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THE ARGUMENTS OF THE *APOCRITICUS*
A RE-EVALUATION OF THE APOLOGY OF MACARIUS MAGNES

Benedict C. Sheehy
Bachelor of Theology,
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THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Religion and Culture
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts degree
Wilfrid Laurier University
1989

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
PREFACE	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
PART 1 <i>PROLEGOMENA</i>	
1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Historical Context	2
1.2. The Manuscript	5
1.3. Editions and Studies	7
1.4. Authorship	9
1.4.1 Identity of the Author	10
1.4.2 Identity of the Objector	17
1.4.2.a Porphyry	18
1.4.2.b Hierocles	24
1.5. Date	27
1.6. Thesis	37
2. THE ARGUMENT OF THE <i>APOCRITICUS</i>	
2.1 Pagan versus Christian: A Summary of the Dialogue	39
2.2 Structure	46
2.3 Mode of Argumentation	49
PART 2 <i>ANALYSIS OF THE APOCRITICUS:</i> <i>PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY</i>	
PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY	57
3. RHETORIC	
3.1 Rhetorical Background	58
3.2 Ancient Rhetoric: A Brief History	58
3.3 Nature of Rhetoric	60
3.4 Rhetorical Proofs	62
3.4.1 Enthymemes: Topoi	64
3.5 Rhetoric in Ancient Education	66
3.6 Macarius as a Christian Rhetorician of the Second Sophistic	67
4. THE RHETORIC OF THE <i>APOCRITICUS</i>	71

4.1	Invention: Macarius' Use of the		
	Rhetorical Proofs	71	
4.1.1	Paradigm Arguments	71	
	4.1.1.a Paradigm Arguments: Real		72
	4.1.1.b Paradigm Arguments: Fictional		77
4.1.2	Enthymemes	79	
	4.1.2.a Antecedent-Consequent		80
	4.1.2.b More and Less	82	
	4.1.2.c Some Form of Relation		83
	4.1.2.d Enthymematic Maxims		84
4.2	Arrangement, <i>Taxis</i> , or Dispositio	85	
	4.2.1 Prooemium	86	
	4.2.2 Narration	87	
	4.2.3 Proof	88	
	4.2.4 Epilogue	88	
4.3	Style, <i>Lexis</i> , or <i>Elocutio</i>	89	
	4.3.1 Word Plays	89	
	4.3.2 Macarius' Use of the Tropes		90
	4.3.2.a Metaphor	91	
	4.3.2.b Allegory	92	
	4.3.2.c Metonymy	93	
	4.3.2.d Synecdoche	94	
	4.3.2.e Catechresis	95	
	4.3.2.f Antonomasia	96	

5. LITERATURE 98

5.1	Grammar	98
5.2	Textual Criticism	100
5.3	Hermeneutics	102
5.4	History	103

6. OTHERS

6.1	Ethics	108
6.2	Military Strategy	111
6.3	Medicine	111
6.4	Metallurgy	114

PART 3 ANALYSIS OF THE APOCRITICUS:
THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY

THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY 118

7. PHYSICS AND MATHEMATICS	119
7.1 Order of nature	119
7.2 Change	120

7.3 Astronomy	120	
7.4 Mathematics	122	
8. METAPHYSICS	124	
9. ANALYTICS	129	
9.1 Syllogisms	129	
9.2 Sorites and Pure Hypothetical Arguments		131
PART 4 ANALYSIS OF THE APOCRITICUS: ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY		
10. ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION		
10.1 Historical Background	136	
10.2 Allegorical Interpretation as a Biblical Hermeneutic		138
10.3 Allegorical Interpretation in the Apocriticus	141	
11. CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY	146	
11.1 Theology Proper	147	
11.2 Creation	149	
11.3 Christology	150	
11.4 Soteriology	153	
11.5 Demonology	154	
11.6 Eschatology	155	
11.7 Christian Hermeneutics	156	
PART 5 CRITIQUE AND CONCLUSION		
12. CRITIQUE		
12.1 Rationale	160	
12.2 Neglected Objections	162	
12.3 Misunderstood Objections	172	
12.4 Answers to Non-existent Objections		175
13. CONCLUSION	181	
APPENDICES		
1. Crafer and Harnack on Authorship		188
2. Eusebius on Hierocles	196	
3. An Outline of the Arguments		

in the Apocriticus 201

INDEX 212

BIBLIOGRAPHY BY TOPIC 223

BIBLIOGRAPHY 239

ABSTRACT

Since its rediscovery in the last century, the *Apocriticus* of Macarius Magnes has been dismissed as a worthless apology. Scholars generally agreed that the value of the work was not in the Christian apology, but rather in the pagan point of view it preserves. This thesis is an analysis of the arguments from a historico-cultural perspective, particularly from the perspectives of rhetorical argument, allegorical interpretation, and Christian theology. The thesis then attempts to demonstrate that when understood in its proper historical context the apology is a substantial contribution to the Christian apologetic tradition and vehicle to understanding the Christian-pagan conflict of its time.

PREFACE

Choosing an obscure failure - the apology of Macarius Magnes - for a thesis topic is not everyone's idea of worthwhile study. I had different reasons for choosing the *Apocriticus*. The few introductory articles revealed clear questions and objections to Christianity which seemed quite contemporary in some respects. The answers were amusing in their wandering and yet the difference between the two seemed intriguing. What stands behind this obvious disparity? As the articles noted, the objections were so to the point as well as blunt and crude it was surprising the Christian apologist would feel no compunction about including them in his text. Yet the apologist did include the offensive objections. Furthermore subsequent generations of Christians considered the apologist's answers convincing enough to continue transmitting the work in spite of the objections.

Originall, I had hoped to be able to examine both the objections and the answers, and then draw comparisons and contrasts in an effort to understand why and how the apologist had failed. In retrospect it is obvious that the scope of such a task is well beyond a Master's thesis. Since most scholars had concentrated their work in the objections, I decided to work on the answers. It was with the general consensus of the apologist's failure in mind that I approached the text. As my research progressed, however, I came to develop a new respect for the author of the apology. His logic, his learning, and depth of thought were much more substantial than he was generally given credit for. Finally, I came to the conclusion that his work has been misread and incorrectly evaluated. As a result of my research my thesis changed from an effort to understand the motive behind such a poor apology to an effort to demonstrated its worth.

In the process of my research I came into contact with the intellectual milieu of late antiquity. It is a fascinating period of change and uncertainty. I hope that what I have learned and enjoyed in that period is transmitted through this thesis, making one more facet of late antiquity more accessible to the reader.

My debt to the faculty who guided and encouraged me throughout this project is considerable. I wish to

acknowledge Dr. Harold Remus' contribution as my advisor. He gave me the valuable suggestion of approaching my topic from a consistently ancient perspective, as opposed to the mixed ancient and modern I had been working with. He also gave me consistent guidance and perspective on an intimidating undertaking. His editing and organizing efforts have greatly improved my thesis. Dr. Peter Erb also helped me in many ways. It was while working for him that I met Macarius. Dr. Erb helped in the development of a thesis topic, bibliography, and rhetorical argument and analysis. Dr. Robert Kelly contributed especially in discussions in the formative stages of the thesis. I wish to thank them all for their availability, encouragement, and interest through the whole thesis process.

Finally, I wish to thank my wife Judy for all her work and support. Her encouragement at key times helped me bring the project to its conclusion.

PART 1
PROLEGOMENA

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historical Context

In the fourth century C.E. Greco-Roman civilization was in a state of upheaval. Immigration, war, and civil strife marked the period (New and Phillips, 1941, pp. 239-40) and the religions of the empire reflected the turmoil. The traditional pagan religions were changing as a result of the intermingling of various philosophic traditions and mystery religions. Christianity was growing, although not yet claiming more adherents than pagan religions did (Laistner, 1967, p. 7).

One of the many conflicts in this tumultuous society was between the syncretizing Hellenistic religions (Geffcken, 1978, p. 37) and the exclusivistic Christian religion, each vying with the other for the devotion of human hearts. The methods used in the contest varied from simple gossip and market-place discussion to torture and even death¹. One common and apparently highly effective method of persuading people

¹ The church was still persecuted after Constantine, even into the fifth century. See, e.g., Theodoret, *Church History* 5.8; Sozomen, *Church History* 7.13, and 7.18.

to one or another point of view was through literature, and much of this bitter controversy between the religions has been preserved in the polemic and apologetic literature of the era.

