific, i.e., they offer no benefit to those who believe in them. The general tone referred to above appears to have been predetermined by the following accusation which is undoubtedly taken from a Porphyrian work:

"Επειδή γὰρ τὸν χριστιανοῦν τινα οδόν λόγον ἀποδείξειν, ἀλόγως δὲ πίστει καὶ ἀνεξέτασθη συγκαταθέσθαι τούτο τῆς προσομοιωτικῆς ἁπτικῆς τοῦ δόξαν κυρίου ὑπελήκισιν, μήδεν γὰρ συνόντες δύνασθαι δὴ ἀποδείξεις ἐνεργοὺς παρέχειν ἕκαστον τῆς τε ἐπεγγελλομενίας ἁλληκος, πίστει δὲ μόνη προσέχειν δείξεων τοὺς προσέντας παρ' οὗ καὶ πιστοίς χρησιμοποιεῖν τὴν ἄκριτον χάριν καὶ ἀδικασμένον πίστεως (Φγ.I.I=Ham. ΟC fr. 1. It may have been derived from Phil. or.: v. Wilken, 1979, p. 127.)

This attitude towards Christian faith coheres with Porphyry's remark about Ammonius Saccas: he was a Christian and had been brought up among the faithful by his parents, but he gave this up as soon as he began to be a thinking man and study philosophy (Bus., ΕΕ 6.19.5-7: ΟC). The argument in the text above is that there is no rational proof to support the faith that Christians hold. They too simplistically assent to it without any examination. Faith is unreasonable because it is not supported by a clear demonstration of the evidence of the things promised. Thus Christians call themselves 'the faithful' because of their uncritical and untested faith. Porphyry was essentially calling upon his enemies to offer rational proof that the basic tenets of their faith were true. He might have responded to Justin Martyr's comment that the Roman authorities accuse Christians of various acts without first making an inquiry (I Apol. 11). Tertullian could similarly exclaim: 'Dam-
nate veritatem, sed inspectam si potestis, et probate errorem, sed repertum si putatis! (Ad nat. 1.20). Yet Justin (I Apol. 54) and Athenagoras (Leg. pro Christ. 25) could also argue that the pagans accept the myths without first offering proof of their credibility. And as we noted above (pp. 317f.), Porphyry and later Neoplatonists in North Africa were able to offer many proofs (Civ. Dei 10.17: "per multa testantibus") to demonstrate that their Graeco-Roman religious traditions were firmly established in the truth. These proofs were the miracles of the gods/goddesses recorded in the annals and other authoritative sources.

It would be unnecessary to give all the texts of PE and DE where it appears that Eusebius is responding to Porphyry's accusation (p. 336 supra). Beginning his criticism of Porphyry's oracles in PE 4, Eusebius turns his opponent's method against him by noting the importance to examine the beliefs related to the worship of images (4.1); the masses possess an uncritical reasoning (4.1); Christians have abandoned polytheism with just reasons, true judgments, and sound reasoning (4.4).

With right and well-proved judgment Christians have given up Greek religion (14.10: a direct response to Phil. or.). The forefathers' religious concepts and philosophical doctrines were not in agreement, right, or tested and proved to be harmonious and true (14.9: before quoting Ep. An.). Christians have accepted Hebrew Oracles as the result of just reasoning and carefully tested judgment and thought (9.1: before citing Abst. 2.26 in PE 9.2); not without sober reasoning have they done this (Ep. An.). Hebrew theology has been preferred to Greek philosophy not without sound reason (10.4). Christians use: good reason and judgment in giving up polytheistic error; and a well examined and thoroughly tested judgment in forsaking Greek wisdom (14 praef.). He claims to have laid bare by evidence "as clear as day" (Gifford) as to the renowned oracles and the doctrine of fate (in response to Phil. or.: 14 praef.). This is undoubtedly written in response to Porphyry's comment in PE 1.1 (p. 336 supra) that Christians cannot offer a clear (ἐκτοιχία) demonstration of the truth of the things promised in their religious beliefs. He ends his work by affirming that he has plainly set forth the reason why Christians have rejected the Greeks' doctrines and preferred Hebrew oracles (15.62). Finally, we may give a few examples from the many found in DE. First, the name itself appears to have been conceived as a response to the aforementioned accusations (p. 336). The purpose of the work is to demonstrate the proof of the Gospel, and Eusebius acknowledges that it is written as a refutation of those who say that Christians cannot offer proof, only faith (1.1: bis, and referring to pagans). Thus he proves (e.g.) that he who was seen by the patriarchs was the Word of God (1.5); by a 'thorough examination' of scripture Christ is the saviour of the world (2.2); pagans have 'clear proofs' from whom the Gospel takes its origin (3.1); proof in the universal extension of the Christian religion (3.2). The latter proof...
is present in Eusebius, Amobius, and Augustine, and note the similarities:

**DE 3.5**: Before he gives Hecatean Oracle (partially) in 3.7, and responding to the charge that Christ did not work the miracles which his disciples relate, he states that the ignorant disciples worked no deception (i.e., they did not use magic) by teaching His deeds in country, town, some taking possession of the Roman Empire, and the Queen of Cities (Rome), the Persian, Armenian, Parthian, Scythian races, some reaching the ends of the world, going to the Indians, crossing the ocean, going to the British Isles: this was not the work of magicians.

**Adv. nat. 2.12**: Amobius refers to the public miracles performed by Christ and his disciples, united the most disparate nations to agree to the same faith, viz. in India, among the Seres, Persians, Medes, in Arabia, Egypt, Asia, Syria, among the Galatians, Parthians, in Achaea, Macedonia, Epirus, in all the islands and provinces, and in Rome too, the 'mistress' ('"dominam") people dedicated to King Numa's beliefs abandoned their ancestral traditions. Peter's encounter with Simon magus follows, with Amobius stressing that Peter vanquished this magician's power only by the words spoken from his mouth: it is obvious that he is responding to the same accusations found in DF above. We will return to the problem with the selection of Peter infra.

**De cons. evan. 1.32.49**: Augustine has referred to the applauders of Christ in 1.7, specifically naming Porphyry and noting his 'praise' of Christ in the Hecatean Oracle. In this text (1.32.49) he now asks what those perverse applauders of Christ and slanderers of the Christians have to say to the facts about the Biblical predictions of the Lord's advent: did Christ cause these to be fulfilled by magic? The Church has extended to all nations, enlarged her tent beyond Rome and its empire, to the territories of the Persians, Indians and other barbarian nations. 1.32.50: this has been done through Christ exactly as he promised.

We shall give a few examples of Augustine's response to Porphyry's criticism (p. 336-Ham. CC fr. 1) found in De cons. evan. He acknowledges that his opponents attack Christian scripture with a more than ordinary and careful investigation (Praef. 2.1). The purpose is to show that the Bible is contradictory (ID.). Like Eusebius in DE, Augustine pays acute attention to the need to provide evidence from the Bible to show that this is not true. Hence we often read that he wishes to demonstrate ("demonstrare": 2.2.4) the credibility of a particular text; or his use of a phrase like, "it has been acutely observed" ("acute quippe animadversum est": 2.4.8) in providing his evidence; or that a certain text requires the greatest attention and carefulness ("adventissimum et diligentissimum": 2.4.8); or careful inquiry ("diligentius inquiratur":1.32.49f.). We recall that Porphyry stated that Christians were not able by clear demonstration to provide evidence of the truth of the things promised in their faith. In De cons. evan. 1.30.46 Augustine uses Ps. 19.6 to prove that the things predicted therein about the name of Christ spreading to all nations are now set forth as accomplished facts in the clearest light.
Not a single biblical text is used in Amobiou's attack upon pagan religious ideas and practices in Adv. nat. 3-7. This may very well prove to be a great asset in our attempts better to understand Porphyry the polemicist, especially his critical methods employed in the CC. For it is probably in Amobiou's attack in 3-7 that we see a reflection of the same kind of arguments used and methods of literary criticism developed by Porphyry in his great work Contra Christianos.

Both kept the interpretation of the scripture(s) of their opponents at none other than a literal level: Porphyry attacked the Alexandrian allegorical interpretation of the Bible (Bus.; HE 6.19.4: OC), and Amobiou refutes the same kind of methods used by his opponents (Adv. nat. 3.29-35; 5.32-45), and we have already noted above (pp. 237f.) the possibility that Porphyry may be directly attacked in some passages. Both demonstrate the inconsistencies, falsehoods, stupidity, contradictions, and the ridiculous ideas inherent in the literature of their opponents. And both were acutely aware of the importance to offer proof of the truth of their own religious literature and the falsity of the myths/scripture of their enemies.

Keeping OC fr. 1 (p. 336, supra) in mind, as well as the response to it given by Eusebius and Augustine, we may note the following passages derived from Adv. nat.:

Adv. nat. 1.2.1: "Let us therefore examine the precise significance of the belief they hold" (all translations are from McCr) "Inexpiciemus igiti opinionis istius mentem": 1.22.9f.: pagan accusations are "not clearly proven by examining any witness": "non cognitionis alicuius testimonioc probarit". 1.42: someone will ask whether one can prove Christ=GOD: no greater proof than in his miracles, esp. overcoming fate, that peoples saw in daylight without any disagreement: this is in his response to the Hecatean Oracle and commentary (v. Ch. V); 1.47: Christ's miracles performed so that unbelievers might know that what was promised was not false: 1.47.8f.: "sed ut homines dari increduli scirent non esse quod spondebat falsum": apparently a direct response to Porphyry's remark that Christians cannot offer proof of the credibility of such promises noted above (p. 336); Amn. adds to this that this proof makes it "clearer than the sun" (11.18f.: "sole ipse est claritas") that Christ was more powerful than the fates (responding to the Hecatean Oracle: v. Ch. V): cf. Porphyry's μνημοσυνή...δύναμις 61" ἀνυπόκτοις ἐν ἀναγέννησι (etc.): 1.48.27f.: asking the pagans to give his evidence "attentive examination" ("si volueritis attendere": found in a passage where a comparison between the gods' healings with those of Christ is made, and revealing possible Chaldean healing practices, v. pp.257f. supra); 1.54: proof from eye-witness accounts, "clearer than the day itself" (11.7f.: "luce...clarior")): DE parallel noted on p. 259 supra; Ib.: proof from universal extension of Christianity: cf. Bus. and Aug. p.338 supra; and cf. esp. Adv. nat. 1.55: nations once separate have united on one conclusion and risk capital punishment: cf. DE p.269; 1.57: Christian eye-witness evidence compared with mere pagan opinions: 1.61: pagans refuse to let Christians explain incarnation; 1.64: Christ promised unfounded hopes (1.36: "ipse etiam vanissimas poenitentiae"); 1.65.25: Christ promises "air castles": "fatua dona primitit": 2.4: "But all these things will be demonstrated more plainly and more clearly when we shall proceed further."; 2.4.1f.: "Verum haec omnia industrius commemorabuntur et planibus,"; 2.6: "But perhaps those who now throughout the world are acting in concert and uniting in agreement of 'credulity' seem to you stupid and silly."; 2.6.1ff.: "Nisi forte obtunsi et fatui videntur hi
vobis, qui per orbem tam totum conspicient et coeunt in istius credulitatis adsensus.");  2.10: Christians and pagans share "credulitatem"; pagans are not in agreement with theirs;  2.11: Christians believe in and assert to Christ, whereas pagans believe Plato, Cronius, and Numerius: v. p.167 supra for the probable Porphyrian connection with this passage: 2.11.4f.: "Vos Platonis, vos Cronio, vos Numerio vel cui libuerit creditis: nos credimus et adquiescimus Christo.");  2.11: mighty miracles brought out publicly: these can bring anyone to belief (cf. DE 3.7: disciples did not speak in public; cf. CC fr. no.50=PE 6.1, p.315, n.234 supra; also p.278, n.74: since Christ appeared there have not been any public blessings from the gods; cf. Adv. nat. 1.1: gods have abandoned the world due to Christians, and pagans who say this speak "ex oraculo", probably referring to Phil. or.;  2.12: if Christ spoke like a philosopher who would say that he makes any "clear promises"?; 2.12: text noted supra p.336, and note that pagan accusations rob them of faith; 2.16: "Are you willing to inquire, to search out, to investigate what you yourselves are...?";1112f.: "Multis quaerere pervestigare rimari, quid sitis vos ipsi"; 2.20: "And that we may show you more clearly and more patently of what worth is man whom you believe to be very like the Higher Power."; 1.1: "Et ut vobis veleri manifestissimum monstrum": v. pp.166ff. supra for probable Porphyrian connection; 2.34: why does Christian credulitas seem stupid to those who criticise it? why ridicule them for the promise of immortality, and note esp. 2.34.9-30: 'Si nobis haec gaudia, hoc est fugiendum mortis, Plato (in) Plaedro promiss-sent aliuiue ex hoc choro possetque eam praestare atque ad (in) finem pollicitationes adducere, consentiuntatem fuerat eius suscipere nos cultus a quo tantum doni expectaremus et numerus. Nunc cum eam Christus non tantum promiserit verum etiam virtutibus tantis manifestaverit posses compeli, quid allenum facimus aut stultitiae crimen quibus rationibus sustinimus, si elus nominii metasticum subterminum, a quo speramus utrunque, et mortem cruciabilum fugere et vitae aeternitate donari?' A demonstration of the rationality of faith based upon evidence of miracles which prove that Christ's promises can be believed, and using Plato against Porphyry's criticism of Christian faith/credulitas; 2.39: lack of agreement in pagan beliefs; 2.50: clear proof that the soul is not immortal; 2.51: if pagans (Neoplatonists) gave their beliefs a searching examination, they similarly would criticise in themselves what they do in Christians; the concept of descent of the soul is not anything "examined and placed in the light of clearest truth: 11.14f.: "exploratum aliquid dicitis et in luce posthum manifestissimae veritatis"; 2.54.2f.: "Considerandum est nobis sollicite et cura inspiceliun non parva" (a pagan speaks); cf. 2.56;2.57;2.58;2.59;2.60: Christians do not investigate what cannot be known, as philosophers do (cf. 2.59); 2.61: pagan examination/investigation of various questions not to be preferred to salvific knowledge of God; 2.67: one should look at the reason and not the fact why Christians abandon ancient institutions; and not to set forth against them what they abandoned, but examine what in particular they follow; 2.68: Christians have acted against common sense and judgment in forsaking ancestral religious customs: v. pp.22f. supra for the Porphyrian connection with this passage: cf. 2.71; 2.74: Porphyrian investigation as to why Christ came so late and cf. Civ. Del 10.32; 2.76: Porphyrian disqualification of Christianity as way of truth due to persecutions and cf. Civ. Del 10.32; 2.78: pagans are asked to stop obstructing their hopes by "senseless investigations (1.1: "questionibus vacuis"); and not to insist on the reason for the gift of salvation being offered, antithesis of belief and unbelief.

It should be fairly clear that Arnobius is responding in the above texts to the same Porphyrian criticism of Christian faith (CC fr. 1: p. 336 supra) as one finds
in Eusebius and Augustine. We can see the same pattern in his criticism of
religious paganism in Books 3-7:

Adv. nat. 3.6: due to foul myths about the gods the pagans demonstrate
that they do not exist; 3.7: Cicero should be refuted, rebutted, and
proved to be speaking impiously; if pagans wish to show by examination
that the stories about the gods are true; they fear the evidence of
the truth: 3.7.14: "veritatis testificationem"; 3.23: concept of tutelary
deities is not based on certified truth: 1.12: "non explorata
veritas comprehensit"; 3.32: he maintains "on sure grounds" (1.15:
"si ratione profertur et adsequatur certa") that certain deities do
not exist; 3.34: he ascertains, establishes and shows the truth of
the matter that: Diana, Ceres, and Luna cannot be the same goddess; again
like Porphyry's criticism of the Christians, Amobius in 3.37 argues
that diversity of opinion as to the exact identity of the muses
proves that (i.e., this is a sign) it is the pagans who know nothing
about the truth; if the fact were "clearly known, the voice of all
would be one and the agreement of all would tend towards and reach
the conclusion of the same belief"; cf. 3.38.1-4: "Quoam modo igitur
religionis potestis integrare vim plenam, cum circa ipsos erretis de-
cos, aut ad venerables invitare nos cultus, cum nihil nos certi de
ipocrum numinum comprehensione doceris?"; 3.39f.: no agreement about
the identity of the deities; 3.42: uncertain and conflicting notions
of deities; a thousand different views; it is manifestly clear that
it is the pagans who cannot say anything certain about the deities;
he begins by pointing out that it is evident from the pagans' books
that they are confused about the deities; how can a god for help
if it cannot be ascertained and established which to invoke?; 3.44:
a demand that the pagans stand upon one harmonious opinion about
the gods, otherwise they destroy by conflicting notions the confidence
in the whole system; 4.3: Christians cannot determine whether the
pagans have discovered the truth; 4.5: they must clarify the meaning of
'gods on the left' for the understanding; 4.7: the facts of their be-
iefs bring pagans to understand the truth, viz. their concepts of
deity are imagined falsities; 4.15: it is true, certain, and "demon-
strated from the testimony of acknowledged fact" that pagan concepts
of deity are confused; 4.17: we can demonstrate the same regarding
the Merecuses, etc.; 4.18: concepts of deities are taken directly
from the pagans' writings; 4.27: if checked and proven beyond doubt,
his argument reveals that the deities are of a human race (before
R3); 4.30: Christians clearly demonstrate that pagans shamefully treat
their deities; 5.8: he uses the "careful computations" of Varro, that
"investigator of antiquity" to show that the Great Mother was recently
born; 5.15; it would be stupid to demand proofs of these silly myths;
5.16: rites of the Great Mother, have they "been verified and found
worthy of credence"?; 5.20: he makes clear to pagans how they insult
the deities; 5.30: if a true examination is made, it is the pagans who
are the real atheists; 5.31: it is clear they provoke divine anger;
5.33: the need to examine (1.16: "inspicere" cf. 1.2.1) the allegorical
method; 5.39: it is established that the mysteries refer to actual
historical events, thus one cannot allegorize the immoral/illogical
elements found therein; 6.14.4ff.: "Quidam est istud, homines, quod
ipsi vos ultra in tam promptis ac perspicuis rebus voluntaria falli-
tis et circumscribibilis cascat?"; 6.26: it is proven and established
that fear of the images is nothing; 7.4: a sacrificial theory examined
and thoroughly investigated; cf. 7.5; 7.19: the proof and discovery of
an inquiry about sexual distinctions among the gods: these concepts are
"most foolish delusions"; 7.26: proof that antiquity did not find
incense necessary: without reason (cf. esp. Porphyry's ἂναθές δὲ πίστει,
"sine ulla...rationibus" this practice has been introduced in modern times; 7.30: pagans know in their hearts that Christians speak the truth about the sacrifices; "and the reason is, with you a custom having no basis in reason takes precedence rather than the reality of things looked into and appraised in a search for the truth": 11.18-21: "primum quia apud vos valet nullem habens consuetudo rationem quam rerum inspecta natura veritatis examinatia ponderata"; 7.39: he now comes to his central thesis: a close inspection ("inspicere") must be made to ascertain whether the pagan deities of the myths actually exist; 7.41: these stories are believed to have the character of the miraculous (11.Iff.: "miraculi speciem...habere creduntur"), which is the basis of Porphyry's attempts to prove the credibility of the myths: the reader is asked to review pp.317f. supra for the Porphyrian connection; yet the stories only have a "semblance to truth" (1.6: "veritatis similitudine"); he then adds (11.7ff.): "Ceterum si penitus intueri res factae, personae et personarum voluere voluntates, nihil esse repertae diis dignum..."; 7.43: "if you weigh the circumstances thoroughly"; 7.44: after investigating the facts of the story of Jupiter and the dancer, he concludes (11.44-6): "Quae si penitus cuncta et sine ulla partim gratificatione penduntur, non tantum longe longaque ab ddis esse repertiores alienae, verum (a) quovis homine sentiente communia nec ad studium veritatim cognitionibus erudito."; 7.44: on the importation of Aesculapius: Amobius states that a close analysis of the pagans' statements, as the result of demonstrating from their own authorities, reveals the fact that he was not a deity; 7.44: the "tested truth" of the annals shows that only a snake was sent to Rome (11.64-7): "Ex Epidaurum tanen quid est aliud adlatus nisi magni agminis coluber? Fidem si annalium sequimos et exploratam mis attribus veritatem, nihil..."; and finally 7.45.16ff.: "Non arbitratur evincere atque obtinere vos posse, Aesculapium illum fuisse serpentem, ...", which is again interesting because (1) Porphyry demanded the same kind of rational proof, and not just a foolish belief, from the Christians to show that their beliefs were true, and he used the same kind of rational arguments; (2) Porphyry (and later Neoplatonists in North Africa) used this same story of Aesculapius' importation from Epidaurus (v. Ch. V, pp. 317f., supra, for the evidence appearing in Civ. Dei) to offer proof of the credibility of pagan religious concepts of the deities; (3) the basis of this proof was the miracles recorded in the annals (cf. Amobius' reference to pagans' belief that the stories have a miraculous character in 7.41, and the "tested truth" of the annals concerning the Aesculapius myth in 7.44.

We may conclude that Amobius has responded to Porphyry's criticism of Christian faith by using the same basic argument against him, viz. that it is the pagans who accept the myths about the gods without reason and examination; a close examination of these stories clearly prove that pagans are confused, uncertain, and entirely inconsistent as to the right concept of deity; and the proof of each of the premises of his argument is derived directly from the myths themselves. Like Porphyry, he uses the miracles of Christ which are qualitatively superior to any acts of the pseudo-deities, to prove that Christ was a divine being. Like the Neoplatonist, he also pays acute attention to the details of the myths which help him to demonstrate that nothing of the Divine appears in them. The inconsistency and irrationality of a particular myth, and more importantly the ridiculous conceptions of deity which it has produced, are emphasized with precision by a method of liter-
ary criticism which only operates on a level of literal interpretation. Like Porphyry, he was not able to allow his opponents the freedom to explain away any piece of evidence from their religious literature which might support his argument. Yet Amobius not only used this method in relation to one myth independent of any analysis of similar stories found in other myths. Indeed, the fact that he can demonstrate the inconsistencies about a particular story appearing in several different sources, supports his contention that there is no agreement in the myths, one does not know what to believe, and one cannot find any truth in them about the gods. We may recall that Porphyry's criticism of the synoptic gospels employed the same kind of argumentation, and it would not be unreasonable to suggest that Amobius has responded to this specific attack of the Neoplatonist.

There are a number of general similarities between Eusebius and Amobius. Like Eusebius, the rhetor attempts to demonstrate that Christians have had good reasons, and have used right judgment, in abandoning the religious mos maiorum. Both exonerate the Christians from the charge of atheism and provide evidence that the pagans should be accused in this manner. Like Eusebius, who we know is definitely attacking Porphyry, Amobius attacks the allegorical method. Both also show the great disparity between the Christian conception of the High God who is incorporeal and impassible, and the pagan notions of the gods who are both corporeal and subject to passions, which we have seen are Porphyrian (Ch. V supra). Eusebius and Amobius attempt to demonstrate that the Christians have the truly spiritual worship of God.

The same thing can be said about Augustine and Amobius. The gods are subject to emotions, and therefore they cannot help man in his morality. The universal extension of the faith proves that it has a divine origin and support. Yet it is in Augustine's response to Porphyry's criticism of the Bible that we find a good number of significant parallels between the methods which both Amobius and the Neoplatonist use in their attempts to destroy the credibility of each other's sacred literature. Augustine notes (p. 336 supra) that his opponents attack the Bible with an extraordinary investigation, Amobius uses the same method. Porphyry tried to show the contradictions of the Bible; that the stories were silly, false, and incredible; that the concept of Jesus as divine was philosophically disreputable; that an individual text within a gospel, as well as similar stories found in the synoptic gospels, disclosed too many contradictions and inconsistencies for the Bible to be taken seriously as containing truth. Amobius attempts to make the same points in the texts noted above (pp. 339-42). The main objective of both arguments is the same, viz. to prove to their opponents that they must seek the via salutis in a source other than their own sacred literature.
A basic proof appearing rather frequently in the above general paradigm (pp. 339-42) concerns the universal extension of the Christian religion throughout the entire world. We have noted that this is a theme common to Eusebius, Augustine, and Amobius (p. 338), and we are now ready to analyse Amobius' position in detail. The first accusation to which Amobius responds by referring to the universal extension of the faith appears in Adv. nat. 1.6.1-5:

Quamquam ista quae dicitis bella religionis nostrae ob invidianem commoveri non sit difficile comprobare post auditum Christum in mundo non tantum non auta, verum etiam maiores de parte furiarum compressionibus imminuta.

Eusebius (PE 1.4) also argues that after the advent of Christ, prepared by the Augustan pacification, wars have decreased in numbers. Amobius connects the decrease in wars with the fact that Christ's teachings (1.6: "magisteriis") and his laws (1.6: "legibus") have helped humans to overcome 'their violent passions (1.4: "furiarum"). Here only six chapters into the work he begins to develop one line of argumentation inherent in his soteriology, viz. Christ can help humankind to extirpate such passions; the gods cannot because they are capable of suffering them and therefore are mortal. One of the divine laws which enable man to live in this manner is "evil should not be repaid with evil," which might have been derived from Amobius' knowledge of the N.T. (V. McCr, 273, n. 50). He continues by affirming that if men would lend an ear to "His wholesome and peaceful commandments" (11.14f.: "salutaribus eius pacificisque decretis aures vellent comodare"), the world would live in "most placid tranquility" (1.19: "tranquillitate in mollissima") and come together in "Wholesome harmony" (1.20: "in concordiam salutarem").

In the same text noted (PE 1.4), Eusebius also asserts that people of all sexual ages, and classes lend ears to Christ's words which enable them to overcome vices of all kinds. The central idea in both is that Christ's teaching benefits people everywhere in the world. And Augustine argued against Porphyry: "Hac est igitur anime liberandae universalis via, id est universis gentibus divina miseratione concessa" (Civ. Dei 10.32). It appears that one of the nuances of "via universalis animae liberandae" according to Porphyry's quest to find it, was strictly geographical. That is, he appears to have searched for a way of salvation which might be applicable to all nations and races of people in the world.

In Adv. nat. 1.42, which we have argued (Ch. V) was written as a direct response to the Hecatean Oracle and Porphyry's commentary upon it, Amobius again offers proof of Christ's divinity on the basis of people and tribes who saw him perform miracles in daylight without a disagreeing voice. He refers to the eye-witness account as being superior to mere opinions in 1.57 also. Eusebius, immediately before
he gives the same Porphyrian accusation ridiculing Christian faith in DE 1 as we saw that he gave in FE 1.1 (v. p. 336 supra), challenges his opponents to see with their eyes the miracles of Christ witnessed to in the gospels. Both (DE 3.6; Adv. nat. 1.16) refer to the existence of Christians among the Persians and Scythians; to the pagan accusation that Christians have apostatised from worshipping the gods, both mentioning the Greek mysteries, the cities and the country where the gods are worshipped (Adv. nat. 5.29.5f.: "per rura, per oppida": PE 1.2: πόλεις καὶ ἄρποις), and that Christians deserve severe punishment for not worshipping them (Eusebius gives the general statement, and Arnobius typically gives a detailed list of such punishments); (Eusebius also refers to the presence of the Christian religion in cities and towns in FE 4.4 and DE 3.7). Porphyry in Phil. or. evidently argued that traditional polytheism was the true way of salvation because it was to the gods that "whole peoples, both rulers and ruled, in cities and in country districts, offer animal sacrifices" (PE 4.10: it is obvious that Eus. refers to Phil. or., which defended and encouraged animal sacrifice to the gods, whereas Abst. argued that it was valid only to demons). Much like Arnobius in 5.29, Eusebius again refers to the polytheistic worship of the gods in temples, in the form of mysteries, and both in city and country regions, before attacking Porphyry in PE 14.10.

Arnobius offers similar evidence in Adv. nat. 2.5.7-14:

Nonne vel haec saltem fideum vos faciunt argumenta credendi, quod iam per omnes terras in tamen brevi temporis spatio immensae nominis huius sacrae mentis diffusa sunt; quod nulla iam natio est tam barbarie moris et mansuetudinem nesciens, quae non eius amore versa molliverit asperitatem suam et in placidos sensus adsuntim tranquillitatem migraverit;

All nations have been evangelised in a brief period of time. Not even barbaric nations have been neglected. The result of this evangelisation has been the abandonment of harsh behaviour and the adoption of tranquility brought about by the love of Christ. These are the main points of his argument here. Note that in Phil. or. Porphyry asserted that (i.e., through an oracle of Apollo) the Greeks were in error in finding the salvation of the soul, but the Barbarians found many paths to the gods (PE 14.10: a direct quote from Phil. or.). Two groups were Egyptians and Phoenicians, and perhaps this gives us a clue as to why Eusebius (PE 1.6) states that these races started evil polytheistic delusions; and that Greeks and Barbarians together adhere to the word of Jesus Christ (PE 1.4). He later in the same passage says that Greeks and the most savage Barbarians "and those who dwell in the utmost parts of the earth" have overcome their "irrational brutality" and live now according to a "wise philosophy" (PE 1.4: Gifford). The spreading of Christianity throughout the world in such a brief amount of time is emphasised in the DE as well
In the list of miracles which Christ performed given in 1.46, Amobius attempts to prove the divinity of Christ on the basis of his teaching the disciples the true religion, who immediately filled the entire world: "unus fuit e nobis qui, cum officia religionis certae sui sectatoribus tradeter, mundum totum repente complebat...?" (11.21ff.). Note also Adv. nat. 1.50.1-13:

Quid quod istas urtutes, quae sunt a nobis summatim, non ut rei possebat magitudo, depropertae, non tautum ipse perfecit vi sua, verum, quod erat subliminus, multos alios exspiriri et facere sui nominis cum adiectione permisit. Nam cum viseret futuros vos esse gestarum ab se rerum divinique operis abrogatores, ne qua subissent suscipio, magicis se artibus munera illa beneficiaque longum, ex immensa illa populi multitudine, quae suum gratiam sectabatur admirans, piscatores opifices rusticanos atque id genus deligit imperitum, qui per varias gentes missi cuncta illa miracula sine ullis fucis atque administrulis perpetrarent.

He finishes the chapter enumerating the miracles which were done both by Christ and his disciples and brought about only by a word, i.e. they did not use any material aids/magic arts. We noted above (p. 297: CC fr. 4) that Porphyry in the CC explained the so-called miracles of the "rusticanos" (etc.) as being due to the practice of magic, an accusation which he had already made in Phil. or. First, we take note of the main points made by Amobius above: (1) Christ not only performed miracles himself, but he also gave this power to his disciples; (2) the disciples have been empowered to do this in Christ's name; (3) both Christ and his followers are exonerated from the charge of practicing magic; (4) he specifically chose fishermen, workers, farmers, and uneducated persons; (5) these were sent through various nations of the world to perform miracles; (6) they did not use any material aids, only Christ's name. If we turn to Eusebius, in the section of DE which immediately follows his citing of the Hecatean Oracle (3.7), we find the same points being made: Jesus was no sorcerer; proof of the divine power shown by Christ's selection of fishermen, rustic and common men (p. 156: Ferrar), and uneducated (p. 159: Id.); disciples were empowered to work miracles in Jesus' name (p. 157); they went to all nations and made many disciples in his name in a short time (p. 157: N.B. Eusebius here, and Amobius in 4.13, where he is undoubtedly referring to Chaldaean invocations (cf. Lowy's "rulers" in OTh, 202), both give Egyptians, Persians, Armenians, Chaldaeans, and Indians in reference to worship of the One God); and Christ and his disciples healed by a word/the name of Jesus (p. 160). Finally, Amobius ends the text by referring to the amazement of those present when Christ and his disciples performed their miracles, and Eusebius accentuates the astonishment of the spectators of the disciples' miracles in the name of Jesus (p. 160).

He brings up the universal theme again in 1.55.1-5:

Quodsi falsa ut dicitis historia illa rerum est, unde tam brevi tempore
totus mundus ista religione completus est, aut in unam coire qui
potuerunt remanem gentes regionibus dissitae, ventis caeli convexionibusque dimotae?

All the world has been filled with the Christian religion. Nations separated by such great distances have united on this one conclusion, viz. that this way is the true way of salvation. He begins the statement by referring to the charge that the Christian writers had lied about the miracles of Christ given in 1.54: his emphasis again upon the eye-witnesses which make it "clearer than the day" would never assent to this kind of events make it fairly certain that he is responding to CC fr. 1 (Porphyry's criticism of faith). Also, the charge that the disciples were deceivers parallels the pagan explanation of the disciples' miracles given by Eusebius in DE 3.7, immediately after citing the Hecatean Oracle. Amobius' remark about the universal agreement of the Christians, found in the context of an attempt to exonerate Christian writers - and we can be almost certain that he means the biblical writers - from mendacity, may have been written as the direct response to Porphyry's making mincemeat of the synoptic gospels, the main object of which was to prove that the evangelists were semi-illiterates of the working classes who could not get their stories about Jesus to harmonize. Finally, we can be fairly certain as to why Eusebius and Amobius rather frequently emphasise the short time it has taken for Christianity to extend to the farthest reaches of the world (e.g., v. esp. the texts from DE 3.5 and Adv. nat. 2.12, supra p. 336). First, note the general remark in Civ. Dei 10.32 attributed to Porphyry that the persecutions would soon ("cito") destroy Christianity. Also, in Civ. Dei (and cf. esp. O'Meara, 1959, 70f., for penetrating analysis of the meaning of the text) we find that Porphyry asserted that Peter ensured by using magic that Christianity would exist exactly for 365 years (18.53). Augustine acknowledges the many pagans who believed in this oracular prediction (18.54) in North Africa. We shall analyse the charge that Peter was a magician below. In 2.6 Amobius also refers to those who unite in credulitas throughout the world, and this appears in the Book where he attacks the philosophical via salutis and two chapters before a text which has many elements in common with Eusebius' list of examples of pagan faith (v. p. 290 and n. 100, supra). There follows a defence of Christian credulitas in 2.11: the pagans whom he addresses believe in Plato, Cronius, and Numenius (etc.), which is an apparent allusion to Porphyry/a Porphyrian sect (v. p. 167, supra); Christians believe in and assent to Christ. This is undoubtedly a response to CC fr. 1 (p. 336 supra).

We recall that Amobius mentions one Christian predecessor by name in Adv. nat., Peter, and that he might well have been the patron saint of SV during Amobius' life (v. pp. 87-90, supra). The text is 2.12, and we analyse first 11.7-13:

Virtutes (sc. Christi) sub oraculis positae et inaudita illa vis rerum,
We recall that Christ could not be thought to make "any clear promises" if he were to summise like the philosophers (2.11) in 2.12.4f. ("quis eum promittere aperte aliquid indicaret"), which appears to be a direct response to Porphyry's assertion that Christians cannot offer a clear demonstration that the promises of the faith are true (v. p. 336, supra for the Gr. text).

We again find an emphasis upon the public ("palam") manifestation of both the miracles of Christ, and of those of his disciples "in orbe toto," which is another recurrent theme in Books 1-2. Eusebius makes the same point in vivid detail. In response to those who claim that the disciples did not carry on their ministry in public (οὗ κατὰ μανή: PG 22.241), he says that they stood in the middle of the city in the Agora and preached to passers-by with a loud voice; then came the universal theme and the disciples' miracles (DE 3.7). Note also that Ammonius attributes to Christ above (2.12) what we observed that he did in 1.6, viz. that Christ's power has helped men throughout the world to vanquish the "fires of passions"("adpetitionum flammas"), the same point made in DE 3.6 (Ferrar: p. 148).

All races, Ammonius maintains, have consented to one and the same faith (cf. CC fr. 1, p. 336, supra).