A whole corpus of polemical and apologetic literature derives from Christianity of this period. The corpus, however, does not stand without precedent. From its beginnings, Christianity has had to defend its right to existence. Beginning in the first century one finds the apostle Paul in conflict with followers of Jesus who demanded conformity to Jewish practices, insisting that these practices belonged to Christianity as well (Letter to the Galatians). The author of Acts portrays Paul as in dialogue with philosophers in Athens (Acts 17). Paul's letters in this regard are the start of a long apologetic-polemical tradition (Chadwick, 1966, p. 3) that was to be continued throughout the church's history.

As Christianity grew in numbers it came to the attention of the Roman governors, who often persecuted Christians in response to some local condition (Lietzmann, 1953, 2:160). As the populace clamoured against and maligned this new religion, calling for its

violent suppression if need be, the Christians attempted to defend themselves with apologies and declarations addressed to the various authorities. In the second century, the two apologies by Justin Martyr (c. 100-165) dispel rumours of atheism (1 *Apol.* 5-6) and caballing (1 *Apol.* 17), and attempt to inform misinformed Roman rulers of the true beliefs and practices of Christianity.

Celsus' attack on Christianity (about 180 C.E.) is much better informed than those to which Justin was responding. Among other things, Celsus attacks Christian use (i.e. misuse) of Jewish scriptures and traditions (in Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.14-63), Christian historical claims about Jesus (2.8-76), and the emptiness and foolishness of Christian doctrines (3.14-76), and he accuses Jesus of such practices as magic (1.38). Celsus was responded to by Origen (c. 185-254), a learned Alexandrian Christian. In *Against Celsus*, Origen deals with Celsus' criticisms one by one, attempting to vindicate Christian religion.

Porphyry, the third-century student and systematizer of Plotinus who attacked the Christianity defended by Origen (Eusebius, *Church History* 6.19.2),

was well versed in Christian beliefs and scriptures. He had, for example, dated the book of Daniel as a work from the second century C.E. (Wilken, 1984, pp. 140-41) and unlike Celsus does not accuse Jesus of sorcery but admires him as a wise man (ibid., p. 159). Porphyry was responded to by a host of Christian writers but most notably by St. Augustine (354-430 C.E.).

It is in this long tradition of attack and counterattack that the work entitled *Apocriticus* - i.e., "Reply" - stands.

1.2 Manuscript of the Apocriticus

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a mutilated MS containing an apologetical dialogue from the fourth century was discovered. The dialogue, entitled *Monogenes e Apocriticus pros Hellenas*, ostensibly takes place between a Christian and a pagan objector over a five-day period. The dialogue is structured so that the opponent of Christianity raises a series of objections, usually about seven, to which the Christian replies with lengthy, discursive answers.

The MS, found in 1867 in the Epirus region of Greece (Crafer, 1919, p. x), became the property of

Apostolides, former librarian of the National Library in Athens (Harnack, 1911, p. 2). It was kept at the National Library until his death, when it was bequeathed to his widow; upon her death, it completely disappeared (Crafer, 1919, p. xiv).

Fortunately, while the MS was still in the Library, it was found by a scholar of the French school at Athens, Carol Blondel² (Palm, 1959-60, p. 3). The MS was a paper codex believed to be of fifteenth- or sixteenth-century origin (ibid).

Despite the poor condition of the MS - it did not begin until chapter 7 of Book 2 and ended in the middle of chapter 30 of Book 4 - Blondel began a critical edition with great attention to detail and accuracy (Harnack, 1911, p. 3; Palm, 1959-60, p. 3). Unfortunately, Blondel died before the work was complete and it was subsequently taken up with less care by his friend, Paul Foucart (Harnack, 1911, p. 3). Foucart published it without introduction in 1876 (Palm, 1959-60, pp. 3-4.; Crafer, 1919, p. xii). An

² In the edition published by Blondel and Foucart (1876), the title page identifies the editor as C. Blondel and the Preface gives his name as "Carolus Blondelius."

introduction was published a year later by L. Duchesne (Crafer, 1919, p. xii), also a member of the group of French scholars at Athens (Salmon, 1882, 3.766).

Aside from the poor physical condition of the MS, the text of the MS proved to be a most unreliable witness for the *Apocriticus*. Crafer summarizes Duchesne's assessment of the MS as "badly written, with many gaps" (Crafer, 1919, p. xxvii). When compared with quotations and fragments from the *Apocriticus* in other works, the MS was seen to have many mistakes and corruptions (Crafer, 1919, p. xxvii). Finally, as further evidence of its poor quality one might note the numerous corrections already in the MS and the further corrections made by Blondel (Crafer, 1919, p.xxvii).

1.3 Editions and Studies

Blondel and Foucart's edition, published in Paris in 1876, remains the only complete text and only edition of the ancient MS³. Their edition must have had a rather limited press run for even in the early 1900's it was difficult to obtain a copy (Crafer, 1919, p. x).

³ Goulet, 1984, p. 448, has promised a new edition but it has yet to appear.

Harnack published all of the pagan's objections to Christianity twice: in *Von einem griechischen Philosophen des 3. Jahrhunderts*, with German translation; and in *Porphyry "Gegen die Christen."* Beyond these works of Harnack, however, no other texts or partial texts of the *Apocriticus* turned up in my research. Partial translations of Blondel's text have appeared in German (Harnack, 1911) and English (Crafer, 1919).

Secondary studies are also limited. Quasten's bibliography contains nineteen entries, of which only five are books (Quasten, 1950-86, 3.488). In recent years a text-critical study was produced by Jonas Palm and published in 1959-60; a Ph.D. dissertation was published by Francesco Corsaro in Italian in 1968; and two articles were published in 1977 and 1984 by the French scholar, Richard Goulet.

The small amount of work done on the *Apocriticus* leaves much ground to be covered. Very little has been done to track down sources, both explicit and identifiable paraphrases and allusions. No full discussion of the structure of the book has been done. Full translations have yet to appear in any language.

No one has undertaken the task of tracing the many similarities and the subtle differences between the Christian and his opponent. Nor has anyone attempted to analyze the arguments put forth by the opponent or the arguments of the defence.

1.4 Authorship

The MS edited by Blondel lacked a title page and its contents do not refer specifically to either author or title. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars expended much effort attempting to identify the work and its author. Fortunately, the *Apocriticus* was cited by two earlier authors. In the ninth century, Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople, cited the *Apocriticus* in his work against the iconoclasts (Crafer, 1919, p. xi), and in the sixteenth century the Jesuit, Francesco Torres, used the work extensively in his attack on the Lutheran view of the eucharist (ibid., p. xii). From their information it is known that the title of the work is *Monogenes n Apocriticus pros Hellenas* and the author a certain Macarius Magnes.

Further research led scholars to the conclusion that the *Apocriticus* is actually a composite work made

up of (a) a book of pagan objections and (b) the replies of Macarius. The importance of these objections has been evaluated differently by different scholars, but any discussion of the *Apocriticus'* authorship would be incomplete without also considering the authorship of the objections. These questions of authorship will all be addressed in turn, beginning with "Macarius Magnes," the author of the replies.

1.4.1 Identity of the Author of the Apocriticus

Very little is known about Macarius Magnes; even the name is unclear. Is it a proper name, or an epithet to be translated "The Blessed Magnesian" (Crafer, 1919, p. xix, n. 5)? Or is it to be interpreted as "Macarius the Magnesian" (Salmon, 1882, 3.766) or "Macarius of Magnesia" (Barnes, 1973, p. 428)? Who is Macarius? Is the author male or female?⁴ Lay or clergy? No definitive answer has been found (see Crafer, 1919, pp. ix, xix-xxiii).

Nicephorus (*Antirrhetici Libri*, ap. Pitra, 1852-58,

⁴ Since the Greek references to the people involved in the dialogue and to god(s) are masculine, it has been deemed more faithful to use genders as specified in the text.

1.305) thought that Macarius was the author's given name but did not take any definite position on "Magnes." The MS he had in his possession described Macarius as *hierarchon* in the title and had a portrait of the author in clerical robes on the front cover (Salmon, 1882, 3.766). From these two facts, Nicephorus deduced that the author was a bishop (*ibid.*).