He then enumerates in 2.12 the many nations to which the miracle-working power of Christ and his disciples has spread, with which we have compared DE 3.5 and De cons. evan. 1.32.49 (p. 338). Peter's encounter with Simon Magus is then given.

Peter conquered his adversary by his mouth, i.e. by uttering the name of Christ (2.12.24: "nominatus Christo"). The description of an injured and disgraced Simon Magus who eventually commits suicide ends the story. Two questions arise: why did he insert the story here, and what is its central message?

In Civ. Dei 18.55f Augustine responds to Porphyry's special hatred for Peter. The present writer agrees with O'Meara's conclusions that Augustine's source is Phil. or. (1959, 67-72). Thus the oracles of the gods did not accuse Christ of sacrilege, but "Petrum autem maleficia fecisse subiungunt, ut coleretur Christi nomen per trecentos sexaginta quinque annos, deinque completo memorato numero annorum, sinea mora sumeret finem" (18.53). The specific charge is that Peter ensured that Christ's name would be worshipped, and he did this by practicing magic:

> O ingenia litterata digna credere ista de Christo, quae credere non multis in Christum, quod eius discipulus Petrus ab eo magiae artes non didicerit, sed, ipso innocent, tamen eius maleficius fuit in nomine illius quam suum colui maluerit magicas artibus suis, maginis laboribus et periculis suis, postremo etiam effusione sanguinis sui! (Civ. Dei 18.53)

We recall that Ammonius insists upon Peter's performance of his miracle in his en-
counter with Simon Magus by uttering the name of Christ. In Civ. Dei 18.54, Augustine informs his opponents that the faith first enflamed Jerusalem with extraordinary success, thousands being converted to the name of Christ with bewildering promptness. He then asks: "Hoc si nullis magicis artibus factum est, quor credere dubitant eadem urtute divina per totum mundum id fieri potuisse, quae hoc factum est?" Remember Amobius' "vel quae ab ipso fiebant palam vel ab eius praecomicus celebantur in orbe todo" (p. 348). And Eusebius be responding to the same Porphyrian argument: these words were said in a corner (after mentioning that the disciples will triumph in the name of Christ!), he supposes, so how was it possible that his disciples left their own country and made disciples of every race of men in the world? (DE 3.7: Ferrar, p. 157, after citing the Hecatean Oracle). Porphyry's sore point was what to do with "per totum mundum," i.e., how to explain the universal diffusion of Christianity. It is quite clear from Augustine above (18.54) that he did not accept the idea that the same divine power which had worked in Jerusalem, which he easily explained away as being due to Peter's use of magic, could have manifested itself throughout the whole world. We again see the Porphyrian wedge working its way between Christ and his disciples to show the great credibility gap. And we are confronted again with an argument derived from Phil. or. Augustine, like Amobius, apparently felt the need to give a story (albeit from the Bible) depicting Peter who healed only by the name of Jesus (18.54: the lame beggar). And he, like Amobius in 1.50, shows that the same miracles performed by Christ were performed by his disciples without the use of magic:

Nec ergo, qui sumus uocamurque Christiani, non in Petro credimus, sed in quem creditit Petrus; Petri de Christo aedificati sermonibus, non carminibus uenenati; nec decepti maleficiiis, sed beneficiis eius adiutii... (Civ. Dei 18.54)

We conclude that Amobius and Augustine are responding to the same accusation derived from Phil. or., which attributed Peter's ability to perform miracles to the use of magic.

By developing his argument in such a manner, by using the charge of magic against the disciples, by arguing that persecutions would bring about the end of Christianity, or that the religion was predicted by the gods to live 365 years, Porphyry could provide "scientific evidence" to establish that it was not the via universalis animae liberandae. He appears to have been particularly committed to proving that its vast geographical extension throughout the Roman Empire did not have any divine connection or explanation. Conversely, Amobius offers proof of Christ's deity to a great extent on the basis of his miracles, performed without using magic; that the disciples were dependent upon the same power as he and they did these works throughout the world in the name of Christ; and that therefore the Christian religion provided the only way of salvation to all people everywhere.
Christus Via Salutis Universalis Animae: The Philosophical Argument.

In Civ. Dei 10.32 Augustine responds to Porphyry's quest to discover a via universalis animae liberandae by showing how Christianity offers such a way. First, he affirms that it is the universal way for all nations, and we have dealt with this concept in the preceding section. Second, he argues that the way of Christ purifies the whole person:

Haec via (sc. Christi) totum hominem mundat et immortalitati mortalem ex omnibus quibus constat partibus preperat. Ut enim non alia purgatio ei parti quisereret quam vocat intellectualen Porphyrius, alia ei quam vocat spiritalem, aliaque ipsi corpori, proprium totum suscipit veracissimus potentissimusque mandator atque salvator. Praetet hanc viam, quae partim cum haec futura praenuntiatur, partim cum facta nunquantur, nonquant generi humano defuit, nemo liberatus est, nemo liberatur, nemo liberabitur.

Porphyry mentions purificatory sacrifices for soul and body in Phil. or., and from the above it appears that he added to these the via salutis for the intellect (cf. PE 14.10). The latter provided a way for the philosopher, whereas through theurgical practices the non-philosophers could experience a purification of the soul (Civ. Dei 10.9). It is possible that Civ. Dei 10.32 and PE 14.10 reveal that Porphyry also incorporated the human body in his soteriological system, but we need not go that far. First, we have already noted that his principal concern was to flee the body and escape through pure thought and silence to the intellectual realm. Second, by corporeal purifications in Phil. or. (PE 14.10) he probably is referring to the Chaldean concept of the "salvation of the body," which Lewy has convincingly interpreted as "a medical, not an eschatological term" (CTh, 216) which applies "to the immunity against demonic infection with disease" (Ib.). Certain apotropaic rites, one being a kind of purificatory sacrifice, neutralised these demons (Ib., 290). We are back to the concern for physical health to which we referred in the introduction, and we have noted the fanatical attention which the Chaldeans paid to it above (pp. 287f.).

The principal soteriological text in the Adv. nat. is 2.65. After affirming that "pontificium Christi est dare animis salutem et spiritum perpetuam adponere" (11.26ff.), he explicitly argues that Christ alone is the via salutis animae:

...et hoc necesse a nobis est ut debendi accepere, ab nullo animos posse vim vitae atque inoculatitatis accipere nisi ab eo quem rex sumus huic munieri officioque praefect. Hanc omni potens imperator esse voluit salutis vian, hanc vitam ut ita dicerim innanum, per hanc solum est ingressus ad lucem neque alias datum est vel irreperae vel invadere ceteris omnibus clauesata atque inexspugnobilis arcem munitis. (2.65.33–40)

This is given in response to the pagan's question in 11.18f.: "Christianus ergo mi fiero, spem salutis habere non potero?" In 2.13 he lays the foundation of his attack upon the philosophical way of salvation. He addresses the followers of Mercury, Plato, and Pythagoras in 2.13. The Platonic concept of the flight of the soul
from the world of Becoming and occupy itself in contemplating the divine: "Quid Plato vester in Theaseto, ut eum potissimum nominem, nonne animo fugere suadet e terris et circa illum semper quantum fieri potis est cogitatione ac mente versari?" (11.14-7). He notes the corporeal-incorporeal antithesis, that his opponents extirpate all passions from their soul, and the esoteric rites which enable the soul to make its journey back to its ancestral home. The latter very probably describes Chaldaean theurgical practices according to Bidez (v. p. 335 supra). Noteworthy in the same passage is the remark that his philosophical opponents nail themselves to their bodies, which Fortin has argued betrays Porphyrian influence (esp. the Abst.: v. p. 159, n.215).

He quickly comes to a major objective of Book 2, viz. to disprove the immortality of the soul. He develops his argument throughout the Book until he reaches his main goal in 2.65 (v. p. 350 supra), which is to establish that Christ is the only way of the soul's salvation. In a rare moment when Amobius actually criticises Plato, in 2.14 he rejects the idea that an immortal being cannot suffer pain - he attacks the soul's survival in Acheron in Phaedo - and adds: "Quis autem hominum non videt quod sit immortale, quod simplex, nullum posse dolorum admittere, quod autem sentiat dolorem, immortalitatem habere non posse?" (11.12-5). Put in contradistinction to this is Amobius' belief (which might have come from e.g., Tatian) in the media qualitas of the soul which he attributes to Plato in 2.36 (v. pp. 155f., supra). Souls are of an indeterminate nature: knowledge of Summus Rex enables them to be immortalized, otherwise they shall suffer for an indefinite period in a burning gehenna and then perish (cf. 2.12; 2.14; 2.29; 2.33f.; 2.36 (cf. 2.30); 2.53; 2.54; 2.61f.; 2.78; 1.38; 1.39; 2.46). The concept of souls being thrown into the burning abyss, described in 2.14, appears to have a Prophyrian-Chaldaean correspondence as well: according to Levy, the Chaldæans apparently believed in vicious demons "who cast the soul after death into the abyss of Tartarus" (COTh, p. 308), a concept he ties in with Porphyry's remark in Ep. An. 3 that Chaldæans invoked terrestrial and subterraneous deities (cf. COTh, 259, n. 112: χάοουν καὶ υποχώουν εἶται θεομονεῖς κλέοντα). In Adv. nat. 2.25 he uses the ambiguous term viri novi to identify his opponents. At the beginning of Ch. V the opinions of modern scholars were given which concerned this group of philosophers whom Amobius is attacking in Book 2. The present writer does not believe that the viri novi had the kind of heterogeneous character as Festugière and Mazza might have us believe. Courcelle laid the foundation of the Amobius-Porphyry connection in Book 2, but his opinion on viri novi caused him to be too sympathetic with the views of Festugière. Fortin did a marvellous job in building upon Courcelle's foundation, but he limited himself to the philosophical concepts of Amobius and his enemies in Book 2, thus ignoring entirely the polemical arguments of Porphyry which could have taken him beyond this Book; he did not deal with the ideas about
animal psychology/the presence of reason in humans and animals which Porphyry himself espoused (v. the final section infra on animal sacrifice); and he did not investigate the meaning of the religious concepts that Amobius' opponents express in Book 2 which are incompatible with the Platonic tradition. We can offer this interpretation: the *viri novi* defines a Porphyrian-Chaldaean Neoplatonic group which was in the process of establishing itself in North Africa during Amobius' latter life, a good guess being sometime during the last two decades of the third century A.D. *Novi* would therefore convey a chronological (as Fortin) and functional meaning. The latter relates to the mixture of Platonic philosophy and Chaldaean theology which might have appeared "new" in the sense of "strange" to Amobius, and this explains why he frequently uses Plato against Porphyry. We see the same method being used in Eusebius and Augustine. On the polemical side of the argument, such use of Plato had the goal of retorting Porphyry's "credibility gap between Jesus and his disciples" upon him, and again Eusebius and Augustine seem to enjoy not only disclosing to the world certain inconsistencies in the works of Porphyry, but also found in Plato on the one hand, and his so-called follower on the other. Hence Bidez's suggestions noted on p. 335 above, that a number of Amobian texts appear to have De regressu animae in mind, appear to have been correct.

The basic concepts of the *viri novi* on the soul appear in 2.15.1-7:

*Quae nihil est quod nos fallat, nihil quod nobis polliceatur spes causae, id quod a novis quibusdam dictur viris et immoderata sui opinione sublatis, animas immortales esse, dominum rerum ac principi gradu proximas dignitatis, genitore illo ac patre prolatas, divinas sapientes doctas neque ultra iam corporis attractatione contiguis.*

The emphasis to flee the body found in the last clause is, as noted (p. 333), a prominent feature of Porphyry's soteriology. We have also noted a parallel (p. 165, n. 246) between Amobius' "...gradu proximas dignitatis..." and Plotinus' remark that souls remain very near to God after experiencing the heavenly vision (Enn. 5.8.10f.).

The importance of maintaining one's moral integrity by the controlling of the passions is another aspect of this teaching, and note that the terms used ("cupiditas" and "libido": 1.11) also appear in his attack upon the anthropopathic behaviour of the deities of the myths (Ch. V).

Further evidence which helps to establish that Porphyrian/Neoplatonic philosophical concepts are being refuted in Book 2 appears in 2.16. He begins to attack the view that the human soul is immortal (immortalis) by asking his opponents to investigate, inquire, and search out who they are, which we have interpreted already (p. 340 supra) as being a direct response to CC fr. 1. His next question is significant: "Multis favore deposito cogitationibus tacitis pervidere animantium nos esse aut consimilia ceteris aut non plurima differentia distanciam?" (11.15-8). This is a clear attack upon Porphyry's psychological concepts (i.e., the soul is immortal, divine, etc.) by using his argument in *Abst.* that humans and animals possess reason, against him. Compare Amobius' term...
"animalia" and Porphyry's ἀνίματα which are both used to describe animated beings both human and animal who have the ability to use reason (cf. Abst. 2.33 and last section below). The rhetor's "cogitationibus tacitis" corresponds to Porphyry's use of the concept of Pythagorean silence as an inherent feature in his contemplation of the divine: διὰ τῆς ἀγίας καθεξῆς καὶ τῶν εὐφημίων καθαρῶν ἐννοιῶν θορυβοκειμένου αὐτῶν (Abst. 2.34.2). There are other Amobius-Porphyry parallels on this subject which will be analysed in the section on contemplation below. Amobius' argument is that there is no qualitative difference between man and animal, they should be enrolled in the same number, and the examples which he gives to support his argument will be analysed in the last section of this chapter. Note that he ends his argument by tactfully using a Platonic concept against Porphyry. The doctrine of the transmigration of human souls into the bodies of animals clearly demonstrates (cf. CC fr. 1) that men and animals do not share any appreciable difference. But note Civ. Dei 10.30:

Si post Platonem aliquid emendare existimatur indicium, cur ipsa Porphyrius nonnulla et non parva emendavit? Nam Platonem animas hominum post mortem revolvit usque ad corpora bestiarum scrisisse certissimum est. Hanc sententiam Porphyrii doctor tenuit et Plotinus; Porphyrio tamen iure dispuicit. In hominem sane non sua quae dimiserant, sed alia nova corpora redire humanas animas arbitratus est.

The "alia nova corpore" coheres with the Porphyrian: "omne corpus esse fugiendum ut anima possit beata permanere cum Deo" (Civ. Dei 10.29). His diatribe continues for two more chapters (12f.), and as we have pointed out already (pp. 165ff. supra), the psychological experiment of 2.20-8 which attempts to disprove the Platonic doctrine of ἀνίματα, was probably written as a response to concepts/metaphors found in Plotinus and Porphyry.

Amobius gives a definition of the soul, specifically why the doctrine of recollection counts against the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, in 2.27 which is entirely compatible with the evidence found in RL-6, upon which he rests his case against the divinity of the pagan gods/goddesses of the myths:

Atquin nos arbitramur, quod est unum, quod immortale, quod simplex, quacunque in re fuerit, necessario semper suam reterrere naturam nec debere aut posse aliquid perpetui, si modo esse perpetuum cogit et in finibus propriae immortalitatis hecerere. Omnis enim passio leti atque interitus ianis est, ad mortem ducentis viae et inevitabilis rebus adherens functionem: quam si sentiunt animae et tactui eius atque incarnationis oculum, usu et illis est vita, non mercipio tradita, quaevis aliter quidem inferi-ant et rei tantae fidem suis in argumentationibus ponant. (11.7-17)

When the soul descends to take on corporeal existence and forgets the things related to its former existence, then mutability of this nature proves that the soul is capable of suffering "passio" and it is therefore not immortal. The reason that they are not immortal is, as we have noted in Chapter III (pp. 162-73), because they are not the direct creations of the High God who alone can immortalize any being, including the gods. The latter concept is brought out clearly in Adv. nat. 2.36.1-12 (v. p. 188), which is dependent upon Timaeus 41A-D.
In 2.29 an attack is made upon the morality of his opponents. The object
is to demonstrate that there is no reason to go to great lengths to keep one's
soul free from passions and vices if it shares the same immortality as the Sup-
reme God himself. There is no fear of divine judgment for those who believe that
their souls are immortal and therefore not subject to the laws of the fates: "im-
mortalis animas esse nec fatorum esse obnoxias legibas" (2.29.16f.). Porphyry dis-
distinctly posited that deliverance from the bonds of fate is a gift of the gods (PE
6.4), and we recall that in the Hecatean Oracle and commentary (Civ. Dei 19.23;
DE 3.7) he argued that Christians were fated not to receive such dona deorum.
And we have observed (p. 276) that the Chaldæans claimed that the practicing the-
urgist was not subject to the laws of fate. If we keep this doctrine in mind, we
can understand why Porphyry's subjecting Christ and his followers to fate was taken
so seriously by the Christians.