Since it is known that about 400 C.E. a man by the name of Macarius was bishop in Magnesia in Asia Minor, the connection is often made between him and the author of the *Apocriticus*. If one assumes the identification is correct, a further piece of information may be added.

Photius (*Bibliotheca Codex* 59), like Nicephorus, a Patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century, records that Macarius, the bishop of Magnesia, accused Heraclides, bishop of Ephesus, of Origenism at the Synod of Oak (403 C.E.). One can summarize this information in a single sentence: based on a Byzantine description of an ancient MS and the testimony of another educated Byzantine cleric, Macarius Magnes, the bishop of Magnesia who accused Heraclides bishop of Ephesus at the Synod of Oak, wrote the *Apocriticus*.

Is this information correct? The majority of

scholars accept the medieval testimony and use it in their theories of authorship (Altaner, p. 388; Harnack, 1911, p. 16; Quasten, 1950-86, 3.486; Salmon, 1882, 3.771).

Harnack, for example, argues that since the *Apocriticus* is most likely from Asia Minor (Harnack, 1911, p. 15 f.), and that Nicephorus' evidence (ibid., p. 16) indicates that its author Macarius Magnes is dressed as a bishop, it is unlikely that any Macarius Magnes, other than the bishop from the Synod of Oak, is meant (ibid.). Harnack's theory, then, is that Macarius Magnes, a bishop in Asia Minor, took a book of objections and simply wrote a series of answers to them (Harnack, 1911, p. 11).

Not all scholars accept this interpretation of the data. Thomas W. Crafer, the Cambridge scholar who produced and published the partial English translation of the *Apocriticus*, points out the serious inconsistencies of these claims.

Dealing first with internal evidence, Crafer adduces data from the *Apocriticus* on bishops, Origenism, and geography. Crafer claims that the author of the *Apocriticus* could not have been a bishop, for when the

objector suggests that bishops prove the power of their faith by drinking some type of poison (*Apocriticus* 3.16) - following Mt: 16:18 which suggests that such an act would not harm a person who has true faith - the author makes no form of personal defence (*Apocriticus* 3.24), as one might expect if he were indeed a bishop. Crafer also points out that when referring to bishops of his time, the author of the *Apocriticus* does not seem to include himself in their ranks, using only the third person when referring to them (Crafer, 1914, p. 421 n. 3; 1919, p. xx).

Crafer also points out that the charge that Macarius the bishop brought against Heraclides was the charge of Origenism (Crafer, 1919, p. xx). The author of the *Apocriticus*, says Crafer, is deeply indebted to Origen's thought and hermeneutic and would not likely accuse another person of "Origenism" (Crafer, 1919, p. xx). Furthermore, Crafer draws attention to what he believes to be a fatal oversight in the theories which identify the Macarius of the Synod at Oak with the Macarius of the *Apocriticus*. The duplicity required to accuse another of Origenism while being an Origenist oneself is more than Crafer can imagine from the

creative, thoughtful author of the *Apocriticus* (Crafer, 1914, p. 393).

The internal evidence favours instead an author not from Asia Minor (Crafer, 1919, p. xx) but rather from the East (*ibid.*, p. xxi). Crafer bases his argument for Eastern authorship on the priority given to Syrian figures over anyone else and on various other points of geography and habit that would be characteristic of an Eastern author (*ibid.*, p. xxi). Therefore, Macarius bishop of Magnesia in Asia Minor is an unlikely candidate as author of the *Apocriticus*.

Finally, Crafer deals with the external evidence of Nicephorus. Nicephorus tells us that the MS he used had a portrait of a clergy member on it and gave its author's title as "hierarchos." This external evidence is so scanty (Crafer, 1907, p. 404) that, in Crafer's words, it "does not prove anything" (Crafer, 1919, p. xx).

Based on the above arguments - the charge of Origenism; Macarius' silence about tests for bishops; and the belief that the author was from the East (Syria, a considerable distance from Asia Minor where both "Magnesias" were to be found) - which Crafer combines

with the rejection of Nicephorus' evidence, Crafer concludes that the bishop Macarius of Asia Minor Magnesia who attended the Synod of Oak was not the author of the *Apocriticus* (Crafer, 1919, p. xxi).

Crafer's own theory is that the author was a person named Macarius, who was born in Magnesia but moved to Syria where he wrote the *Apocriticus* (Crafer, 1919, p. xxii).

Crafer's objection that Macarius' lack of response to the poison test for bishops proves he was not a bishop deserves some attention. Although it is an argument from silence, Macarius' detachment from the question does give some warrant to Crafer's point. Two possibilities that Crafer does not seem to have considered, however, are that, at the time of writing, Macarius may not yet have been made a bishop, or if he was indeed a bishop, he really believes the allegorical interpretation he gives in response is correct and valid. If the latter be the case, he would feel vindicated in his right to the position of bishop and sufficiently removed from the necessity of taking the poison test, with the result that he feels no compulsion to bring personal experience to bear on the argument. If

the former be the case Macarius would have no reason to include personal experience. Crafer asks rhetorically, "Would an Origenist author accuse another Origenist of Origenism?" The answer to this question, however, is likely related to the immediate consequences of commitment to Origen. If commitment to Origen meant standing trial for heresy charges, one might be tempted to deny one's commitment to Origen in order to escape discipline. If denying Origenist leanings allowed a person to gain revenge on an opponent, who is to say whether or not the person would stick to his Origenist beliefs (Salmon, 1882, 3.771)? It might also be suggested that if others changed their views about Origen when the anti-Origen movement gained in momentum (c. 375 C.E., Chadwick, 1967, p. 184), then Macarius may also have changed his views as part of this same movement. Accordingly, Crafer's rhetorical question loses its persuasive effect when one considers possible answers to it.

To Crafer's objection that the *Apocriticus* was written in the East, one might reply that Macarius may have moved to Magnesia after writing it; for, if one recalls Crafer's explanation - Macarius of Magnesia

moved East to Syria and there wrote the work - could it not just as easily have been the reverse?

So, while on the one hand Crafer's objections may be answered, on the other hand, the identification of Macarius Magnes, author of the *Apocriticus*, with Macarius Magnes of the Synod of Oak is not proven conclusively though scholars seem to favour the identification of the two Macariuses. Further conclusions can only be drawn once the issue of date has been addressed.

For purposes of this thesis, whether the author was or was not bishop Macarius who accused Heraclides is not crucial. More important will be what one can learn about the author from what he or she writes. I wish to note here that the use of the name "Macarius" for the author throughout the thesis is not intended to reflect any particular position on the authorship question; rather, it is used for clarity in the discussions that follow and for general ease of reading.

1.4.2 Identity of the Objector in the *Apocriticus*

As noted above it is commonly believed that the *Apocriticus* is made up of two works: a book from which

the objections were drawn and the work of Macarius' answers. The identity of the opponent in the dialogue is even more obscure than that of the author. Two opponents of Christianity have drawn the attention of most scholars as likely candidates: Porphyry, the Neoplatonic philosopher who lived 232/33-c. 305 (Croke, 1984, pp. 1-2.), and Hierocles, whose career included positions as Vicar of the East, governor of Bithynia (c. 303), and Prefect of Egypt (Croke, 1984, p. 3 and p. 3, n. 15). Though a few scholars have suggested Julian the Apostate as the objector (Geffcken, 1978, p. 160 and n. 14; Salmon, 3.771), by far the majority think the objector is one of the former two.

1.4.2.a Porphyry

Much of the early interest in the *Apocriticus* was due to scholars' belief that it contained criticisms of Christianity from the lost books of Porphyry (Goulet, 1984, p. 449). Porphyry's work, *Fifteen Books Against the Christians*, was written c. 270 C.E. (Hulen, 1933, p. 5). It was considered threatening enough to draw responses from Methodius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Apollonarius of Laodicea, Philostorgius, and Latinus

Drepanius Pacatus (Hulen, 1933, p. 5), and to cause the Christians to call for its destruction by fire⁵.