Porphyry's concept of the purpose of the soul's descent to the world of Becoming
is given by Augustine, which was apparently derived from De reg. an.: "Dicet etiam
(sc. Porphyryus) ad hoc Deum animam mundo dedisse, ut materiae cognoscens mala ad
Patrem recurreret nec aliquando iam talium polluta contagione teneretur" (Civ. Dei
10.30). Amobius devotes five chapters of Book Two (39-43) to refuting this concept.
God sent the souls so that they might become immoral, having lost their former purity:
now they lie, cheat, steal, commit murders, etc. Or perhaps he sent them to
become involved in idolatry, having forgotten what a God is (2.39). In 2.41 he asks
whether God sent the souls who were strangers to "savage passions" (11.1f.: "Idcirco
animas misit, ut quae dudum fuerant mites et feritatis adfectibus nesciae commoveri")
to build amphitheatres and butcher shops (etc.): in one humans are killed; in the
other poor animals are slain. The latter's flesh is chewed up with the teeth and
given to the cruel belly. The language here suggests that Porphyry's Abst., especial-
ly his argument that one should not eat the flesh of animals, might have been in Am-
obius' mind when he wrote these words. (We shall observe in the last section infra that
he does appear to have had knowledge of Abst.) This particular diatribe comes to an
end in 2.43:

Quid dicitis, o suboles ac primi progenies numinis? Ergone sapientes illae
atque ex causis principalibus proditae genera haec animae turpitudinum crimi-
num multitarunque novurunt atque ut exercerent, ut generent, ut perceleber-
rarent haec mala, abire atque habitare iussae sunt has partes et humani cor-
poris circunscentis vestiri? (11. 1-7)

With Augustine's "ut materiae cognoscens mala" compare Amobius' "noverunt...haec
mala", and the fact that both attack the belief that God sends the souls (Augustine:
"ad hoc Deum animam mundo dedisse"; Amobius' refrain in 2.39-42: "Idcirco animas
misit (sc. "rex mundi" of 2.39.1), ut...") for the purpose of recognising evils in
the world. Finally, notice the pagan comment placed immediately after his attack upon
the aforementioned Porphyrian concept: "Sed sua, iniquitas, voluntate, non regis missione
venerunt." This very probably expresses the Plotinian view of the descent of the soul (as noted supra, p. 167, n. 257), viz. that their descent is precipitated by an audacity and "their desire to be self-centred" (Rist (1967), 116: on Enn. 5.1.1). The two views together would indicate a debate between the Porphyrian and Plotinian views of the soul's descent carried on within the *viri novi* sect which we have identified above (pp. 351f.; v. also O'Meara (1959), 146, who first suggested a connection with Porphyry in Adv. nat. 2.43).

Finally in 2.62, as Bidez, Festugière, and Courcelle have observed, Amobius rejects the pagan notions of salvation which was the purpose of the *diggessio* (v. p. 12, supra) of Book 2. We have agreed with Bidez and Courcelle (p. 335) that the reference to the magicians' prayers indicates Chaldaean theurgical practices (cf. also O'Meara (1959), 8; Kroll, RM 1916, 309-57). We may only add that in 2.62.3f. ("deo esse se gratos nec fati obnoxios legibus") Amobius makes the same point as he does in 2.29.16f.: his opponents claim exemption from the laws of the fates (the latter text is cited p. 354, supra), which we have noted betrays Chaldaean influence (cf. p. 354, supra). Also, compare the "aulam dominican" of 2.33.18 and the "aulam" of 2.62.4, both designating the eschatological habitus of his opponents' souls. We showed in Ch. III (pp. 180f.) that Synesius and Damascius use *aulam* to describe the specific place to which the disembodied souls were thought to ascend according to Chaldaean theology. This also seems to be the use of "aulam" in Adv. nat. 2.37.5. We can be certain that he is not using his own designation and can completely agree with Amata: "In nessun luogo dell'Adversus Nationes si accenna 'dove' i salvati vivranno la loro felicità."24 (V. pp. 22f. for other texts in Book 2 (the latter part) which also appear to betray Porphyrian connections.)

If we return to the main soteriological text in the Adv. nat. (2.65), we recall Amobius' insistence upon Christ being the only way of the soul's salvation: "ab nullo animas posse vim vitae atque incoluntatis accipere nisi ab eo quem sumus huic munere officioque praefecit. Hanc omnipotens imperator esse voluit salutis viam.. .". Note that in 2.5.6 he acknowledges that people of various social classes (slaves, men or women from common couples, children) and outstanding intellectual ability (orators, grammarians, rhetors, etc.) now come to Christ, and "even those who explore the profundities of philosophy" (MCr). In 2.63 he responds to Porphyry's question about what has happened to those who died before the advent of Christ (v. pp. 22ff. and 139, supra) by affirming that God's mercy has been granted to them also (v. Civ. Dei 10.32: "Quare modo? et: Quare sero? quoniam mittentis consilium non est humano ingenio penetrabile."). Note 2.64.1-3: "Sec si generis Christus humani, ut inquitis, conservator

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advenit, quor omnino non omnes aequali munificentia liberat?" And the answer: "non aequaliter liberat qui aequaliter omnes vocat?" Christ the via salutis animae is available to all persons regardless of age, sex, social status, and intellectual ability; to those who died before his advent; and this via salutis animae "aequaliter liberat" (2.64.3). Geographically (v. preceding section), socially, intellectually, chronologically, and in terms of all being liberated alike, Christ is the universal way of the soul's salvation. This appears to be the principal soteriological message of Book 2. And in light of the aforementioned Porphyrian-Chaldaean connections, this message appears to have been directed towards Porphyry's rejection of Christ as the via universalis animae liberandae and his soteriological system which offered one via salutis animae to philosophers and another to non-philosophers.

Notions Of Deity And Contemplation Of The Divine.

Amobius' principal objective in attacking the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic depictions of the deities in the myths is to offer evidence that the pagan notions of deity are wrong, do not contain a particle of truth in them, do not benefit those who believe in them, and therefore are anti-salvific. We note three important factors related to his attack: (1) an exegesis of the names of the gods; (2) a method free from prejudicial interpretations, i.e. his evidence is derived from the myths/histories, annals/mysteries themselves ("literary retortion"); and (3) an exclusive analysis of the deities qua deities, and not demons whether good or bad. As noted above (p. 195), the basic premise of Amobius' argument is that any concept of deity which the pagan may attempt to form in his mind will ultimately be influenced by, and derived from, the notions of deity conveyed in the myths;

Sed si mendaces illi, vos veritas quae sit exponite et irrefutabile aperiite secretum. Et qui fieri potis est remotis magisteriis litterarum? quid est enim quod dici de immortalibus diis possit, quod non ex hominum (di) scriptis ad humanas pervenerit notiones? aut quicquam vos ipsi de illorum ritibus potestis caerimoniosque narrare, quod relatum in litteras non sit et scriptorum commentariis publicatum? Aut si ponderis existimatis nullius haec esse, aboleantur omnes libri quos de diis habetis compositos theologorum, pontificum, nonnullorum etiam philosophiae deductio; quinimmo potius fingamus ab exordio mundi nullum aliquando mortalium commentum esse de diis quicquam: experiri volumus et cupimus scire, an nutritre, an hiscore deorum in mentione possit, an concipere eos mente quos in animis vestris nullius scripti informaverit notio. Om vero nomina et potentias illorum suggestentibus vobis libris addicisse vos constet, iniquum est detrahere litteris his fiden quarum ea quae dicitis testimonia atque auctorisate firmatis. (4.18.10-30)

Hence by using the stories about the gods/goddesses as the basis of his attack upon their credibility, and by keeping the interpretation at a literal level, he can demonstrate clearly that the pagan concepts of deity are false. The literary motif of Book Three is that the anthropomorphic deities are not true deities. We may
give a few examples as to how Amobius shows the falsity of pagan notions of deity by using this motif. Christians are confused about which deities to worship: they will not, however, worship those whose characters have been befouled by the stories fabricated about them (3.6). The stories prove their non-existence (3.6). Pagan ideas of deity are full of impious fictions (3.29.2: "vires impiarum plenissimes fictorum"). There is absolutely no agreement about the specific identity of the gods (3.35), and the difference of opinion on this subject is too great for anybody to be able to ascertain the truth. If the myths contained the truth, all would be in agreement about the identities, names, and functions of the gods. His conclusion in 3.37 is significant:

Nisi fallimur, ista dissensio nihil scientiun verum est, non ab rei veritata descendens. Nam si liquido sciretur quid sit, una esset vox omnium et in eiusdem sententiae finem cunctorum pergeret et conveniret adsensio. (11.10-4)

This is the same change to which Amobius responds in his apologetical section (Books 1-2), and we have seen (pp. 344-9) that he frequently proves the credibility of the Christian religion on the basis of disparate nations, peoples, and races, even barbarians who have come to unite on one and the same conclusion that this faith is the true way of salvation. We have concluded that Amobius is responding to Porphyry in these passages, and we particularly recall that one principal method of biblical criticism which he employed (cf. Eus., HE 6.19.4) was to show the inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in the Bible. It therefore could not be relied upon as containing the truth. He especially concentrated upon the synoptics (cf. De cons. evan.). Amobius uses the same method: conflicting opinions about the names of the gods causes uncertainty about their real identities, and this produces doubt as to whether god or goddess x exists (cf. 3.26-34: an exegesis of the names of the deities). There is no unanimous and therefore trustworthy verdict about the gods, but only a great diversity of opinions about them: there is no method available to enable one to ascertain which concept contains the truth:

Ut videtis, et hic quoque nihil concinens dicitur, nihil una pronuntiatione finitur, nec est aliquid fidium, quo insistere mens possit veritati suae proxima suspicione coniciens. Ita enim labant sententiae alteraque opinione ab altera convellitur, ut aut nihil ex omnibus verum sit aut si ab aliquo dicitur, tot rerum diversitatibus nesciatur. (3.40.22-8)

It is clear from the books themselves (3.42.2) that there is no pagan deity in whom persons have believed about whom there are not thousands of conflicting notions (3.42.2-5: "nullum esse a vobis deum neque existimatum neque creditum, de quo (non) ambiguas discrepantissque sententias opinionum mille varietatibus prompsitis.").

The argument intensifies in Books 4-5. Greek and Roman scholars of outstanding intellectual abilities have proved that only one name can correspond to one being. Yet the myths give five different Jupiters, five suns, five Mercuries, four Vulcans, three Dianas, three Aesculapiuses, and so forth (4.14f.). Thus pagan religion is confused and erroneous, and the worshipper knows not what to think about the deities.
(4.15). We see here Amobius the rhetor using his critical exegetical skills (v. p. 92 for the use of such skills in rhetorical studies) against the pagans, and we can say the same about the suasoriae of the five Minervas in 4.16 (v. p. 94 for the suasoria). How can one correctly perform one’s religious duties without knowing which of the five goddesses to worship? He again exegeses the meaning of the names and powers of the deities, basing his argument upon the principle of one name to one being, to prove that pagans derive their religious beliefs from misconceptions of the gods, which are found in their myths. Such stories slander the gods’ majesties (4.32), and they should have been erased from humanity rather than learned by heart (4.33). He concludes his argument of Book Four by asserting that it is indeed the pagans’ notions (4.37.10: “vestrae opinationes”) of the deities that have caused all the miseries in the world (1.19: “miserias”: retorting the same pagan charge made against the Christians in Adv. nat. 1.1-10). And the notions come from their fables (1.21: “fictionibus”).

Such notions are not conducive to receiving salus deorum: there is no benefit to be had in worshipping the pagan deities. Amobius quite frequently accentuates the fact that there is nothing worthy of the name and power of deus found in the religious literature of the pagans. He affirms that he is not hard to influence to worship the gods, but he demands of the pagans that they show him something worthy of the name of deity (4.17). There is no reason why one should pray to them (3.28). They cause evils to happen in the world (3.28). He is not confessing belief in the existence of the mythical deities (v. pp. 184-7, supra), but only showing that the entirety of Graeco-Roman religious culture is firmly established upon misconceptions of deity. The pagans have not found truth (v. infra) because Christ alone, as we have already noted (pp. 175ff., supra), has revealed deus verus. He constantly brings before the pagans his counter-charge that their misconceptions of the gods do not disclose anything worthy of the power, name, and majesty of deus (e.g., 2.78; 3.2; 3.3; 3.42f.). His position related to right worship is admirably expressed in 4.30.16-21:

Cultus verus in pectore est atque opinatio de dis digna, nec quocum prod- est inlatio sanguinis et crucoris, si credas de his ea quae non modo sint longe ab eorum dissita distantiisque natura, verum etiam labis et turpitud- inis aliquid et malestati eorum concilient et decori.

There is a direct relationship between right worship and correct concept of deity: Porphyry argued the same thing in Abst. 2.34, and he also, like Amobius above, argued for a truly inward or “spiritual” worship of the deity which did not involve the practice of animal sacrifice. We shall come back to these similarities.

Amobius also rather consistently emphasises not only that there is no truth to be found in the pagans’ notions, but also where religious truth can be found. One very good example of this critical and constructive approach to the problem appears
Si aperi re oculos mentis et veritatem propriam intueri sine ulla vultis gratifications privata, miseriarem omnia causas, quibus genus ut dicitis iambicum: (ad)fictatur humerum, ex hulmosodi reperietis opinionibus fluere quae habetis antiquitus de diis vestris et quae in melius reformare ante oculos posita veritate remunitis.

Again, it is clear that he is referring to the apologetical section where he shows that Christ has shown the truth about polytheism and has revealed Deus verus. Hence there is no need to build temples where one can sacrifice, pour out libations, pray to lifeless images, only to worship the true summus rex (6.3). Temples completely discredit the power which one should attribute to a deity (6.8). Images do not help humans to acquire aid from the divine powers above (6.9). Christians are threatened with their lives to worship licentious blocks of wood in the form of human beings. This only provides evidence that pagans irrationally force their religious beliefs upon the Christians rather "then to give in and consent to acknowledged truth" (6.11.27f.: "quam confessae cedere atque advocare veritati"). In 4.13 Arnobius states that he could inform his adversaries about the One God with evidence derived from "truthful authors (1.7: "veris auctoribus"); cf. his reference to "excellentibus ...viris" who "veritatem istam...nosee" in 3.1.1-4). In 4.9.1-4 he makes reference to truth itself and common sense in all mortals which acknowledge that pagan deities are the products of false opinions: "Quid ergo, inquitis, hos deos nusquam esse genium iudicatis et falsis opinionibus constitutus? Non istud nos soli, sed veritas ipsa dicit et ratio et ille communis qui est cunctis in mortalibus sensus." Compare also 4.7.9-12: "Quosdi minime vos adnoent ad intellectum veritatis res ipsae, nec ex ipsis saltam potestis nominibus noscere inanissimae superstitionis figurae haec esse et falsorum imaginationes deorum?" At the end of his criticism of sacrifice he concludes:

Non nobis est sermo cum hominibus rationis expertibus neque quibus non sit communis intellectus veritas: inest et vos sapientia, inest sensus, verumque nos dicere apud vos ipsi interiorem iudicium scitis. Sed quid facere possimus considerare nolentibus penitus res ipsas secunque ipsos loqui? Facitis enim quid fieri omenitis, non quod fieri oportere confiditis: primum quia apud vos valet nulam habens consuetudo rationem quam rerum inspecuta natura veritatis examinatione ponderata. (7.30.11-21)

As noted above (p. 342), this passage appears to have been written in response to Porphyry's assertion (CC fr. 1: p. 336, supra) that Christians only essay to faith without first examining the evidence of the things promised therein.

If Christians espouse the correct conception of deity, it follows that only they are involved in the right worship of God. A good number of passages in Arnobius bear upon the subject of worship. We may first note 1.31, a passage which betrays possible Porphyrian theological designations, as we have already pointed out (pp. 148ff.). In the text a prayer, pregnant with philosophical concepts and which is characterised by a strong apophatic colouring of human understanding of the divine, is offered to the High God. There is a christianized formula added at the end which begs for God's mercy
to be granted to the persecutors of his followers. The form of the prayer corresponds to a Hymn to the Chaldean High God, which in turn was modelled on the fixed scheme of ancient religious hymnology (Theos. no. 27, CWS i, 10 and n. 26) and it appeared in the Second Book of Porphyry's Phil. or. (We have another hymn of Porphyry preserved in FE 3.9, addressed to Zeus, in which he allegorizes the anthropomorphic depictions of the god found therein.) This hymn and Amobius' invocation have the following elements in common in respect of their form: (1) an invocation of the High God; (2) a mention of the deity's abode; (3) a petition that the one who prays may be heard; (4) a reference to the specific aptitude of the invoked power to fulfill the prayer; (5) an exposition of the power of the invoked deity (cf. Lewy, CWS i, 10 and n. 26). Note especially 1.31.14: "qui ut intellegaris tacendum est", and Porphyry's remark in Abst. 2.34.2 (cited in toto p. 333, supra: v. Leb, p. 292, for other possibilities), which may have influenced Amobius: οἵη δὲ σηγὺς καθαρὰς καὶ τῶν περί αὐτῶν καθαρῶν ἐννοιῶν θρησκευόμενον αὐτῶν. Eusebius also, as noted above (p. 332), employs the same Porphyrian-Pythagorean concept in FE 3.10: God is to be worshipped separate from all perishable matter by contemplating him in silence. Indeed Eusebius quotes Abst. 2.34 in FE 4.11 and DE 3.3! Note also Porphyry's emphasis upon the use of pure thoughts of the Divine in order to worship him. He does not stop there, however: "ὅπως ἡμικαθαρῶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐννοιών τῶν Περί αὐτῶν καθιστήθωσιν τῶν προδοτῶν καὶ τῶν ἑλέοντων τῶν ἐκδικηθέντων τοιαύτως διὰ συνεργός τῶν ἐνδόξων, καὶ ὧν ἡμικαθαρῶς ἐννοιῶν ἔλθουσι συνεργοῦσιν τοιαύτως, ἐν χρήσει τοῦ καθαροῦ καθαρῶς ἐννοιῶν τοιαύτως. It is consecrating oneself to the gods by offering good thoughts about them in contemplation that Amobius found offensive. Hence his attempt to prove that (1) pagans cannot form any concept of deity unless it derives from the fables which offer nothing but misconceptions of the gods (4.18 and cf. pp. 358ff.) and (2) such notions are not beneficial in respect of man's worship of the Divine.