Harnack has dealt most extensively with the possibility that Porphyry is the objector of the *Apocriticus* (Harnack, 1911, pp. 96-141). While not claiming that the objections were excerpted directly from Porphyry's massive *Against the Christians* Harnack believes they were drawn from *Against the Christians* by another anonymous author who compiled Porphyry's work into two popular handbooks (Crafer, 1914, p. 361; Harnack, 1911, pp. 141-43).

In support of his theory, Harnack in his *Kritik des Neuen Testaments von einem griechischen Philosophen des 3. Jahrhunderts* lists the following significant similarities between Porphyry and the objector in the *Apocriticus* (ibid., pp. 96-141): (1) Both Porphyry and the objector are Neoplatonists. (2) The generally humane ideology and the disdain for violence are reminiscent of Porphyry and are found in the *Apocriticus'* objector. (3) Both Porphyry and the objector share such common beliefs as the eternity of the heavens and earth, an immutable,

⁵ Decree of the Council of Ephesus, C.E. 431, and one of Theodosius II's laws, C.E. 448 (Whittaker, 1961, p. 144).

omnipotent God, and "lower gods" and demons. (4) They both hold a favourable view of the Old Testament and Judaism "as opposed to Christian lawlessness." (5) Both *Against the Christians* and the objections of the *Apocriticus* were written about the same time. (6) Though both Porphyry and the objector are from the East, they display an intimate knowledge of the traditions of the Roman church, suggesting a period of residence there; since we know that Porphyry lived in Rome for a number of years, this intimate knowledge of Rome may be used to support the claim that the objector is Porphyry. (7) Both Porphyry and the objector use a Western text and canon of the New Testament. (8) Both use discrepancies in the gospels and inconsistencies in apostolic practices to discredit the church. (9) Both critics share "method of controversy...learning and penetration." (10) Both share a number of specific words, phrases and ideas in at least twenty-four places. Of these twenty-four shared words, phrases, and ideas we will now examine the five most significant similarities, particularly, the ideas.

(i) *Apocriticus* 2.12-13 draws attention to the conflicting accounts of Jesus' death. Harnack observes

that Jesus is not blamed for this and then suggests that this deference to Jesus is evidence of Porphyry, who treated Jesus with respect.

(ii) In *Apocriticus* 3.6 and 3.4 the objector claims that the Evangelists have misrepresented the Lake of Gennesaret as a sea. We know from Jerome (*Quaest. Gen.* 1.10) that Porphyry raised the same objection.

(iii) *Apocriticus* 3.15 objects to the symbolic cannibalism of the eucharist in a way that corresponds with Porphyry's views on the subject.

(iv) *Apocriticus* 4.10 asks, if Jesus came for the sick, why did he not come sooner, for certainly there were many sick in past generations? Augustine (*Ep. ad Deograt.* 8) claims Porphyry used this same argument.

(v) *Apocriticus* 4.24 asserts that a destroyed body cannot be resurrected. Augustine is supposed to have attributed this argument to Porphyry (*Ep. ad Deograt.* 2).

We will now turn from Harnack's tenth point in which he discusses the similarities and examine his last point. (11) Both the objector and Porphyry seem once to have been close to Christianity and then to have left it. Augustine, *City of God* 10.28, and Socrates, *Church*

History 3.23, are both cited by Harnack as supporting this assertion. As well, Harnack thinks one can detect a remaining general sympathy for Jesus and a tone of "bitter regret" in the statement "it is no use flying to Jesus" (*Apocriticus* 3.4). Harnack tries to make the point that the objector seems to defend Jesus.

With regard to the explicit reference to Porphyry and his work *Philosophy from Oracles* (*Apocriticus* 3.43), Harnack, while admitting that apparently Macarius did not know he was dealing with Porphyry, suggests Macarius' ignorance may have been the result of the suppression of Porphyry's work under Constantine⁶.

Harnack then points to a break in the *Apocriticus* at 3.20 (Harnack, 1911, p. 103) and uses it as evidence of the existence of two smaller popular handbooks excerpted from Porphyry's *Fifteen Books against the Christians*.

In his 1914 article, Crafer responded in detail to Harnack's arguments equating the objector of the *Apocriticus* with Porphyry. For purposes of this thesis

⁶ Harnack, 1911, p. 142, n. 1, refers the reader to Socrates, *Church History* 1.9, where a suppression of Porphyry may be understood, but is not explicitly expressed as an act of Constantine's.

Crafer's replies to Harnack can be condensed into two main criticisms. (1) The similarities between the objector and Porphyry often apply equally well to any Neoplatonist, not just Porphyry. (2) Some of the similarities Harnack thinks he has found are in contradiction with other more certain knowledge we have about Porphyry's beliefs and books⁷.

In Crafer's opinion, Harnack has failed to prove that the objector in the *Apocriticus* is Porphyry. Crafer accepts Harnack's view that the objections were set forth in two books, but suggests that a better solution might be "to look for some known attack on the Christians at that period which actually contains two books" (Crafer, 1914, p. 373). A book of this description did exist, the *Philalethes* of Hierocles. Crafer suggests that Duchesne's idea about Hierocles as the objector be reconsidered⁸. Crafer (1919, p. 37) uses the extant sources on Hierocles - Lactantius' *Divine Institutes* 5.2-3 and Eusebius' *Contra Hieroclem* - in constructing his argument.

⁷ For more complete discussion of the debate between Harnack and Crafer on authorship see Appendix 1.

⁸ Crafer, 1914, pp. 362, 376-78.; 1919, pp. xii f., both referring to Duchesne, 1876.

1.4.2.b Hierocles

Crafer cites eleven significant points of similarity between Hierocles and Macarius' objector in support of his theory. (1) Hierocles wrote two books against the Christians; Macarius' objections were drawn from two books (Crafer, 1914, p. 377). (2) Hierocles bitterly attacks Christianity while feigning good intentions; Macarius comments on his opponent's bitterness and cunning (ibid.). (3) Hierocles attempted to invalidate the scriptures by finding inconsistencies; this type of attack is most common among the various types of attacks in the *Apocriticus* (ibid.). (4) Hierocles knew Christianity intimately and had likely been a Christian himself; the objector's knowledge of Christianity has already been noted (ibid., p. 378). (5) Hierocles' attack centered on the figures of Peter and Paul; similar attacks are found in Books 3 and 4 of the *Apocriticus* (ibid.). (6) Hierocles charged Peter and Paul with ignorance and deceit; these accusations of ignorance and deceit are found in the *Apocriticus* (ibid.). (7) Hierocles said that after Jesus was rejected by the Jews, he joined with 900 of his

followers and became a robber; Crafer suggests this may have been an argument from Book 1 since the only fragment of that book seems to answer an attack on Jesus (Crafer, 1914, p. 378). (8) While not denying Jesus' miracles, Hierocles tried to discredit them; this is how Macarius' opponent deals with Jesus' miracles (ibid.). (9) One of Hierocles' methods of discrediting Jesus and his miracles was comparing Jesus to Apollonius of Tyana, favouring the latter; Macarius' opponent makes good use of Apollonius in just this manner (ibid.). (10) Hierocles prided himself in his wisdom and contrasted himself with the credulity of the Christians; this is an accurate characterization of the tone of the *Apocriticus*' objector (ibid., p. 379). (11) Hierocles took a "position between polytheism and monotheism, believing in lesser gods and accepting the divinities of Greece and Rome" (ibid.); again, it may be said that his position in this regard is the same as that of Macarius' opponent (ibid.).

Unfortunately, Eusebius' only direct quotation from Hierocles' work is not found in the *Apocriticus* (ibid., p. 380); however, an analysis of the language in the quotation yields some interesting information. Crafer

notes that "no less than seven of these eleven [distinctive] words are to be found" in the *Apocriticus* (Crafer, 1914, p. 381).

Crafer also observes that every point Harnack has rallied in favour of Porphyry can be equally well applied to Hierocles; however, Crafer observes that in regard to his eleven points, the reverse is not true (*ibid.*, p. 387). Crafer observes that Eusebius' work does not deal extensively with contradiction of scripture. Does this fact invalidate the Hierocles hypothesis? No, says Crafer, on the grounds that Eusebius himself explains that he has chosen not to deal with these objections, since, in his opinion, Origen has dealt with them adequately (*ibid.*, p. 384).

Crafer then puts forth the following theory. Early in the fourth century, an anonymous Christian who had visited Rome wrote a fictitious dialogue in response to Hierocles' *Philalethes* (*ibid.*, p. 393). This work was taken up by Bishop Macarius Magnes of the Synod of Oak and edited into its present form of five days' debate, hiding the original division of the two books of objections (*ibid.*, p. 393). While opposed to Origenism, Crafer says that Bishop Macarius probably

just left the Origenist tendencies in or shortened the work (Crafer, 1914, p. 393)⁹.

In my opinion, it seems quite likely that, as Duchesne and Crafer believed, Macarius is responding to Hierocles. With such uncertainty about authorship and previously discussed textual transmission, however, it is foolish to assume that what we have is the text as it left the author's hand. Since there are no certain answers we will have to use what we have as if it were what the author wrote. These problems will have to be kept in mind as we continue our study of the work.

1.5 Date of the Apocriticus

As with authorship, the main work on the date has been done by Harnack and Crafer. So it is with their work that our discussion will be primarily concerned. Dates ascribed to the *Apocriticus* have ranged from 150 C.E.- given by Torres in the sixteenth century (Crafer, 1907, p. 402) - to 410 C.E., in the nineteenth century (thus Neumann; see Crafer, 1907, p. 405). However, since the rediscovery of the Athens MS, scholars have tended to

⁹ For more on Hierocles from Eusebius see Appendix 2.

place it between 295 C.E. (Crafer, 1907, 1914 and 1919) and 405 C.E. (Harnack, 1911, p. 13).

German scholars tended to date the *Apocriticus* in the late fourth and early fifth centuries on the basis of select passages and especially the identification of the author with the bishop at the Synod of Oak (Crafer, 1907, p. 404). This latter identification and corresponding date has been widely accepted by scholars (Crafer, 1919, p. xvi). Crafer points out that the later date greatly diminishes the value of the work as original material and may to some degree be the reason for its neglect by modern scholars (Crafer, 1901, p. 401).

When Crafer began publishing his work on the *Apocriticus*, expressing his belief in an earlier date, he had to respond first of all to those earlier scholars from whose work he had diverged. After publishing his work, which supported an earlier date, he then had to respond to criticism from Harnack.

Crafer's own view underwent some modification as a result of the dialogue with Harnack. In his first published position (1907) Crafer argues for a date between 293 C.E. and 302 C.E. (*ibid*, p. 406). Crafer

adduces two points which he believed fixed the above dates: (1) The *Apocriticus* is based on a real dialogue (*ibid.*, pp. 409-13) and (2) the opponent was Hierocles (c. 300 C.E.) (*ibid.*, pp. 413-15).

Since we know when Hierocles lived and - in Crafer's view - that he took part in the debate recorded in the *Apocriticus*, Crafer feels assured that the date can be fixed by Hierocles' dates. Furthermore, noting that though Macarius¹⁰ is fearful and timid at times but yet was allowed to debate Hierocles publicly, Crafer suggests that the debate must have taken place prior to 304 C.E. when Hierocles, as governor of Bithynia, instigated a persecution against the Christians (Crafer, 1907, p. 406).

Crafer sets a *terminus ad quem* on the date by observing that Macarius lists the Macrobian Ethiopians and the Mauretians as unevangelized. These groups, says Crafer, were evangelized in 316 C.E. by Frumentius (*ibid.*, p. 416). This delineation of the date is

¹⁰ The "Macarius" Crafer is referring to here is not Macarius Magnes, the bishop of Magnesia, but another person of the same name who wrote the *Apocriticus*; see Crafer, 1907, p. 406. It is difficult to follow Crafer in this regard as one is not always certain which Macarius Magnes he is referring to.

confirmed, in Crafer's eyes, by the omission of the Arians from a list of heretics. Crafer argues that certainly by 330 C.E. any list of heretics would have included this group (*ibid.*, p. 417). Crafer adds that the New Testament canon of the *Apocriticus* is certainly pre-Constantinian (*ibid.*). Finally, he points out that the opponent's statement about the considerable number and large size of the Christians' churches (*Apocriticus* 4. 21) is not necessarily indicative of authorship in the post-Constantinian era and actually may even reflect the situation described by Eusebius (*Church History* 8.1-2; see 8.1.5) just prior to the persecution of 303 C.E. (*ibid.*, p. 419).

In his 1911 publication *Kritik des Neuen Testaments von einem griechischen Philosophen des 3 Jahrhunderts* - namely, the opponent of Christianity in the *Apocriticus* - Harnack argued for dating the *Apocriticus* between 395 and 405 C.E. (Harnack, 1911, pp. 12 - 13).

Harnack begins with the internal evidence offered by the objector, who states (4.5) that it has been 300 years (and more) since Jesus predicted that other false Christs would appear (*ibid.*, p. 12). Harnack claims that this fixes the work after 330 C.E. (*ibid.*). A

second mention of time (4.2) next draws Harnack's attention. The MS was corrupt at this point, reading thirty as the number of years which had elapsed since Paul looked for the resurrection. Harnack claims it could be amended to 300 or 330 based on a confusion between the words *triakonta* and *triakosia* (ibid). He suggests that 300 be adopted as the years since Paul's statement, moving the date yet another 30 years to the "sixth decade of the fourth century" (ibid). That the objector is dealing with round figures here, says Harnack, none would deny. Harnack suggests then that since round numbers are being used, one may advance the date yet further, even as far as 390 C.E. (ibid).

Both of these statements of 300 years are, however, in the mouth of the objector. Since Harnack believes that the objector's argument is based on Porphyry's, who lived 232/33 to c. 305, the original objection would have read 200 instead of 300 (ibid, p. 109, n. 2). Harnack suggests that Macarius altered the figure when he wrote the dialogue (ibid, p. 109). Regardless of what these figures originally were, Harnack observes that Macarius is directing attention to the latter part of the fourth century as the period of the dialogue.

To further his argument, Harnack adduces the four following points. (1) The *Apocriticus* portrays a church no longer in direct conflict with paganism; rather, the conflict is only literary at this point (*ibid*, p. 12). (2) The monastic movement has spread throughout the East (*ibid*). (3) The Manichees are found everywhere (*ibid*). (4) The trinitarian formula Macarius uses is orthodox and found only at the end of the sixth decade (*ibid*); in fact, says Harnack, the formula is actually post-Nicene and even post-Cappadocian (*ibid*, p. 13). Harnack feels secure now in offering a date between 370 and 390 C.E. (*ibid*).

He next notes that the Arians are not mentioned in Macarius' list of heretics (*Apocriticus* 4.15) and suggests that the council of Constantinople (381) had sufficiently removed them and that they no longer would be part of the author's contemporary concern (Harnack, 1911, p. 13). Therefore, a date about 390 C.E. is certainly not out of the question (*ibid*).

Finally, Harnack refers to the impact of the philosopher's argument. Harnack says that the attack would have had its greatest impact between 395 and 405 and thus the response of the *Apocriticus* is best

ascribed to that period (ibid).

Crafer in his 1914 article heartily disagrees with Harnack. He writes, "Every word of this theory [of Harnack's] contradicts the view I ventured to put forth myself, and Dr. Harnack has honoured me by discussing and rejecting most of my arguments" (Crafer, 1914, p. 389).

Crafer immediately rejects Harnack's suggestion that the "300" figures have been altered from 200 by Macarius. Crafer points out that Macarius did not bother to alter numerous other indications of date (Crafer, 1914, p. 389). Moreover, Crafer suggests that "300 year" statements are quite round figures, noting that Macarius dates both Jesus and Paul's letters to the same time (ibid).

Crafer next replies to Harnack's four main points.

(1) The fearful, humble tone Macarius assumes in his answers to the pagan objector show that the "stigma of Christianity" has not been removed. Therefore, the date cannot be c. 400 C.E., a time when the church had indeed gained the advantage over paganism (ibid).

(2) Monasticism's spread, says Crafer, is certainly a good argument for a late date; however, he notes that

the monasticism referred to appears to be an earlier type, before desert retreat was common (*ibid*, p. 390).

(3) Concerning Harnack's argument from the spread of the Manichee movement, Crafer observes that already in 290 C.E. Diocletian had the Proconsul of Africa take action against them (*ibid*). In Crafer's opinion, Diocletian's edict proves that a later date is not necessitated by this argument (*ibid*).