Note also that in Adv. nat. 1.46.16ff., which has been identified as appearing in a section of Book One which responds to Porphyry's rejection of Christ's divinity, Amobius attributes to Christ the ability to see clearly in the hearts of individuals what each was thinking: "unus fuit e nobis qui quid singuli volverent, quid sub obscuris cogitationibus continenter tacitorum in cordibus pervidebat?". Compare 1.27.18: "patitur se (sc. sumus rex of 1.7) semper nostris cogitationibus concepi". Concipere is the term used frequently (esp. the important text 4.18: v. supra, p. 356) by Amobius to denote the mental process whereby the pagans form a concept of deity, which of course is misconceived because it is impossible to think upon the divine without the notions of deity derived from the myths at once coming to one's mind. In attacking Porphyry in Civ. Dei, Augustine distinguishes between the former's angelic beings who browbeat mortals into sacrificing and worshipping them, and the Christian God whom it is bliss to contemplate (10.16: "contemplatione"). Eusebius (PE 4.21), attacking the same practices,
makes the same point as well, adding that the Word of God dwells in the hearts of his believers: cf. Adv. nat. 4.30.16-21 and Abst. 2.34, p. 358, supra. Adv. nat. 2.13.15ff. specifically mentions Plato and the Theaetetus and the doctrine found therein that the soul must flee the earth and involve itself in thought and contemplation of the divine: "nonne animo fugere suadet e terris et circa illum semper quantum fieri potis est cogitatione ac mente versari?". In this chapter he addresses those who follow Mercury, Plato, and Pythagoras. In 2.16.16 he refers to the "cogitationibus tacitis" of his opponents, using the concept related to animal psychology developed in Abst., which is analysed in the last section infra (v. also pp. 352f., supra). True contemplation of the Divine, emphasising the necessity to flee the world of Becoming by elevating oneself in thought which is both a mental and spiritual process, is the noetic experience in which salvific knowledge takes place:

sed, quantum fieri potis est, ad dominum rerum tota mente atque animo proficisci, sustoli ab his locis atque in eum traducere suspense pectoris conversiones, memoriam eius habere perpetuam et licet nulla possit imaginatio formari, auras tamen nescio quas eius isbl contemplationis afferre:...quem sat is sit scire ut nihil aliud novetis, sise veram et maximam scientiam consequeretur in dei rerum capitis (et) cognitione defixus.

(2.60.21-32)

Porphyry also emphasised the need to unite with God in contemplation by elevating oneself to him (Abst. 2.34.3: Gk. text appears on p. 333, supra). Arnobius appears to be claiming that true contemplation and the right concept of the Divine belongs only to his new religious ideas of deity. And 4.18 establishes the fact that no mental concept of deity can be developed without being derived from the religious literature of the pagans (Latin text: v. p. 356). Porphyry explicitly argued in Abst. that contemplation of the Divine could be done to one's advantage in conjunction with worshipping the images in the temples: "For to dwell with the statues of the gods, a thing allied to the whole desire, by which the soul tends to the contemplation of their divinities" (4.6: Taylor). In Book Six Arnobius attacks temples and images, and note especially 6.4.9-14:

Atquin nos arbitrantur omnem deum omnino, si modo nominis huius vi pollet, et quacumque mundi parte quod quisque fuerit locutus, tamquam si sit praesens, audire debere, imo quod quisque conceperit sub obscuris et tacitis sensibus, cogitatione anticipata praesumere,...

The mention of "tacitis sensibus" strongly suggests a Porphyrian connection.

A text that should be compared with Adv. nat. 2.60.21-32 (above, this p.) is Adv. nat. 3.19.11-18, especially the reference to conceiving the deity in the silence of one's mind:

Quicquid de deo dixeris, quicquid tacitae mentis cognitione conceperis, in humanum transilis et corruptur sensum, nec habeas propriae significationis notam quod nostris dictur verbis atque ad negotia humana compositis. Unus est nominis intellectus de dei natura certissimus, si scias et sentias nihil de illo posse mortalit oratione deprimi.

Arnobius here affirms, like Porphyry in Abst. 2.34.2 (p. 333, supra), that the Aiosoc
The opening moves of this aggressive chess game are easily discernible. First, Jesus strictly taught men not to worship the "minoribus spiritibus", and with this we should compare Adv. nat. 2.3.9f. (tactfully put on the lips of a pagan who finds fault with Christ's doctrine): "Sed minoribus supplicare diis homines vetuit" (sc. Christus). Second, he taught men to worship the "caelestes deos", which is the term which Amobius frequently uses (cf. 1.35.8; 3.4.20; 3.14.1; 3.29.31; 4.26.2; 4.33.1; 5.12.6; 6.15.17; 7.3.8; 7.12.13; 7.13.9; 7.16.24; 7.44.64), in addition to caelestes/caelites (cf. 1.1.6; 1.26.2; 1.36.36; 3.42.13; 4.34.12; 4.37.23; 5.30.17; 5.35.18; 6.2.31; 6.15.20; 6.20.3; 7.12.1; 7.26.23; 7.34.26; 7.36.16; 7.38.29), to designate the objects of his attack upon the pagan notions of deity. Third, Christians are fated not to receive dona deorum, which we have discussed in Ch. V. Yet note carefully the "neque habere Iovis immortalis notionem." Christians are fated not to have a concept of immortal Jupiter. As we have noted in this section (pp. 356-9), a principal diatribe of Amobius against the
pagans is that their misconceptions of deity have caused them erroneously to establish the entirety of their religious culture upon falsities. Fourth, Christians have rejected the gods and only pretend to worship the High God. They actually worship demons. This perhaps gives us a clue as to why Amobius does not use the well-worn apologetical argument that the pagan deities are evil demons, but rather offers to his opponents evidence derived from their own religious literature as to why the Christians do not worship their gods/goddesses. This helps to explain why Amobius demonstrates that in worshipping their High God, the Christians are involved in the truly spiritual worship of God. Fifth, Porphyry saw a correlation between worshipping the High God and seeking knowledge of him, a concept which is expressed in Adv. nat. 2.60.21-32 (v. p. 361, supra). Sixth, he clearly maintained that the Christians paid a great moral price for pretending to worship the High God: they do not do those things by which alone the deity is adored. Hence they do not practice justice, chastity, and the other virtues. The arguments of the earlier apologists, from Justin Martyr onward, which accused the pagans of immorality because they only had immoral deities to imitate, had now come full circle, and Porphyry could modify it somewhat and turn it against his enemies. We must now investigate in detail the way in which Amobius appears to have responded to the sixth premise of Porphyry's polemical argument.

Christus Via Salutis Universalis: The Moral Argument.

In beginning this section we may make a few general observations of Eusebius' references to the names and notions of the gods which appear in PE. After citing from a good number of ancient sources related to explaining the names of the gods, Eusebius affirms that it is unholy to honour the adorable name of God with mortals who have long been dead (PE 2.4). He then covers the fact that the elements received the names of deities (2.6), and later analyses the exegesis of the names of the gods found in Plutarch (e.g., 3.1) and Diodorus (cf. 3.3). The Ep. An. is attacked because of the reference to the Egyptians' giving divine names to the celestial elements (3.4). He had introduced his exposition by noting that these proofs reveal that there is nothing divine in such beliefs (3.3). After giving a lengthy passage from Abst., for example, he concludes that Christ's gospel is admirable in that it teaches men to worship with correct thoughts the God of the elements (3.5). In 3.11 he criticizes Porphyry's exegesis of the gods' names in Cult. sim., where he used the allegorical method. Eusebius' objective, like that of Amobius, is to demonstrate that there is nothing worthy of the name and power of deity in Greek theology (PE 3.2). After giving a passage from Abst., for example, he concludes that such ideas are not worthy of humans, let alone a deity (3.5). Clearly referring to the same concept of deity which Augustine found so disgusting (Civ. Dei 10.9), Eusebius says that his opponents degraded
"the venerable and adorable name of God to the level of their own passions" (PE 5.3: Gifford). Amobius has found equally ignominious the same conception of deity (v. Ch. V). He uses Ep. An. to prove that the ancients have not passed down any worthy notion of God (14.9). It is not right to blame the Christians because they have forsaken the conjectures of Greek theology (14.10), and he adds that Christians despise such teachings with well-proved judgment, which is undoubtedly a response to CC fr. 1. After devoting nine chapters to surveying Greek theology, he turns to the physical philosophers to learn whether any worthy notion of God has come down to modern times (PE 14.9). Again, the general form of the polemical arguments of both Eusebius and Amobius related to the names and power of the gods, and the correlation that both make between right notion of deity and true worship, rather strongly suggests that both have Porphyry as a common enemy.

Amobius’ main objective in discussing morality in Books 1-2 is to prove that those humans who follow Christ and worship the High God are empowered to overcome passions and thus live a truly virtuous life. Adv. nat. 1.63.23-30 vividly portrays a Christ who enabled men to live such a life during his earthly ministry:

Cum enim de animarum periculis multa, multa de illorum contra (salute) insinuaret, magister, atque auctor ad officiorum convenientium fines suae leges et constituta direct: non superbiae fastum comminuit, non libidinum extinxit flammis, non histum compressit aviditatis, non tela extorsit e manibus atque annia seminaria totius vitiositatis absicidit?

It is the direct result of Christ’s laws and ordinances that "flames of passion" ("libidinum...flammae") were extinguished. We noted (p. 344) that in Adv. nat. 1.6.1-5 he makes a similar point: Christ’s teachings (1.6: "magisterii") and his laws (1.6: "legibus") have been instrumental in helping humans overcome violent passions (1.4: "furiarum"), and this has decreased the number of wars which have occurred since Christ’s advent. A correlation between worshipping the High God and experiencing an amelioration in one’s moral conduct is clearly made in 1.27.16-22:

Nam cuia prord ad culpes et ad libidinis varios adeptitus vitio sumus infirmitatis ingenitae, petitor se semper nostris cogitationibus concipi ut, dum illum oramus et n Peri eius contendifimus munera, accipiamus innocentiae voluntatem et ab omni nos labe delictorum omnium amputatione pungamus.

Note that he uses some of the same terms here as he does in his attack upon the anthropopathic behaviour of the gods to prove their mortality ("libidinis,...adeptitus": v. Ch. V). Also, the divine "gifts" ("munera") which, we recall, Porphyry argued were not available to Christians because of their false worship of the High God, are the direct results of the individual’s contemplation of the divine. The cleansing of the spot ("labe") concerns that process whereby the soul is kept impassible: passions are extirpated, otherwise the soul may become soiled. Cf. Abst. 2.34, where Porphyry maintains that the interior language of the soul is inappropriate for honouring the divine when it is soiled by the passions of the soul: one’s sacrifice to God is accomplished in the impassibility of the soul. The close connection between morality and
worship of the Christian High God suggests that Porphyry's sixth premise (p. 363) concerning the immorality of the Christians, is being answered. Note also that in 2.12, in responding to Porphyry's statement that Peter was a magician and in the development of the theme of the universal diffusion of Christianity, he asserts that it was Christ's "unheard-of power over nature" that quenched the fires of passions (1.10: "subdidit adpetitionum flammas") and united the world in one faith. He says the same thing in 2.5.7-14 (cited p. 345).

Man is completely dependent upon the divine to experience both temporal and eschatological redemption. All of 2.33 is devoted to demonstrating that humans (i.e., according to Christian thought) cannot bring about their salus animarum on their own efforts, unlike the viri novi; nor can they reach the world beyond on their own power; nor arrive at the Lord's palace unless the rerum dominus himself grants this to men. Thus the philosophers who fight daily to extirpate passions from their souls prove that the goal of such struggle is unattainable: "Qui ergo luctatur animarum in genitas corrigere pravitates, is apertissime monstrat imperfectum, improbabilem esse, quamvis omni (contra) conatu et pervicacia contendat" (2.50.18-22). Only Christ is the guardian of the human soul (1.64.32: "animarum vestrarum custodem"), and his guardianship is not restricted to the granting of immortality to the soul (cf. 2.65), but also concerns giving aid to men to overcome the passions (cf. 2.13). Christians fight against the passions (cf. 2.54) because of the media qualitas animae (cf. 2.31f.): thus if they do acquire knowledge of God they will experience the immortalization of their souls; if not, they will be thrown into a burning hell by wild and vicious monsters where they will suffer for an indefinite period and perish (v. p. 351, supra).

Yet the pagan philosophical concept of the immortality of the soul nullifies the whole purpose of living in accordance with a strict moral code (cf. 2.29), and even if one were to become pure and cleansed from all vices, one would still have to receive the 'gift' of Christ to experience an immortalization of one's soul:

Licet ergo tu purus et ab omni fueris vitiorum contaminacione purgatus, conciliaveris illas atque inflexeris potestates, ad caelum (ne) redcurrant vias cludent atque obseaepiant transitum, ad immortalitatis accedere nullis poteris contentionibus praesum, nisi quod ipsum immortalitatem facit Christo adtribuente perceperis et veram fueris ad vivam. (2.66.1-7)

A final observation is necessary concerning the connection that Amobius makes between worship and morality, which is a concept that appears to have been formulated with Porphyry's 'sixth premise' in mind (p. 363), viz. that Christians only pretend to worship the High God and do not do those things by which God is adored. These are justice, chastity, and "the other virtues" (Civ. Dei 19.23). There may be some significance, in light of this, in the claim made in 4.36 that in the Christians' "conventicula" the High God is worshipped (1.24: "summus orator deus") and there nothing else is uttered "but what makes men kind, what makes men gentle, modest, virtuous, chaste..." (11.27f.: "in quibus alius auditur nihil nisi quod homines faciat,
nisi quod mines vereundos pudicos castos...". This interpretation does not contra-
dict what we have concluded in Ch. I, viz. that it is an apparent allusion to the
First Edict of Diocletian, the principal reason being that there is good reason to
believe that Porphyry's anti-Christian propaganda was disseminated in the eastern and
western provinces of the Roman Empire during the period which immediately preceded
the beginning of the 'official' State Persecution of the Christian religion (compare
the hypotheses of Chadwick and Wilken to which we have referred several times already).
We must come back to this in Ch. VII.

The Argument Concerning Animal Sacrifices.

Porphyry's basic argument in Abst. is that animals should not be sacrificed to
the gods because they possess both the λόγος μορφωτικός and the λόγος ἐνειδικός. He
begins to develop his argument in Book 1 against the Stoic and Peripatetic view that
humans do not owe any justice to animals because justice is practiced only within a
community which possesses reason. In Book 3 Porphyry argues against the Stoics mainly
by using their own concepts against them by attempting to prove that animals possess
both the inner reasoning of thought and the external reasoning of the word. We may
note that this debate probably goes back to the Middle Academy, and it is found in
the end of Book 4 of C.Cels., where Origen takes up the Stoic position that the irrational
animal exists for the sake of the rational. In any case, the Christians were
not the only enemies of Porphyry who were attacked with their own concepts, and it ap-
pears that Amobius has used some of the main lines of argumentation found in Abst.,
with perhaps some dependence upon Aelian, Juba II (?), Pliny, and Plutarch, in the de-
velopment of his criticism of (1) the concept of the immortality and divinity of the soul
which his opponents espouse in Adv. nat. 2, and (2) the soteriological importance of
sacrificing animals which is the pagan religious practice that receives the lengthiest
refutation in Adv. nat. (Book 7).

In Adv. nat. 2.16ff. Amobius develops the position that man should not be consid-
ered superior to the animals. We recall (p. 361) that in 2.16 he asks his opponents to
search out, investigate, and inquire who they are, which has been interpreted as being
a direct response to CC fr. 1. In the same chapter we also noted a mention of his oppo-
ents' "cogitationibus tacitis" (1.16) which is a concept found in Abst. 2.34.2. Finally,
the latter is a Pythagorean concept, and Amobius identifies his enemies in 2.13 as fol-
lowers of Mercury, Plato, and Pythagoras. It would be superfluous to enumerate the many
other texts in Book Two alone which evince Porphyrian influence (v. this Ch., supra, pas-
sim).

for the historical background to the debate. As Chadwick notes, sometimes Origen can take
the Academic position against the Stoics: v. p. 37 on C.Cels. 4.94 et al.
Arnobius begins to prove that man and animals should be enrolled in the same number because of the similarities between the constitutions of their bodies. Note 2.16.16-20: "Vultis favore deposito cogitationibus tacitis pervidere animantium nos esse aut consimilia ceteris aut non plurima differri: Quid est enim, quod nos ab eorum indicet similitudinem discrepare?"; and Abst. 3.7.1: Πολύνεναι δὲ ἡ παραλλαγή, ὡς φιλ' που καὶ Αριστοτέλης, ὡς οὖσιν διαλλάσσεται, διό ἐν τῷ μᾶλλον καὶ οἷον εξωρυμήν •. There is no qualitative or essential difference between man and animal. Porphyry continues by observing that all the world is generally agreed that the dispositions of animals and humans are similar at least in respect of sensation and general organization of the organs of sense and those of the body (Abst. 3.7.2). Arnobius concurs, giving the specific examples of the common possession of skeletal systems and connecting sinews (cf. Pliny, HN 11.87.215: bones (asses and dolphins) and 11.88.217: sinews). Compare Adv. nat. 2.16.19f. (cf. 7.4; 7.9): "Voxquee in nobis eminentia tanta est, ut animantium numero dedignemur adscribi?" with Abst. 3.25.3: οὕτω δὲ καὶ τοῖς πάντοις ἀνθρώποις ἄλλητος τίθεμεν (καὶ) Μυγγενείς, καὶ μην (καὶ) παρί τοίς ὅμους •. Depending upon Pythagorean doctrine, Porphyry adds to the concept of man and animal being in the same race, the fact that both have the same kind of soul (Abst. 3.26.1). Both Arnobius (2.16.27ff.) and Porphyry (Abst. 3.22.7) refer to the separation into male and female sexes to support their arguments that man and animal both possess common physical characteristics. Both note that animals have sexual intercourse in order to have young (2.16.29-32; Abst. 3.22.7: Porphyry adds that they use sexual organs with pleasure; cf. Abst. 3.10.5: sexual continence in animals more admirable than in men; cf. Plut., Brut. anim. rat. 990C-D; Ael., De nat. anim. 1.24; 1.50; 6.39). The specific example of breathing through the nostrils may have come from Pliny (Adv. nat. 2.16.25ff.; HN 11.72.188; cf. 11.100.246: "Nam simiarum genera perfectam hominis imitationem continent facie, naribus, auribus."). Both observe that animals eat, drink, urinate, and defecate (Aen.: 2.16.32-5; Abst. 3.12.4; 3.14.1; 3.23.5; the latter comes from Plut., Brut. anim. rat., 992D: lynxes excrete; the swallows turn their tails upward, their behinds outward, and then they defecate; cf. also generally Brut. anim. rat. 991B). Arnobius (2.16.35-40) and Porphyry (Abst. 3.14.1) note that animals repel hunger and watch for food, the latter being more specific (which is what we might expect). Both polemicists state that animals feel diseases (Adv. nat. 2.16.40-3; Abst. 3.7.3). Finally, Arnobius uses the Platonic doctrine of the transmigration of souls into the bodies of animals against Porphyry, because, as we have noted (p. 353), Porphyry did not accept this idea.