(4) The trinitarian formula that Harnack dates from the sixth decade is conceded by Crafer (*ibid*). However, Crafer does not accept the trinitarian formula as part of the author's work (*ibid*, p. 391). He suggests that it is an interpolation and sees his view supported by the following: (a) Trinitarian statements are confined to a pericope of twenty-two lines that have a style distinct from the rest of the work. (b) It is unlikely that the author would introduce the concept of the Trinity, having just heard the pagan's challenge against monotheism (*Apocriticus* 4.23). (c) The context of the passage - the doctrine of baptism - is a prime place for introducing a trinitarian formula. (d) Another interpolation has been discovered elsewhere in another doctrinal passage (Crafer, 1914, p. 391).

With these four counter-arguments, Crafer believes he has sufficiently replied to Harnack's basis for a later date.

Crafer's own theory in this 1914 article still favours an earlier date, sometime in the first half of the fourth century (Crafer, 1914, p. 393). However, he capitulates to Harnack in that he no longer holds that the *Apocriticus* was based on a real dialogue between Hierocles and Macarius at the opening of the fourth century (*ibid.*, p. 389). Though Crafer allows that it may have been written somewhat later than 305, he claims it would not have been written after Christianity had gained the decisive advantage over the pagan religions (*ibid.*). He puts forward the argument that the portrait of the Christian as fearful and cringing would not be suited to late fourth-century literature written for purposes of edification (*ibid.*).

Harnack did not respond to Crafer's 1914 article, though he acknowledges it (Harnack, 1916, p. 10, n. 1, and p. 22). So in his 1919 partial translation, Crafer does not bother with Harnack's arguments and adds the following points for an early date.

Crafer notes first the mention of 300 years since

Jesus and Paul. These statements may give some indication of date but are neither particularly accurate nor reliable (Crafer, 1919, p. xvii).

When Macarius lists those who have yet to hear the Gospel, he mentions the Ethiopians and the inhabitants of Mauretania. Crafer says that well before the end of the fourth century, these people would certainly have heard the Gospel (*ibid.*, p. xviii).

That Arians do not appear in the list of heretics proves nothing, says Crafer, since it is unclear who specifically is being referred to by the term *Christomachoi* (*ibid.*). And the trinitarian passage means little as far as dating since it is likely a later interpolation (*ibid.*). Even if it is part of the author's work it does not necessitate a late date, for, as Crafer points out, there is a similarity in thought and language between Macarius and Gregory of Nyssa (330-c. 395) which suggests that the terminology may have been in use in the early fourth century (*ibid.*, p. xix).

Goulet, whose work on Macarius was done long after both Harnack and Crafer, has tended to side with Crafer in authorship and dating. Though his publications are only short summaries lacking any indication of the

thoroughness of his investigations, it is worth noting that Goulet thinks that the 300 reading is correct and that it precludes Porphyry as author of the objections (Goulet, 1984, p. 449).

The question of the date of the *Apocriticus* remains unanswered. The only agreement seems to be that it is a fourth-century work. Fortunately, the exact date has relatively little bearing on the topic of this thesis and our attention can focus on other issues.

1.6 Thesis

Scholars have commonly dismissed the *Apocriticus* as a worthless apology. The work is generally ridiculed because of its seemingly rambling and digressive answers. It is usually studied in relation to Porphyry's pagan concerns. Quasten's evaluation is typical: "as an apology for the faith, the *Apocriticus* does not merit serious attention, and, paradoxically its chief claim to our notice is its accurate presentation of the pagan viewpoint" (Quasten, 1950-86, 3.487).

In this thesis I wish to re-evaluate this negative scholarly consensus. I hope to demonstrate quite the opposite. To do so the arguments of the *Apocriticus* will

be analyzed with respect to their types, cogency, and consistency in relation to their historical context. An assessment will then be offered. Finally, though so little is known about the identity of the author, yet from what he says one can learn a number of things about the person who stands behind the work.

2. THE ARGUMENT OF THE APOCRITICUS

2.1 Pagan versus Christian: A Summary of the Dialogue

The content of the *Apocriticus* has previously been described as a dialogue (see above p. 4). The objections are the insightful, penetrating criticisms of a well-informed objector while the allegorical, and meandering answers of Macarius seemingly lack the poignancy manifested in the objections.

A dialogue along these lines suggests two questions. (1) Is it likely that a real dialogue has been recorded or is behind the *Apocriticus*? (2) To what audience did the writer address his work? Did he write as an apologist to convert pagans or Jews, or did he write as a Christian to edify fellow Christians, or both?

Concerning the first question one may note the following. (1) The pagan never questions or replies to Macarius' answer, regardless of how poor or off the mark it is. (2) Whereas real dialogue tends to wander from topic to related topic, the dialogue of the *Apocriticus* is an orderly debate following a definable format of

objections and replies on unrelated topics. Even known fictional debates of the period reproduce the meandering better than does Macarius' work (cf. Augustine, *Contra Academicos*). (3) In a real dialogue, the thought often skips from point to point and refers back to previous points to answer previously unanswered questions. Neither of these characteristics is to be found in the *Apocriticus*. (4) The criticisms make up a relatively small portion of the work while the answers take up a good three-quarters. One would expect a real dialogue to be somewhat more equal in this division. (5) As Harnack observed, most dialogues do not consist of seven questions followed by seven answers (Crafer, 1914, p. 392). From the above five points one may suggest that the dialogue is fictional.

Not all scholars have accepted this suggestion. Crafer objected that the *Apocriticus* is at least based on a real dialogue (Crafer, 1914, p. 392). He argued that the introductions to the various days of the dialogue were not simply literary devices, but are evidence of a real discussion (Crafer, 1914, p. xvii, n. 1). The long series of questions followed by group of answers, which Harnack pointed to as evidence of

fictional dialogue, are an equally peculiar way to treat a book (Crafer, 1914, p. 392). Crafer suggests that no one would excerpt a series of seven questions from a book and then try to answer all the questions. Rather, when given the choice, any author would choose to take one question at a time and deal with questions individually. Since the *Apocriticus* is not in a single question-single answer format, Crafer argues that it is based on a real dialogue.

After publication of his 1914 article, in which he still held the view that a real dialogue was the basis of the *Apocriticus*, he seems to have changed his mind. In his 1919 book he states that in the *Apocriticus* "two separate works" are to be found, one in the words of the objector and the other in Macarius' answers (Crafer, 1919, p. ix). Nevertheless, Crafer still thinks a dialogue occurred but that when Macarius wrote the dialogue he referred to the objector's book for the objections (Crafer, 1919, p. xvii).

Seeing that even Crafer, the only person who argued for a historical background, has shifted his opinion this far, we may conclude, as most scholars do, that the dialogue is fictional (Grant and Goodspeed, 1966, p. 36;

Lietzmann, 1953, 3.44; Quasten, 1950-86, 3.447; Salmon, 1882, 3.767-68; Whittaker, 1965, p. 145; Goulet, 1984, p. 448).

If the dialogue had been a real event with true interaction - the pagan responding to Macarius' replies and so on - some development of the arguments might have been discernible. This, however, is not the case. The pagan does not develop a large, insurmountable objection to Christianity through a series of sequential objections nor does Macarius lead the pagan through a developing series of arguments culminating in a compelling irrefutable truth which causes the pagan to admit defeat and surrender himself to the Christian religion. Indeed what we are dealing with in the *Apocriticus* is not a dialogue but a rhetorical argument which utilizes slower, lengthy, more elaborate arguments¹.

This lack of progression has an effect on the rhetoric of the *Apocriticus*. Since the objections are not broad, sweeping statements from a single point of view or a series of unfounded accusations against Jesus,

¹ For an illuminating discussion distinguishing dialectic and rhetoric see McBurney, 1974, p. 119-122.

Macarius cannot develop full forensic, deliberative or epideictic arguments in reply.² He is forced to stick to handling single small objections one by one.

The only semblance of climax is in a didactic discussion of baptism which builds up to a quasi-climactic statement of a Nicene-like trinitarian formula "*trion hypostaseon en ousia mia*" (4.25). It would be a mistake, however, to identify this passage as the climax of the *Apocriticus*. As a lengthy epideictic passage honouring the mystery of the Trinity the passage functions as an apology to heretics by clearly asserting the perfect equality (*homoousios*)³ of the Father with of the Son. The passage, however, is in all likelihood

² This lack of unified objection is unfortunate and may be one reason this work has suffered such neglect. Unlike Tertullian, who is able to develop brilliant rhetorical arguments in his writings against the Marcionites, who held a specific doctrine and against whom he is defending a different point of view, Macarius is answering a hodge-podge of different and sometimes self-contradictory objections with no unifying theme. For an excellent treatment of Tertullian's rhetorical arguments - with which one may readily contrast both Macarius' use of rhetoric and the haphazard nature of his opponent - see Sider, 1971.

³ See Kelly, 1976, pp. 252-53.

an interpolation⁴ and while unique in the book and written with force, it cannot properly be described as a climax since there is neither build-up nor denouement with respect to the greater structure of the argument.⁵

Though the style and content of the *Apocriticus* will be discussed more fully later in the chapter, a very brief description here will indicate the general tenor of the arguments. The opponent criticizes Jesus as a man not worthy of the title "God" given him by the Christians. The objector also criticizes the words and actions of the two main apostles, Peter and Paul, in an effort to discredit them as untrustworthy leaders of the Christian faith. The opponent does not neglect the opportunity to discredit the Gospels by pointing out discrepancies in the Synoptic accounts and claiming that

⁴ The passage about baptism with the Nicene trinitarian formula has been much discussed. Harnack uses it to date the work as post-Nicene. Against its authenticity one might cite the context (Macarius has just previously dealt with the problems of polytheism); the language (the style is significantly different); and the issue (trinitarianism is neither attacked nor defended and is simply not an issue in the *Apocriticus*). See Crafer, 1907, and 1.5 Date above.

⁵ This lack of pattern or development is characteristic of the Second Sophistic period when orators practiced their art for the sole purpose of eliciting admiration from the audience. See Baldwin, 1928, p. 20.

these discrepancies invalidate their historical claims. Finally, the opponent criticizes various doctrines of the church as improbable, and even impossible, fantasies of a deluded group of followers. Generally the objector's criticisms show a solid understanding of Christian beliefs and the Gospels as well as a keen, clear mind.

The defender's attempts at answering the criticisms vary in quality: some are good, some excellent, some pathetic. The defender shows variety in the methods he uses in answering his opponent. Often he finds answers in rhetorical methods of argument and in allegorical interpretation. Sometimes he re-interprets the text under discussion, circumventing or at least mitigating the objection. At times the answers seem to miss the point of the objection entirely and at other times digress onto other topics; however, not infrequently the answers display an acumen equal to the question. The answers, despite their varying quality, are never questioned by the objector.

It should be noted that the objector and Macarius share similar views on many significant issues. Some of these issues are the existence of an omnipotent,

immutable, and remote God; intermediary beings (even the objector points out that the difference between him and Macarius is merely semantic in referring to particular intermediaries as gods or angels, 4:21); and the structure of the universe.

The main point of disagreement seems to center on the person of Jesus and Christian claims of his divinity⁶. The attacks on the disciples, scriptures, and doctrines usually end with or imply some type of indictment of Jesus, demonstrating some error of judgement or action on his part, and often, some serious flaw in his character.

2.2 Structure

The overall structure, as previously mentioned (pp. 3-4), could be described as five to seven chapters of objections followed by five to seven corresponding chapters of replies⁷.

The argument of the *Apocriticus*, however, does not

⁶ This focus on Jesus as the object of attack is certainly not unique to the *Apocriticus*' objector; cf. Dodás, 1979, p. 22.

⁷ See Appendix 3, An Outline of the Arguments in the *Apocriticus*.

follow a discernible pattern or show progression. It simply moves from one set of objections and answers to the next. It is a series of non-sequential objections about one topic, discrediting some fundamental aspect of Christianity, followed by an abrupt shift to another, disparate topic with another series of non-sequential arguments attacking a different belief basic to Christian faith. The objections stay rather strictly on topic; they stick to the point. The only apparent wandering occurs in the answers, where a topic might be picked up and discoursed upon for no discernible apologetic reason and then dismissed just as obtusely.

Direction for the development of the argument comes from the pagan objector, who guides the topics that will be discussed by introducing objections to Christian faith. Macarius follows the objector's lead, digressing only on side-issues he wishes to bring to the reader's attention.

Since this is the nature of the argumentation, to approach it with understanding one must work with these groupings of chapters or blocks of objections and responses. And in order to evaluate the responses we must know the objection. Since the only surviving

manuscript was mutilated so that what remained begins with a series of answers to objections which are no longer extant, we will restrict our discussion to those series of objections and answers which form complete blocks.

There remain six full blocks of series of objections and their corresponding answers (see Appendix 3 for a detailed outline). The first block contains attacks (2.12-16) on the reliability of the New Testament and responses (2.17-21) to the attacks. The second block is a group of arguments (3.1-7) aimed at discrediting Jesus on the basis of his behaviour, followed by Macarius' answers (3.8-14). The third block is a series of criticisms (3.15-22) discrediting Christians' faith and Peter, with Macarius' replies following (3.23-29). The fourth block has attacks (3.30-37) on Paul's actions and Macarius' explanations (3.38-43). The fifth block is comprised of attacks on (4.1-10) and defence of (4.11-18) the Christian doctrines of the end of the world and the inspiration of the Christian scriptures. The sixth and final block deals with Christian beliefs about Jesus and divinity in six chapters of objections (4.19-24) and six chapters of

answers (4.25-30). This last block is complete in the sense that each chapter of objection has a corresponding chapter of answers, though it should be noted that chapter thirty is missing its conclusion.

2.3 Mode of Argumentation

One of the first observations one makes when reading through the *Apocriticus* is a marked difference between the objector and the defender in regard to their respective methods of attack and defence. The objector, as mentioned above (p. 45), criticizes the Christian faith very directly. His criticisms are sharp, logical warheads penetrating Christianity to the core. The point is made, the obvious conclusion stated, and a disparaging remark about either some New Testament figure or Christians in general is often added.

In contrast, the defender's arguments appear quite weak. When answering, the defender appears to evade the objections - as Crafer laments in his ringside commentary, when he thinks a more direct hit could have been scored - or the defender appears to wander off onto some related topic while seeming to neglect the heart of the objection, avoiding a confrontational counter-attack

that would expose the falsehood of the objection and bring to light the truth of the religion he is defending.

This type of dialogue in which the author-defender appears the weaker is most curious if one considers the book to be written as a means of strengthening Christian faith and/or convincing Jews or pagans to embrace Christianity. If the book had this apologetic or polemic purpose one would reasonably expect a different tone, one in which the opposite appears - i.e., the Christian defender causes the pagan objector to appear as an illogical, uneducated simpleton. Yet in the dialogue of the *Apocriticus* it is the defender who seems at a loss. Labouring under the assumption that the work is a Christian apologetic - explanation of the Christian faith is an obvious purpose of the book - one is led to question the method and to look deeper to find a possible rationale for such a defence.

It is important to keep in mind that not all arguments follow a direct attack-direct rebuttal format. Indeed, few real life arguments remain focused on the issues; however, we of the post-enlightenment, scientific twentieth-century enjoy thinking of ourselves

as the direct and objective evaluators of our world. In contemporary opinion, anything less than an objective, head-on response puts a person in a position of vulnerability. From this twentieth-century vantage point, the defender in the *Apocriticus* is a weak-minded loser and the work is likely a pagan polemic!

Considered from a third- or fourth-century vantage point, however, the *Apocriticus* may have been a most effective response to contemporary attacks on Christianity. For, what a person in the third or fourth century may have looked for, understood, and considered valid is often quite different from what is acceptable today. Macarius, as a man of his time, could only and would certainly be wisest to respond in a way most acceptable to the people of his day. In studying his answers we find that Macarius develops his arguments from three main, well-understood, and commonly accepted ancient approaches. He develops arguments (1) from his rhetorical training, (2) from allegorical interpretation, and (3) from his understanding of Christian theology. Macarius is indeed a person in harmony with the thought of his age, both as a man of letters and as a Christian.