Keeping in mind that the cutting edge of Arnobius' argument is the use of the Stoic doctrine of the λόγος έναθετος in animals to disprove man's superiority to the beasts - the principal objective being to destroy the premises of the doctrine of the soul's divinity and immortality-, we note 2.17.1f.: "Sed rationales nos sumus et intellegendia..."
vinvinus genus omne motorum." In Abst. 3.10.3 Porphyry affirms that animals possess reason and intelligence (λογικὸς καὶ φορμήως). Plutarch could argue in a similar way by referring to animals that specialise in medicine, providing food, warfare, hunting, self defence, music (Brut. anim. rat. 961B). A better parallel is Abst. 3.15.3, where Porphyry argues that animals manifest a rational intelligence (συνέχεια λογικής) in the acquisition of human arts: "Ὅταν δὲ καὶ τέχνας ἀναλαμβάνῃ καὶ τάΞις ἀνθρώπινας (3.15.1: introducing his argument; on animals-rational beings cf. also 3.13.1 and 3.23.3). Amobius responds to the question which begins 2.17 by saying that he would believe that man was superior to animals if all men lived rationally and wisely, refraining from forbidden things, and none "through his depraved intellect and blindness of ignorance asked for what was alien and even hostile to himself." His words for "depraved intellect" are "pravitate consilii" (1.6). A similar position is taken by Porphyry: Πάντα δὲ οὖν ζῷον τολλοῦν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ἀληθείᾳ μόνον εἶναι δρῶντας, νομὶ δὲ καὶ λόγων οὐκ ἔχοντας (Abst. 3.19.3), continuing his argument by showing how men have surpassed animals in their ferocity and their criminal acts (murdering their enfants, etc.). Amobius enumerates a list of arts ("technical skills": cf. 2.17.16f.: "scientolas artium") employed by animals to prove that they have a resemblance of reason and wisdom, and he may have depended upon De sollertia animalium for his examples: they make nests (Adv. nat. 2.17.12ff.; De soll. anim. 963B-E; cf. Ael., De nat. anim. 4.38); make dwellings in rocks and crags (compare De soll. anim. 966F: spider makes a web: this is work of a practical art; Adv. nat. 2.17.25); burrow in soil (Adv. nat. 2.17.26ff.; De soll. anim. 969A-B: the complex passages of anthills; 972A: the hedgehog’s lair); homebuilding shows intelligence (Adv. nat. 2.17.28-35; De soll. anim. 974A). He ends 2.17 by observing that if animals only had hands, they would create new works of art. Yet "parens natura" (1.18) did not give them hands (1.17: "manus") with which to do this. Plotinus makes a similar point: nature has no hands or feet with which to work, and he compares the craftsmen who practice their arts with their hands (Enni. 3.8.1f.), noting also that nature is a forming principle in plants and animals (Ib. 3.8.2). And note that beaks (cf. Plut., De soll. anim. 963B-E) and claws (cf. Ael., De nat. anim. 1.31; Pliny, HN 11.96.243) were common elements in the ancient texts which dealt with animal physiology and psychology. A closer parallel can be found in the Stoic Balbus: "Quam vero apertas quamque multarum artium ministrae manus natura homini dedit" (De nat. deor. 1.1x. 150). And the examples given in Adv. nat. 2.18 should also be compared with Balbus’ list of arts and crafts made by man's hands in De nat. deor. 2.1x.150ff. It is quite clear that Amobius is using the Stoic concept of the λόγος ἀνθρώπων possessed by animals to argue against the doctrine, espoused by his opponents, which held that the soul was immortal, rational, all-wise, and divine. Porphyry indeed appears to be the principal opponent underlying this diatribe, and a main source who has furnished Amobius with many of his specific examples, observations, and philosophical concepts.
Amobius similarly uses the same kind of Porphyrian source and method of argumentation in several passages in Adv. nat. 7 where he develops a lengthy criticism of the practice of animal sacrifice. First, we must get a clear picture (as clear as the Christian opponents will allow!) of Porphyry's position related to animal sacrifice. Eusebius explicitly informs us that Porphyry enjoined through the oracles of Apollo the performance of animal sacrifice, specifically pointing out that animals were to be offered to the ethereal and heavenly powers (τοις αιθέριοι καὶ οὐρανίοις  
ζωόντες τῷ αἴθρῳ; PE 4.8), the latter corresponding to his "caelestes deos" in Civ. Dei 19.23, both of which appeared in Phil. or.; and we should not overlook Amobius' "caelestes" (also caeleas/caelites) who are found frequently in his attack in Book 7. In Civ. Dei 10.10 we are told that Porphyry (De reg. an.) encouraged purificatory sacrifices to gods who could be bound by "passionibus et perturbationibus," and later we are told that Porphyry learned this concept from Chaldaean schoolmasters (10.27). Augustine also relates that he elevated human frailty to "aetherias vel empirias mundi sublimitates et firmamenta caelestia" (10.27). We should not forget that a principal theme of Civ. Dei is true sacrifice. In PE 4.9 a lengthy passage from Phil. or. is given to show Porphyry's encouragement to offer animal sacrifices, followed by a long introduction (PE 4.10) to Abst. 2.34, which takes up two chapters (4.11-12), and these are in turn followed by a long quote from Apollonius of Tyana in Philostratus, and three more chapters which quote from Abst. (4.14-16: the latter also Clem. Alex., Diodorus, etc.), all of which argued against offering sacrifices to the gods. Abst. 2.34 appears above (p. 333): in it Porphyry states that one must not sacrifice any of the things of sense to the High God, nor the outward speech, nor inner speech when it is defiled by passion in the soul, but only a pure silence and pure thoughts concerning him. Sacrifice, he affirms, is perfected in the impassibility of the soul and contemplation of the divine. Abst. 2.43 is quoted by Eusebius in PE 4.19. There Porphyry states that the wise men will not offer sacrifices (i.e., to demons), but will try to make by every endeavour in the impassibility of his soul a clearly formed conception of that which truly exists, to grow like God and those beings about him, and to grow unlike wicked men, demons, and everything which delights in what is both mortal and material:

It is obvious that Eusebius devotes a good part of Book 4 to demonstrating that Porphyry contradicted himself on the subject of animal sacrifices: in Phil. or. he encouraged it and in Abst. he rejected it (except to the demons, which a wise man would not do anyway). On the one hand, there was the practice which was so earthly, corporeal, bloody, and material; on the other, the true sacrifice in the silence and pure thought, contemplation of the divine, in clearly formed conceptions of the world of Being, and the necessity to flee
mortal and material things. One was centred in a conception of deity which viewed the gods as capable of suffering passions, and the other stressed being like the High God "and those about him" - a concept important for the present enquiry - by means of extirpating the passions from the soul. These Porphyrian texts revealing these particular contradictions appear to have influenced the development of Amobius' argument in Adv. nat. 7. Finally, in DE 1.10 and 3.3 (the latter quotes Abst. 2.34 as does PE 4.11f.) Eusebius uses Porphyry's rejection of sacrifice and some of the chapter. Men of O.T. times did not consider sacrifice sinful because they had not been taught that the souls of men and beasts are alike, viz. rational and intelligent (DE 1.10).

He begins Book 7 by using Varro to support his argument that sacrifices should not be offered to the gods because they do not possess sensation: "Quis est enim pectoris tam optimi, qui aut rebus nullum habentibus senaeus hostias caedet et victimes aut eis existimet dandas qui sunt ab his longe natura et beatitudine" (7.1.10-4; these are Amobius' words). Nothing sensible should be offered to the divine, so argued Porphyry, whether in sacrifice or word (Abst. 2.34: Gk. text: p. 333). Before we analyse our principal text, note 7.5.12-5 (REF): "Quicquid enim vexatur rei alicuius e motu, possibile esse constat et fragile: quod passioni fragilitate subjicitum est, id necessis esse mortale" (in the context of criticising the concept of appeasing the divine wrath with sacrifice). This is the same concept that Eusebius and Augustine find so disgusting in the theology of Porphyry (Phil. or.; De reg. an.).

McCracken's heading of Adv. nat. 7.9 is quite accurate: Why should innocent animals be sacrificed for guilty humans?. A suasoria (v. p. 94, supra for this rhetorical device) featuring a talking ox rather pitifully pleading for his life in the name of justice takes up most of the chapter. The specific idea of a speaking animal might have been inspired by Plutarch, Brut. anim. nat. 966F-967A, where Gryllus becomes a pig and explains his experiences in the animal world with human speech. By using the talking ox who uses articulate speech to defend his rights to live, Amobius not only drives home his argument with conviction and eloquence, he is also (again) using in 7.9 the same basic Stoic concepts, with a few additions, as he does in 2.16ff. Adv. nat. 7.9.1-8 is important:

Ecce si bos aliquis aut quodlibet ex his animal, quod ad placandas caeditur mitigandasque ad numinum furias, vocem hominis surat eloquenturque his verbis "ergone o Juppiter, aut quis(quis) alius deus es, humam est intul et rectum aut aequitatis aliquis in aestimatione ponendum, ut cum alius peccevari, ego occidet et de meo sanguine fieri tibi patiarius satis,...

Citing Plutarch, De soll. anim. 2, Porphyry (Abst. 3.20.7) gives the Pythagorean attitude towards animals as being humane and pious, and Amobius' "humanum...rectum...aequitas" suggests that this has influenced his choice of words. The ox continues his speech by defending his innocence: he is only a "dumb animal" (1.10: "animal ut scis mutum") who has never wronged the deity by neglecting to celebrate his games, swearing
by him, etc. (7.9.9-20). The ox now asks why should he be killed: "An quod animal vile sum nec rationis nec consili i particeps, quemadmodum pronuntiant isti qui se homines nominant et ferocitate transilient belices?" Compare Abst. 3.19.3: "Quo de ovis dividunt polloque uin tribus aperit melius uinontas dividontas, quin de etiam uin duxit, dividunt ovis uin uincus dividontas, polloque de uin tribus dividontas et tribus dividontas;" and Amobius' mention of the killing of parents et alia in 7.9.41ff.: "quis parentibus, fratibus, quis uxoribus, quis amiciis mortiferas subdidit commiscuitaque potiones?" Special penalties awaited the soul of those who committed violent crimes against their parents, according to the Platonic tradition (Phaedo 113E-114A). Plutarch (De usu carn. 594A-B) also said that men outdoes the beasts in cruelty by his own foul slaughters. According to Bouffartigue-Patillon (p. 138), Sandbach's fr. 193 of a Plutarchian work is Porphyry's source in 3.19.3.

In Adv. nat. 7.9.25f. he (i.e., the ox) asks: "Homine spiritus unus est qui et illos et me regit?", which may be related to the remark in 2.16, already analysed, that man and beast should be classified in the same number, i.e. they are members of the same race. If this is what Amobius intended to communicate, then Theophrastus' remark that man and beast are of the same race because the principles of their bodies are by nature the same, which appears in Abst. 3.25.3, may be the immediate source of the passage. The enumeration of the bodily senses and organs which follows this statement, given by the ox to prove that man and animal are alike, supports this interpretation. Amobius is clearly using the kind of 'scientific method' which Porphyry argued Christianity so desperately needed to prove the credibility of its claims to the truth of its faith, in order to disprove the pagan concept that animal sacrifice spiritually benefits man.

Turning to the enumeration mentioned, he first refers to the fact that the bodies of both man and animal are affected by the same kinds of senses: "non consimili ratione respire et video et ceteris adficior sensibus?" (7.9.26f.). Compare Porphyry, who quotes a rather lengthy passage from De sollertia animalium, in Abst. 3.21.9: "Deus omnis animi finem iic uci adsequebatur, et non uini etudruei. The possession of sensation denotes ipso facto the possession of intelligence: Amobius introduces the latter a few lines below 7.9.26f. (v. infra). A closer parallel also comes from Abst. (7.7.1-7.8.1), and Porphyry's source is the molaioi, which may refer to the tradition of the Old or Middle Academy:

ούτως σχεδον ἀπάντων τὰ σώματα ὄμοιοι τοῖς ἀντιπόθεσις κατὰ τὰ πάθη. Ὅτα να μὴν τὰς ψυχὰς τὸ πάθη δια εἰ μὴ πάντα ὄμοια καὶ πρῶτα γε τὴν αὐθεντήσαν. Οὐ γὰρ ὁ δύναμις μὲν ἡ γενετικ εὐμοία, ὃ δὲ δύνατ' υμοῖν, ὃ δὲ δύνατ' διεξοθοητικες αὐτολαμβάνεται, ὢν όποίον ἢ ὅποιο, καὶ λεμφάν δὲ ψυχοῦ οὔτε ἡ τῶν ἔλαιων ἀποτέλεσσεν, οὔτε δὲ καὶ τῶν ὀματῶν ἀπάντων ὄμοιοι.

Porphyry argues that the sensations which affect man and animal are the same. His list includes taste, sight, smell, and hearing. Both Amobius and Porphyry base their arguments upon the belief that animals possess the λόγος ἐνσιάντης (cf. Abst. 3.7.1). Porphyry even continued his argument by giving examples of animals that are superior to man in respect of
possession and use of various senses (cf. Abst. 3.8.3-9). Both polemicists are maintaining that just because the internal organs of man and animal are the same in number and arrangement, as well as function, then it is necessary to conclude that animals are rational beings. And rational beings should not be offered up to the divine in bloody sacrifices. Hence the logic of Amobius' mentioning that animals possess such internal organs as livers, lungs, hearts, intestines, and bellies, with which we should compare Porphyry's line of argumentation in Abst. 3.7f. In 2.16.29-32 we observed (p. 367, supra) that Amobius mentioned the begetting of young among the animals as the direct result of having sexual intercourse. In 7.9.29-32 the emphasis is upon the love of the young and the delight felt by the parents when offsprings are born: "Amax suos fetus et gignendis conveniunt liberis: non et mihi proliis et subrogandae est cura et dulcedo cum fuerit procreata?". Again depending upon De sollertiae animalium, Porphyry develops the same kind of argument (Abst. 3.22.7): Τὸν γοῦν πρὸς τὰ ἐγγόνα φιλοσοφικῶς ἀρχὴν μὲν κυνικῶς καὶ δικαιοσύνης τιθέμενοι, πολλὴν δὲ τοῖς οὐράκατοι καὶ οὐχοράκατοι ἀνώται, σοὶ φασιν αὐτοίκι σοῦ ἀξίουν μετεῖναι δικαιοσύνης. A new idea appears here which is not found in the above text of Amobius, viz. that the principle of the social life and of justice manifests itself in the affection which humans have for their young, and that although the Stoics acknowledge the expression of such affection among animals, they deny the latter any participation in justice.

We recall that Porphyry's argument in Abst. is that animals possess both kinds of reason, and he defends the concept that humans do owe animals justice (against the Stoics and Peripatetics) because they do practice it within a community which possesses reason.

He uses the Pythagorean concept of the necessity to maintain a relationship between man and animal based upon justice, and one manifestation of this virtue was, of course, to abstain from eating the meat of animals. This necessitated killing an innocent creature (cf. Am.), which was in turn tantamount to committing an injustice. Both Amobius and Porphyry use the common scientific observation of the ancient world, that animals show intelligence in caring for their young (cf. Ael., De nat. anim. prolog.; 1.4; 1.18; 2.19; 2.40; 3.8; 3.10; 3.16; 10.8; Plut., De soll. anim. 962B; 970E; 963B; 962A; Pliny, HN 8.80. 215), base it upon Stoic concepts (and Pythagorean justice: v. infra), and use this as evidence that animals use reason and should not be sacrificed.

A new concept is now introduced into the ox's speech in 7.9.32-6:

Sed rationales illi sunt et articulatae exprimunt voces. Et unde illis notum esse n vel ego facio meus rationibus faciam et vox ista quam prome mel generis verba sint et solis intellegantur a nobis?

Although Juba II's work on animal behaviour, now unfortunately lost, dealt with the ability of various animals to mimic human speech (cf. Pliny, HN 8.45.107), it is doubtful that he explained this on the basis of Stoic concepts. Besides, Amobius makes clear that animals possess the ability to speak in an intelligible language to each other, and here we are met with the Stoic doctrine of the λόγος προφορικός. Analyse carefully Abst.
3.3.3: λόγου γέ γυνος μέτοχα τα ζώα τα φυλακτικά, τῶν μὲν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ νόμους
tούς ἀνθρωποί τις ἁγγαρευμένων, τῶν δὲ ζώων κατὰ νόμους οὔσα παρὰ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὸς
φύσις εἶξαν ἑκατον. Τοιοῦτοι συνεχῶς. Τοιοῦτοι συνεχῶς οὐκοῦν εἶξαν ἑκατον. Τοιοῦτοι συνεχῶς οὐκοῦν εἶξαν ἑκατον. Τοιοῦτοι συνεχῶς οὐκοῦν εἶξαν ἑκατον. His source here is the 'ancients' which probably refers
to a tradition dependent upon the Old or Middle Academy. The same source argued that
it was egotistical for man to deprive animals of the possession of both kinds of rea-
son (Abst. 3.2.4). Also, just as the Greeks cannot understand the language of the
Scythians who speak to themselves distinctly and articulately, so it is with the animal-
s: they speak in a language known to themselves (Abst. 3.3.4ff.). Although the animals
make sounds that are unintelligible to humans, it would be impudent to conclude
that they therefore do not possess reason under the pretext that they themselves
do not understand what they are saying (Abst. 3.4.4).

We now come to the important conclusion to the Ox's speech:

Interroga Pietatum, utrumne sit aequius me occidit, me confici, hominem
venia et commissorum impunite donari? Quis in gladium formavit ferrum? non homo? quis cladem gentibus, quis nationibus imposuit servitutem? non homo? quis parentibus, fratribus, quis xoribis, quis amicis mortiferas
subdidit commiscuitque potiones? non homo?...ita istud non ferrum, non
imane, non saevas, non tibi, o Iuppiter, inustum videtur et barbarum, ecciv, me occidi, me caesi, ut fas tu placidas et ut soelecrosis contingent
impunitas? (7.9.36-49)

The gist is that it is not pious ('Pietatum') or just ('aequius'; "inustum") to
slaughter an innocent animal ('me occidit') while the real culprit is pardoned
('hominem venia...donari'). He now introduces the Pythagorean concept of justice be-
tween man and beast. It was the Stoics who said that humans have no compact of justice
with the animals according to Plutarch, De usu cam. 999A-B: ὅσον γὰρ ἦν ἤὸς τὰς
κόλαγα δίκαιον οἶνον (cf. 994E: animals seek justice). In De soll. anim. 994E he informs
us that Pythagoras reintroduced the concept of justice towards animals, that is, he ab-
stained from eating them, refused to sacrifice them to any deity, and practiced kind-
ness towards them (cf. also De soll. anim. 995F). We recall that immediately after
citing Abst. 2.34, Eusebius gives a text from Philostratus which contains the very
'spiritual' theology of Apollonius of Tyana, both of which reject animal sacrifice
(PE 4.10; Abst. 2.34.2).

Porphyry's principal source of Abst. 2.5-32 is Theophrastus' Περὶ Εὐμεθητῶν, and
for the present investigation we are particularly interested in 2.22-4, adequately summed
up by Bouffartigue-Patillon: "Il est impossible de sacrifier des animaux sans injustice
ou sans impitié: injustice si l'on tue des animaux inoffensifs, impitié si l'on sacrifie les autres, qui sont indignes d'être offerts (ch. 22-23-24)" (p.5). Like Amobius' ox,
Theophrastus's ox, Porphyry asserts: 'Ἐν τῷ ὡς γὰρ θέου ἡμῖν ἄναρτον τὰ μαθὲν ἄδικον τῶν
όμων, διὴκτησεν ἄρρητον ἡμῶν' (Abst. 2.24.2). Piety characterised the Pythagoreans' at-
titude towards animals (Abst. 3.20.7). Porphyry follows De soll. anim. here, but he
adds that those who practice this are preferred to those who (i.e., Stoics) say that
this practice destroys habitual justice. Referring again to the 'ancients' in 3.18.1,
he skillfully uses the Stoics' argument against them: Ὁς ὃς δὲ ἁματοτούλης πρὸς τὰ λογικὰ ἥξης, καθὲςπερ φανεί οἱ ἀντιλέγοντες, πᾶς ὁ μὲν καὶ πρὸς τὰῦτα εἰπὶ δὲ ἦρεν τὰ δύκαιον;: He begins Book Three with the affirmation that it is the best expression of justice in the piety towards the gods, above all in abstaining from the eating of animal flesh (3.1.2). In 3.1.4 he acknowledges that the doctrine of justice towards animals, which has its basis in the belief that animals are rational and possess both sensation and memory, derives from Pythagoras. According to his doctrine, so states Porphyry, humans should extend justice to every animal. Finally, the theme of justice and piety towards the animals, derived from Pythagoras (he is named), specifically in the form of abstinence, takes up the concluding chapters of Book Three (3.26f.).

We end by noting a number of other parallels between Arnobius (Book 7) and Porphyry (Abst. and Phil. or.). In 7.3 Arnobius argues that the divine has no body: the incorporeal cannot be nourished by the corporeal; cf. Abst. 2.34.2: to the God who is over all one must not sacrifice anything that is sensible, either in holocaust or in word; there is nothing material which does not immediately become impure for an immaterial being. In the same text (Gr. text appears supra, p. 333) Porphyry posits that the best sacrifice to the High God is pure thoughts and pure silence maintained in the impassibility of the soul. Yet we have noted above from both Eusebius and Augustine that the same philosopher held that the 'heavenly powers'/'caelestes deos' were capable of suffering disturbing passions/mental agitations, and we have concluded that it is this specific doctrine, espoused by Porphyry in Phil. or. and De reg. an. under Chaldean influence, which Arnobius criticises in the development of his attack upon the anthropopathic behaviour of the deities throughout Books 1, 3-7 (v. Ch. 5 supra).

In light of this, we observe that Book 7 is quite pregnant with such anti-anthropopathic texts, its principal theme is animal sacrifice, and both Eusebius and Augustine shoot off their anti-anthropopathic fireworks vis-à-vis Porphyry frequently in the context of discussing sacrifice. Note, e.g., that in 7.4 the rhetor attacks the concept that the sacrifices give the deities pleasure (voluptas), which he exclaims is a passion which causes them to behave like a base animal. Hence if they feel this, they must have the five senses, and therefore they are mortal (RSA: v. Ch. 5) because whatever has sensation must have a body. He vacillates from Stoic concepts of the passions which can be detrimental to the human soul, to the Pythagorean conception of justice towards all animals (i.e., against the Stoic view), and returns again to Stoicism. This does not mean that he was syncretistic, confused, or pessimistic (i.e., in Book 2.16ff., where he argues that man should not be considered superior to animals) as perhaps too many Arnobian scholars have argued. He can use a philosophical concept to attack one of an opposite position in one section of the Adv. nat., and reverse the process in another section, and we should not think badly about him. Origen does the same thing at the end of C.Cels. 4.

In such vacillation he is simply doing to Porphyry what Porphyry himself had done to many of his enemies: he is taking his enemy's concepts and arguing against him.
We conclude that Amobius in Book 7, like Eusebius in FE 4 and Augustine in Civ. Dei 10, has noted carefully the contradictions inherent in Porphyry's works which dealt with the subject of animal sacrifice, and has exploited these to ensure that his great contemporary enemy was presented with a strong counter-attack: he uses Stoic concepts about the passions which harm the soul to criticise Porphyry's theology ap. Phil. or. and De reg. an., which encouraged sacrificing to deities which suffer passions; and Stoic doctrines of the λόγος ένθοτος and λόγος προφορικός, in addition to the Pythagorean doctrine of justice and piety towards the gods, the same concepts used by Porphyry in Abst., to provide evidence that such sacrifices were both impious and unjust. He can also use the same two Stoic concepts to argue against the too high views of the human soul, espoused by his Neoplatonic-Chaldaean adversaries, and their views of the gods being capable of suffering emotions. The gist of Amobius' argument is fairly clear: Porphyry has turned the normal theological understanding of the God-man relationship upside down by divinizing man and humanizing the gods.

In Abst. 2.24.1 Porphyry gives three reasons why men sacrifice to the gods: to honour them, to give them thanks, and to ask for their favours; Amobius attacks the first and the last of these in 7.10ff. and 7.13, respectively. Amobius refers to men who are savages because they eat animal flesh, thus breaking the law of humanity that united both man and beast (7.4), which appears to be Pythagorean (cf. p. 374, supra). In criticising the concept of sacrificing to the gods for favours, he posits: "Cum enim ordinem vertere et fatalian nequeant constituta mutare, quid rei, quid causae est fatigare et obtundere eorum aures velle quorum auxilliis nequeas supremis in necessitatibus fidere?" (7.10.25-9); compare FE 6.1-6, where Porphyry in the Phil. or. explicitly subjected the gods to the power of fate. In 7.19 the sacrificial laws maintain that white victims should be sacrificed to the gods above, and black to the infernal gods below; cf. FE 4.9, where Eusebius gives a passage from Phil. or. containing an oracle of Apollo and Porphyry's commentary upon it, and the correspondence is rather striking. In 7.16, Amobius says that birds are among the victims offered to the gods above; cf. FE 4.9, which prescribes (Phil. or.) that birds be sacrificed to the gods of the air. Both Adv. nat. 7.10ff. and Porphyry (Phil. or. ap. FE 4.9) contain the concept that the gods above (Porphyry adds those of the ether) receive sacrifices in order that they might give good things to humankind and avert evils. Both attack the concept that gods receive pleasure from the sacrifices (Adv. nat. 7.4; Abst. 2.60.3). Both argue that sacrifices encourage one to commit sin due to the belief that one will conclude that one's sins can be bought off thereby (Adv. nat. 7.8; Abst. 2.60.3; and the latter is quoted in FE 4.14). Both apparently follow the same story, taken from Book 26 of Theopomps' Philippica (v. Bouffartigue-Patillon, 204, n.1), about the rich man who sacrificed a lot of cattle (etc.) to the gods, and the poor man who lived in a modest home and only burnt incense in their honour (Adv. nat. 7.12; Abst. 2.16.1-5: the difference being that the former makes the rich man the good man to argue against the belief that
gods favour those who can bribe them with many gifts; and the latter, arguing against animal sacrifice, obviously favours the incense-burner)

Conclusions.

Porphyry's disqualification of Christ as the via universalis animae liberandae in De reg. an., and his attempt to offer such a way to the non-philosopher in the same work, appears to have been a principal reason that Amobius has attempted to prove that Christ is the only via salutis animae for everybody, everywhere, and for all time. He has also apparently taken Porphyry's criticism of Christian faith in CC fr. 1 just as seriously as Eusebius in both PE and DE. And like Eusebius, he can use the same argument not only to 'prove' that Christianity is the only way to possessing the truth, but also to provide evidence which clearly demonstrates the fact that everything about Graeco-Roman religious culture is a lie. That is, it is a lie in the sense that it does not contain any truth about the gods. It does not reveal anything about salus deorum. Hence going back to the introduction, according to Amobius, everything related to religious paganism is malevolent, and the seeker for the true way of salus dei, whether he/she experiences it in this world or that which comes, will find it only in the salus dei which Christ offers to the body and the soul. He provides this deliverance because he has brought knowledge of verus deus to the world. Only this knowledge liberates the human being from the fear of death, diseases of the body, and more importantly, from polytheistic error.

It is quite interesting to observe how this 'unholy trinity' of Amobius, Eusebius, and Porphyry can help us to piece together perhaps a better understanding of some of the major issues inherent in the contemporary Christian-pagan debate concerning the right concepts of deity. One clear issue produced as the result of trying to put some of the pieces of this puzzle together centres in the relationship between one's having a right concept of deity and being involved in the right kind of worship of that deity. Thus on the one hand, Porphyry demanded that the philosopher flee the body, sensations, passions, indeed everything that might be mortal and material (cf. e.g., Abst. 2.43); and involve oneself in contemplation of the divine in pure thoughts, silence, and the total impassibility of the soul, which was immortal. The Christians apparently saw as wide a credibility gap between this way of salvation for philosophers, and the other way that he offered for non-philosophers, as Porphyry himself saw between the teaching and works of Christ and those of his followers. Christians were subjected by fate never to receive the right conception of Immortal Jupiter. Yet Porphyry apparently became disgruntled with the long Christian apologetical tradition which accentuated the immoralities of the deities, and perhaps it would not be far off the bullseye to suggest that this was the reason why he also added in Phil. or. (Civ. Dei 19.23) that Christians pretend to worship the High God
and therefore do not reap any moral benefits from such false worship. Although we do not have the Phil. or. in toto, we can be fairly certain that Porphyry also showed how religious paganism provided, as he himself says in PE 4.7, the one sure source of salvation, and based this soteriology upon the necessity to form a right conception of deity and how this was conducive to living the virtuous life (clearly implied in Civ. Del. 19.23). Eusebius himself admits that Porphyry set out to prove the "excellence of the supposed deities" in the Phil. or. (PE 4.6). Hence Arnobius stresses, like Eusebius, Christ's ability to grant man the power, in the form of a 'gift,' to extirpate/overcome the passions; and that Christians do experience a moral improvement in their lives as the direct result of worshipping the High God and Christ. Also, although we have not covered it in detail (there is enough material for at least one chapter), Arnobius infuses a moral argument into his anthropo-pathic theme (v. Ch. V.) by attempting to prove that the kinds of passions/mental agitations to which the deities are subject cannot benefit humans. It is a well-worn theme in Christian apologetics, but the Porphyrian connection does appear to be quite obvious in 4.18, where he posits that any conception of deity will derive from the pagans' myths. As we have noted, he is as much interested in keeping his method of interpreting the myths on nothing but a literal level, as Porphyry was in his attempts to discredit the sacred literature of the Christians.

It was in exposing the inconsistencies, contradictions, and therefore falsities in Porphyry's works themselves that Eusebius, Arnobius, and (later) Augustine apparently concluded that they could easily refute his criticism of the Christian religion. This was especially the case in respect of his via salutis for the common man, which encouraged the use of sacrifices to the gods who were thought capable of suffering passions. Arnobius, Eusebius, and Augustine have taken issue with him on this subject. A major inconsistency was the great difference in the two ways, one emphasizing the necessity to flee everything related to the body, mortality, and the passions; the other so clearly connected with the corporeal, the mortal, and the passions. This is not to say that the Christians ignored the fine points of each way, and that they did not give him credit for something that must have been much more admirable than they will allow. It simply appears to be a valid assumption that they were not in a position to give very many compliments. Hence another clear issue in the Christian-pagan debate was the impossibility of the divine nature. Arnobius and Eusebius both argue that their religion offers the right notion of deity, therefore the Christians are involved in the truly spiritual worship of the High God, whom they worship in contemplation, right concepts, and in silence. Pagans have nothing more than misconceptions of deity and therefore do not benefit from their false worship. Arnobius and Eusebius have noticed the inconsistencies of Porphyry on the subject of sacrifice in Phil. or. and Abst. The former uses the same philosophical concepts of Porphyry's Abst. to do to him the same thing that he did to
the Stoics, viz. to use Porphyry's arguments against him. So he uses the two kinds of reason of Stoicism and the concept of justice and piety towards animals of Pythagoreanism derived from Abst., to develop his argument against the kind of animal sacrifice encouraged in Phil. or. As we noted in Ch. V, he uses the Stoic concepts about the passions to attack Porphyry's sacrificial-theurgical theories which held that the heavenly gods were able to experience these emotions. It was worship of this kind (cf. R6=Adv. nat. 7.35f.) that proved the misconceptions of deity of the pagans. On a philosophical level, Arnobius also uses the Stoic concept of the λόγος ἐναντίον to prove that man and animal are of the same race, both are rational beings, and therefore man should not be considered superior to the animals, i.e., he is not divine, immortal, and ready to fly to the Lord's Palace. We have noted in Chapters III, V, and the present study that Arnobius attacks a Chaldaean-Neoplatonic group, and chronologically, religiously, and polemically this interpretation makes perfect sense. Their theurgical practices mentioned in Adv. nat. 2.13, 2.33, and 2.62 and the higher way of salvation realised in the daily struggles to extirpate the passions come to nought: it is only Christ's gift which enables man to experience true salus. Only he can help humans truly to overcome passions. And only he has revealed knowledge of deus verus: he is the genuine via salutis animae liberandae. Porphyry's philosophical way divinized man, and his religious way humanized the gods. Both failed to offer man any true way to God.
Amobius was a professor of Latin rhetoric who taught in the North African city of Sicca Veneria during the reign of Diocletian. These two conclusions which we have made in the first part of this study are significant for the history of Christianity in Roman North Africa, in the Roman Empire in general, and in the specific area of the kind of anti-Christian propaganda, in the form of at least three Porphyrian works, which was published before the beginning of the Diocletianic Persecution in February A.D. 303. Thus it was extremely important for the conclusions of this thesis to ascertain, as accurately as the internal evidence of the Adv. nat. and the external evidence derived from every pertinent source would allow, the date in which Amobius wrote the work now known to us as the Adversus nationes. A date too early would make problematical his association with the great pagan polymath and enemy of the Christian religion, Porphyry of Tyre. A date too late, i.e., after A.D. 306, would make our conclusions that he was writing during a time when the persecution of Diocletian was in progress (303-305) in North Africa, rather difficult to accept because most scholars are in general agreement that by c. late 305 the persecution in this part of the Roman Empire had ended. Our suggested date of late 302 to before the persecutions had ended in 305, is therefore important for a number of significant events which were related to the history of Christianity in the Roman Empire and in North Africa.

In respect of the history of the Church in North Africa, we may suggest that in the Adv. nat. one may catch a few glimpses of what was already beginning to be the greatest cataclysmic upheaval in the religious history of North Africa, viz. the conflict and competition between the Christian religion and the cult of Saturn. The latter was something like the national cult of Roman North Africa, and the god Saturn was conceived as the great Lord of all in both a cosmological and a terrestrial sense. He was the true Lord of heaven and earth, who controlled the elements, who blessed the crops, and who made the seeds fruitful. He was the undisputed Deus frugifer and the agrarian deity par excellence in Roman North Africa, but in all the other provinces of the empire his identity and many of his functions as a deity were quite differently conceived (i.e., in Rome he was associated with the treasury). Hence the importance of analysing the biographical information concerning Amobius given by Jerome in the Chron. and De vir. ill., and the reader may recall that we concluded that Jerome indeed appears to have been given accurate information regarding Amobius' provenance. We do not know whether he was born or even died in North Africa, but we can be fairly certain that he was living there when he wrote the Adv. nat. Thus we have identified certain aspects of Amobius' conception of the Christian High God as Saturnian-related. We have analysed the principal text which
depicts a providential deity who blesses "aequaliter" the crops of pagans and Christians alike, 3.24, who makes the sun to shine, sends the rains, etc., as one such Saturnian-related text. There are a number of passages in Book One which also reveal a concept of God who controls the natural elements, and we have concluded that Amobius' use of frugifer to describe the High God's specific way in which he blesses the seeds to make them fruitful, is probably written during a period in North Africa when the agrarian/agricultural situation was characterised by drought and subsequent crop failure. We have also suggested that there is convincing evidence that makes fairly clear that Amobius' understanding of the divine largesse in respect of man's agrarian needs has come under the influence of a Cyprianic conception of divine providence found in his De bono patientiæ. Thus the Christian-pagan debate in North Africa concerning concepts of deity centred in divine providence related to the contemporary unpleasant agrarian situation, the belief in an all-powerful deity who controlled the elements, and the Lord of the harvest. Amobius' contribution to that debate appears to have been his emphasis upon the Christian God's equally bestowing agrarian (and other kinds of) blessings upon all persons regardless of their denominational affiliation, combining with this the practice of sharing one's possessions with all persons both Christian and pagan (cf. 4.36); and a strong affirmation of a clear and unambiguous belief in eschatology, neither of which were so clearly present or affirmed in the Saturn cult. It is quite clear from this that the Christians were better organised institutionally and better equipped theologically to take their message of divine providence, in time of need, to those who were outside the camps of both Christian Church and Saturn cult.

Yet overwhelmingly the evidence which we have analysed which is related to the contemporary Christian-pagan debate on the subject of concepts of deity has taken us to the necessity of re-examining the suggestions/arguments of Kroll, Bidez, Courcelle, O'Meara, Hadot, Fortin, and Wilken who have to varying extents associated Amobius' polemical argumentation in Book 2 with various aspects of Porphyry's philosophical ideas and anti-Christian polemics. O'Meara and Wilken inspired the present writer to investigate the possibility that Amobius may be responding to Porphyry also in Adv. nat. 1.

Yet immediately the realisation occurred that Eusebius, who has hitherto been an unknown entity in the Amobius-Porphyry connection, might also shed some light on the problem. And we have seen that he has been quite helpful. We have not ignored Augustine either, who was instrumental in Bidez's suggestion at the turn of the century, and in Courcelle's argument in 1954, that Amobius is clearly responding to the De reg. an. and the CC in Book 2. The significance of the present study, specifically Chapters I (in some parts), III, V, and VI, is that it has shown that Porphyry's polemical arguments cannot be restricted to Adv. nat. 2, and indeed we have found that Amobius has responded to Porphyry's Ecstatician Oracle and his commentary upon it, in Book 1; but he has taken Porphyry's reject-
ion of Christ's deity, thereby concluding that he was mortal in soul, mind, and body, and turned it against him by using the Stoic concepts of passions which can harm the human soul (De fin. 3.x.35) to argue that it is the pagan deities who are mortal, through and through. His criticism of the anthropopathic depictions of the deities in the myths had as its principal object Porphyry's conception of the deities in heaven, discussed in Phil. or. and De reg. an., who are capable of suffering passions/mental agitations. Especially in respect of this subject, but indeed in relation to many others, Arnobius, Eusebius, and Augustine have attempted to do to Porphyry what Porphyry himself had tried to do to the Christians, viz. they have fought their enemy not only in his own camp generally, but they have also used his methods of argumentation, his own religious and philosophical concepts, and the inconsistencies and contradictions clearly present in his own writings.

Arnobius, Eusebius, and Augustine have all attempted to show in their own way how far Porphyry has fallen from the true Platonic tradition. Arnobius and Eusebius can take over Porphyry's terminology related to the four concepts of deity which are conducive to the right kind of worship, the importance of overcoming the passions, the flight to the divine in contemplation, and the specific use of the Pythagorean concept of silence before the deity, all of which clearly prove that it is the Christians who have the correct conception of deity, who have the truth, and therefore they possess in Christ the true way of salvation. Arnobius and Eusebius have taken very seriously Porphyry's contention that Christian faith does not have any 'scientific evidence' which might clearly demonstrate that the promises contained therein are true. They respond throughout their works (Adv. nat., PE and DE) by (1) using the literature of their opponents as evidence to prove that there is no truth is polytheism and (2) providing evidence from their own religious tradition which clearly demonstrates the truth of the things that they believe. Hence Arnobius and Eusebius develop the latter around miracles seen by persons from all over the world; the universal diffusion of Christianity which has occurred as the result of divine support; the same power worked in Christ and his disciples; and that Christ is the saviour of all persons, everywhere, and for all time. Porphyry (so they argue) was mixed up with Platonism on the one hand and Chaldean theology on the other.

Arnobius is clearly as much determined to prove the divinity of Christ and that he alone has revealed to humanity the conception of deus verus and thus the only way of salvation, as he is to prove the mortality of the gods and that the myths do not reveal any clear conception of deus verus and therefore do not benefit their worshippers in any way, much less in providing them a way of salvation. Christ as the via universalis salutis is conceived in a geographical sense, but also in respect of every aspect of the individual's being, soul, mind, and body. The latter is significant in that the specific manner that Arnobius has incorporated this aspect of his soteriology which is both faithful to the biblical picture of Christ as the Great Physician, and
provides a way of experiencing physical salus through Christ, suggests that he is responding to Porphyry, who in Phil. or. (undoubtedly under Chaldaean influence) encouraged purificatory sacrifices for the body. The fact that Arnobius mounts a counter-attack upon the Hecatean Oracle partly by showing that Christ was divine because he healed physical diseases, thus overcoming the laws of the fates, supports this interpretation: Porphyry's conception of deities who are subjected to the fates and therefore cannot heal physical diseases (PE 6.1-6) is undoubtedly the object of this criticism of Christ as the healer of the body.

There is therefore significance found in Arnobius' conception of the High God, especially the Platonic aspects of his thought. Eusebius quite frequently uses Platonic or even Porphyrian concepts and terminology to attack Porphyry's humanized deities, and Arnobius often uses the same method in his attack. On the one hand, Arnobius can use the apophatic conception of deity in 1.31 and 3.19; his definition of Deus as being eternal, immortal, unbegotten, incorporeal, impassible, and possessing a conditional immortality (Tim. 41); that God needs nothing; that he is the giver of good things, but does not cause evil; that knowledge of God is like glue, i.e. it immortalizes the soul; that God is the first cause; etc., to prove that only the Christians possess the right conception of deity. On the other hand, he can make mincemeat of the concept of deities who are mortal, corporeal, passionate, loving the material and earthly things, to prove that the pagans do not have the right conception of deity. He is here fighting the religious or non-philosophical way of salvation given by Porphyry in Phil. or. and De reg. an., by using the latter's own basic concepts inherent in his philosophical way of the soul's liberation. And the fact that in Book 2, where he is attacking the philosophical way of salvation, he affirms that Christ liberates all persons alike, which evidently means that there is one and the same way for all persons regardless of intellectual ability and social background, means that he has seen the weakness in offering two mutually exclusive ways of salvation to humankind.

The significance of the contemporary Christian-pagan debate concerning deity, at least to the extent that Arnobius' work sheds light on that debate, reveals itself especially in the specific work which not only received serious attention from Arnobius, but also Eusebius and Augustine. That work was Porphyry's Phil. or., and it would appear from the evidence which we have pieced together in this thesis (esp. Ch. V) that Porphyry's Hecatean Oracle and his commentary upon it, both of which totally rejected the deity of Christ, was perhaps one of the most dangerous pieces of anti-Christian literature written during the ante-Nicene period. It was dangerous because it (Phil. or.) offered both a critical and constructive approach to the Christian problem. On the critical side, Christ was a mortal, supposedly good and pious, who was nevertheless
condemned by right-minded judges; who got his followers entangled in error; who practiced Egyptian sorcery; who taught one thing, his disciples another; and the disciples were fated never to receive any blessings from the gods, and never to be able to form a conception of Jupiter the Immortal; who only pretended to worship the High God; who did not worship God by those things which such worship demands, namely the virtues, the gist being that the Christians were immoral because of their false worship, and this was due to not having the right conception of God; and we may add the criticism of Peter who was a magician, derived from Phil. or., to which Arnobius responds in 2.13. On the constructive side, Porphyry claimed that Phil. or. could be accepted now as the only sure source of salvation; he used the oracles of the gods themselves to prove, after critical examination of the evidence, the excellent natures of the deities, thereby obviously showing to his readers that his discussion provided the right concept of deity; he supported the traditional practices of polytheism which had lived in the Graeco-Roman world throughout the centuries, and especially the use of animal sacrifice as a way of worshipping the deities; and even included a great deal of philosophical discussion, and it is because of this double approach (i.e., philosophical and religious) in Phil. or. (and also in De reg. an.) that we have concluded that Porphyry offered a way of salvation to the philosophers and another to the non-philosophers. If we add to this work (Phil. or.), the fact that Porphyry apparently approached the Christian problem critically and constructively also in De reg. an., and Arnobius’ response to his attempt to prove the credibility of polytheism by referring to the miracles of the Magna Mater and Aesculapius at the end of Adv. nat. 7 reveals that he did, the two works together undoubtedly posed unprecedented problems for the Christian religion. Yet the fifteen volume work CC, which appears to have gone totally over to the offensive by critically examining/exegeting the Bible to prove its inconsistencies and therefore that it did not contain the truth (he also attacked other things: e.g., the allegorical method of the Alexandrians, Christian practices), must have been the crowning event to Porphyry’s career as an anti-Christian polemicist, and the pagan world now had an anti-Christian trilogy that could be seen as authoritative, ‘scientific,’ highly respectful, spiritually/intellectually beneficial, and encyclopedic in its scope. And there is evidence that Arnobius is aware of some of the very dangerous arguments directed towards Christianity, as well as those which supported religious and philosophical paganism, derived from all three works.

This brings us to the most important question of all: what significance does the Arnobius-Porphyry connection have for helping us to understand both Arnobius the pagan and the Christian, and what significance does this have for the history of the Church under the Roman Empire, specifically during Diocletian’s reign?
Perhaps if we go back to Jerome's biographical information concerning Amobius we might now get a clearer picture of the rhetor. We are particularly concerned with the statement that Amobius always used to fight against the Christian religion, and it was this that made the bishop hesitant when he sought admission into his church. We have posited that if Amobius was as vicious and skillful in his attack upon paganism as he is in his criticism of pagan concepts and practices, the bishop will have had good reasons for being suspicious. We have seen that Amobius is responding to Porphyry in many more texts than has hitherto been thought: in Book One he responds to the Hecatean Oracle and Porphyrian commentary; in Book Two, as has already been known in respect of a good many texts, we have added many more texts which will support the arguments already brought forward, that Porphyry is a principal opponent in the Book; in Books Three through Seven, where Amobius criticises the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic gods of the myths to prove that they are mortal because they are capable of suffering all kinds of emotions/mental agitations, and this is independent upon the concept of Stoic passions which harm the soul found in De fin. 3.x.35, and thereby Amobius can attack Porphyry's assertion that Christ was mortal in Phil. or. by using the conception of deity found in the same work (i.e., gods are capable of suffering passions) to turn Porphyry's concept against him; and the brilliant way that he uses the Stoic doctrine of the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and the λόγος προφορικός, as well as the Pythagorean concept of justice and piety towards the animals, concepts which he undoubtedly derived from Abst. where Porphyry used them (like Amobius) to argue against animal sacrifice/eating animal flesh, to attack the encouragement of animal sacrifices found in Phil. or. (Adv. nat. 7). We recall that in Chapter II we suggested that Amobius' apology (Adv. nat. 1-2) might best be considered not an 'apology' in the classical sense, but rather a written testimony, in the form of personal retractions of his public criticisms of Christianity, that his desire to be a member of the church at Stoica was genuine. We may suggest that because Amobius appears to be familiar with a good bit of the anti-Christian propaganda of Porphyry, he is probably retracting the Porphyrian criticism of the faith which he himself had been using in his attack upon the Church. For what newly converted Christian, most probably not even under catechetical instruction, who is ignorant of the O.T. and apparently much of the N.T., and who has been called by a number of scholars 'confused,' 'heterodox,' 'unorthodox,' 'heretical,' and a half-pagan, would seriously think that he could write even a half-decent 'apology'? He is sincere in his Christian beliefs. The Adv. nat. was not just a rhetorical exercise (cf. Colombo), however. He has simply deserted the Porphyrian ship (perhaps) to pledge allegiance to the Christian faith. There is genuine conviction in his attempts to prove the veracity of his new religion. So he is sincere in expressing his new religious concepts. The possibility that he did use Porphyry's arguments against Christianity as a pagan would help us better to understand Jerome's statement that he always used to attack the faith, and the bishop's
suspicion. For we may also ask, what bishop in his right mind would not have got cold feet when the professional rhetor in the college at the forum (rhetoric was usually taught in or nearby the forum) who had been breathing Porphyrian fire upon every basic tenet of the faith of which he was the guardian, approached him perhaps unexpectedly to be accepted into his church? This interpretation exonerates Amobius from the above charges (p. 384, supra), but it does so without reading into the pages of the Adv. nat. something which is not there. The evidence is quite convincing that a principal adversary of Adv. nat. is Porphyry.

The other part of our final question is: what significance does the Amobius-Porphyry connection have for the history of the Christian Church under the Roman Empire, specifically during the Tetrarchy? We should begin to answer this question by observing that, because the study of the history of the Early Church is inseparable from the study of the history of the Roman Empire, the Adv. nat. is important as an historical document not only because it gives us a good picture of the state of the paganism of the period and of the relations between Church and State, but perhaps more importantly because it is the last 'apologetic' work written by a Christian during the last Great Persecution and immediately before the sanctioning of the faith by Rome. The inseparability of these two aspects of ancient history (and not the complementary relations of two histories) is apparent already in the N.T. For example, in St. Luke 3.1, the mission of John the Baptist begins with the words, "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar..." which might not be only a chronological statement; and in St. Mark 12.17, devotion to God and allegiance to the state are viewed as complementary. Many of the apologetical writings of the Early Church are interrelated with the social, political, and religious aspects of the history of the Roman Empire? Justin Martyr addressed his apologies to the emperor Antoninus Pius, and quite a lot of his defence of the faith incorporates a discussion of these issues related to the Church-State confrontation. The 'minor' apologists (so called due to the quantity of their writings and not their quality, e.g., Aristides, Theophilus, Athenagoras, etc.) possess the same general characteristics. Origen devoted much attention to the Roman attitudes of the dom magecum. And Clement of Alexandria went so far as to argue that the Greeks, from whom the Romans received a great deal of religious and philosophical influences, were the recipients of a separate covenant from God. This at least implies that the Romans were beneficiaries of the same covenant. Hence the study which we have ended has shown how intense one specific debate, viz. that related to concepts of deity, could become against the background of official state persecution of Christians by the Roman Empire.

The period between Diocletian and Constantine was highly significant for the history of the Roman Empire and that of the Church. We have seen in the Adv. nat., supported by evidence derived from Augustine and Eusebius where it is either certain
or very probable that Porphyry is the opponent, that a contemporary debate carried on between Christians and pagans had to do with the right conception of deity; what a verus deus was; how one should worship the deity correctly; what benefits both temporal and eschatological, should one expect to receive by worshipping in such a manner; etc. Porphyry's Phil. or. must have been a brilliant piece of anti-Christian propaganda, and the responses of Amobius, Eusebius, and Augustine make this clear; but it must have also been an excellent apology for Graeco-Roman religious concepts and practices which gave full support to traditional polytheism. The way that Porphyry claims that Phil. or. could be viewed as the only sure source of salvation strongly suggests that he incorporated everything in this work which might help all pagans in their search for salvation in the context of their own religious cultures. He appears to have paid particular attention to the encouragement of animal sacrifice in Phil. or. And we have noted Amobius' response to his anthropopathic conception of the deities to whom such sacrifices should be made, and how he uses Porphyry against Porphyry to argue against the mortality of the deities who are thought to receive these sacrifices. Yet we may back up a little and recall that in Chapter I we concluded that Amobius' attack upon the sacrifices chronologically, religiously, and thematically corresponded to the Fourth Edict of the Diocletianic Persecution. The legal records of Crispina's trial on the 5th of December A.D. 304 at Thevese were given to support the interpretation that Book Seven is explicable in light of the Roman Empire's forcing Christians to sacrifice to the gods, i.e., Amobius is responding to a real historical event during the period c. sometime before the end of 305. He is attacking, so it would appear, the sacrificial concepts of Porphyry ap. Phil. or. with philosophical concepts derived mainly from Abst. Could there possibly be any relation between State enforcement of sacrifice and the attack upon the sacrificial concepts of Phil. or.?

The reader may recall that Chadwick years ago (1959, 142ff.) suggested that Porphyry's statement, found in Ad Marc. which was written c. A.D. 300, that he had been called away on business of the Greeks "may perhaps mean that he had been invited to attend the confidential deliberations which preceded the launching of the persecution of the Church under Diocletian in 303. (Porphyry would be a natural person to consult about such a project, as the author of several formidable books against the Christians.)" Wilken (v. his works 1979, pp.132ff.; 1984, pp. 126-63) later added to this hypothesis (he accepted Chadwick's suggestion) the suggestion that Phil. or. was written as the result of this meeting. The present writer accepts Chadwick's view and finds Wilken's suggestion possible, but his chronology both for Phil. or. and Adv. nat. are not accurate. Phil. or. will have undoubtedly been viewed by Diocletian as the kind of propaganda which might strengthen the traditional polytheism which he apparently always zealously and superstitiously respected. Its anti-Christian character will have been viewed as lending support to the State persecution of the Christians. And Porphyry's
encouraging his fellow-pagans to sacrifice to their deities in the Phil. or. will certainly have given strong support to the enforcement of the Fourth Edict. We may add this hypothesis: Phil. or. had already been written before the aforementioned deliberations took place. By the time that Porphyry attended them, the work was already well known in the East. It is a good possibility that at that meeting Diocletian might have made the decision to disseminate the Phil. or. to at least some if not all of the western provinces.

But as we have noted, according to Arnobius, Porphyry’s conception of deity failed just as much as his conception of man did: he turned the normal understanding of the God-man relationship upside down by divinizing man and humanizing the gods. This might not have given either an accurate or fair picture of his opponent’s views, but neither do Eusebius and Augustine. And we may add, neither did Porphyry.
ROMAN NORTH AFRICA.

NORTH AFRICAN PROVINCES

MAURETANA

TINGITANA

CAESARIENSIS

MAURETANIA

TUAREGNES

BAQUATES

Atlas

Mons

AFRICA PROCONSULARIS

Hippo

REGUS

CARTAGO

CAESARIENSIS

Marsa

Gufra

NORTH AFRICAN PROVINCES

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ADDENDA

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