Perhaps it is his rhetoric that makes his arguments seem weak to today's reader. For unlike the objector's method, which tells one everything one ought to know and think concerning an objection, the rhetorical method of argument forced the listener to think about the partial answer given, to fill in "missing" or assumed premises, and to draw one's own conclusions from the lead given by the rhetorician. Or maybe Macarius' use of allegorical interpretation makes him suspect, since the twentieth century has generally rejected the method as a valid method of understanding a writer or a text. Or possibly Macarius' arguments from theology are unconvincing to the secularized reader of our times. Macarius, however, is not dealing with a twentieth-century audience, and therefore it is incumbent upon the twentieth-century reader to attempt to understand Macarius in the context of his day.

What the preceding discussion means is that today's reader of the *Apocriticus* may not be experiencing the full force of the defender's argument in the way an ancient reader might. This difference results from Macarius' use of what are now, in many cases, outdated methods of argumentation. Consequently,

what appears to be an invalid and weak argument to the twentieth-century reader may have been a strong and convincing argument to an ancient. In an ancient person's eyes, at least to one kindly disposed to Christianity, Macarius likely was the victor.

In order to gain access to this ancient understanding one must try to envisage an ancient framework of premises and traditions in which rhetoric, allegorical interpretation, and theology are valid modes of thought and argument. What happens then is that the defender, rather than appearing to be meek and timid, avoiding the direct line of fire and even on occasion acquiescing to the objector's contentions, turns out to be a subtle defender of the faith he cherishes. He carefully spins an answer drawing the reader to a conclusion that, if it were presented according to the method of the objector, would be rejected outright. For, as the defender grants on occasion (e.g., 3.13, 4.30), the objector does point to serious problems in the Christian faith; however, by not attempting to confute the objector directly, the defender is able to lead the reader to arrive at the desired conclusion without stumbling over the immediate difficulty as

interpreted and presented by the objector.

Parts 2-4 of the thesis will analyze the arguments of the Apocriticus by (1) drawing attention to the various resources Macarius employs - especially rhetoric, allegorical interpretation, and Christian theology - and (2) examining what kinds of data he draws upon to give substance to his arguments.

A general introduction to ancient rhetoric will be followed by an outline of the ancient system incipient in Aristotle but more fully developed by his followers and numerous commentators. Macarius' replies to the pagan objector will be discussed according to this greater system in an effort to understand why Macarius says what he says and the way in which he says it. Some of his replies fall into Aristotle's divisions of practical philosophy (*Eth. Nic.*⁸ Al, 1094a 18f.) and theoretical philosophy (*Meta.* K7, 1064b⁹). Others of

⁸ All references to Aristotle are cited by book and chapter and according to Bekker's system.

⁹ For these divisions see *Topics* Z 6, 145a, 15f and *Metaphysics*, El, 1025b 1-30. A good explanation of Aristotle's system may be found in Copleston, vol.1, pt. 2, p. 20; Taylor gives a fuller discussion in his second chapter, "The Classification of the Sciences," Taylor, 1955, pp. 14-40; the validity of the tripartite system of theoretical philosophy is questioned and discussed by Merlan in his third chapter, "The

Macarius' arguments fall outside of this Aristotelian system and will be discussed in separate chapters on allegorical interpretation and Christian theology. Nevertheless, reference will be made to Aristotle's writings throughout our study to aid understanding of Macarius as a person of late antiquity.

Subdivisions of Theoretical Philosophy," Merlan, 1968, pp. 59-87.

PART 2

ANALYSIS OF THE *APOCRITICUS*:

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

Practical philosophy (*praktike episteme*) is primarily concerned with what today is called political science.¹ Under the heading of practical philosophy arguments in the *Apocriticus* from rhetoric, literature, ethics, military strategy, medicine, and metallurgy will be discussed.

¹ *Rhetoric* 1.2.7, 1356a25-35 discusses rhetoric and ethics as part of politics. All references to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are simply *Rhetoric*. Other author's works will be indicated.

3. RHETORIC

3.1 Rhetorical Background

The study and practice of rhetoric pervaded Greco-Roman culture on into late antiquity. Rhetorical tools were used in writing, public speaking, and almost every form of communication. It is against this background of rhetoric that the *Apocriticus* must be discussed.

3.2 Ancient Rhetoric: A Brief History

The Greek rhetorical tradition began well prior to Aristotle; indeed, even the Homeric heroes considered eloquence a gift of the gods (Curtius, 1953, p. 64). It is, however, with Aristotle that rhetoric is first given its proper place among the arts (*Rhetoric* 1.1.1-10, 1354a1-1355b21).

While Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was not the first work on the topic of rhetoric, it most certainly was a seminal work (Marrou, 1956, p. 211; Baldwin, 1928, p. 4; Clark, 1957, p. 50) and exercised considerable influence that lasted throughout antiquity and on into the middle ages (Kennedy, 1972, 2.114-15; Kennedy, 1983, 3.318-

319). Indeed its popularity was only temporarily eclipsed in the sixth century C.E. by the works of Demosthenes, Aeschines, and Isocrates (Kennedy, 1983, 3.49).

The period of the second through the fourth centuries C.E. is commonly called the Second Sophistic (Baldwin, 1928, 8 n., 10). It is a period in which rhetoric's function changed. Traditionally rhetoric was of the three types, forensic, deliberative, and epideictic. In the Second Sophistic, however, as a result of changes in the empire (Grant, 1960, pp. 70-71), forensic and deliberative rhetoric fell from use and epideictic came to the fore (Baldwin, 1928, p. 5-7). This focus on epideictic rhetoric led to a shift in attention from what the speaker was saying to the way he said it (Baldwin, 1928, p. 10)². The result was that the rhetorician attempted to display his skill, especially by very full and flowery explanations (*ekphrasis*) (Baldwin, 1928, p. 17) as well as by the use of the common rhetorical devices.

² Kennedy, 3.52-53, points out the change in emphasis from spoken to written rhetoric in this same period.

3.3 Nature of Rhetoric

Aristotle sets rhetoric in its position next to dialectic (*Rhetoric* 1.1.1, 1354a1). He defines rhetoric as antiphonal to dialectic (*antistrophos te dialektike*) (ibid). His *Rhetoric* is not so much a manual as it is a "philosophical survey" of the topic of rhetoric (Baldwin, 1924, p. 8). His analysis of the philosophical bases and structure of rhetoric laid the foundations of ancient rhetoric.

Philosophically, rhetoric finds its place as a means of discovering the truth when other methods fail. Rhetoric is designed to enliven truth, to display it in relief and to make it relevant to the auditors (Baldwin, 1924, p. 12). When an issue could not be settled by scientific observation or deduction (McBurney, 1974, p. 119; Clark, 1957, p. 47), or when the facts were unclear, or purposely muddled, or complicated, one turned to rhetorical methods to find out the best, the least harmful, the most reasonable, or the most likely course of action (*Rhetoric* 1.1.1-2, 1354a-1355b).

As mentioned above (p. 59), there were three types of rhetoric - deliberative, forensic and epideictic. Deliberative rhetoric was used in determining a future

course of action. Forensic rhetoric dealt with uncovering truth in past events. Epideictic rhetoric was used in public speeches of honour and condemnation.

Rhetoric was commonly divided into five parts (*Rhetoric* 3.1.1, 1403b5-7 and 3.1.7, 1404a13-15; *Ad Herrenium* 1.2.3). Invention (*heuresis* or *inventio*), which may be defined as the attempt to find subject matter, and possible proofs, is the first part. The second part is the arrangement (*taxis*, *oikonomia*, or *dispositio*) of the material into prooemium or introduction, narration, proof, and epilogue. The third part, style (*lexis*, *hermeneia*, *phrasis*, or *elocutio*), concentrated on "correctness, clarity, ornamentation and propriety" (Kennedy, 1961, 3.11-12). The fourth part was mnemonics (*mneme*, or *memoria*)³, which dealt with memory devices and techniques. Fifth came delivery (*hupocrisis*, or *pronuntiatio*). We cannot uncover the mnemonics Macarius may have used, if any, nor his style of delivery. Our discussion of Macarius will cover the first three of these five headings but will focus on invention since it contains information of primary

³ Mnemonics was added after Aristotle's time. It is unknown when it came to be formally considered part of rhetoric (Caplan, in *Ad Herrenium*, p. 6, n. a).

concern to us, i.e., the rhetorical proofs.

3.4 Rhetorical Proofs

The two types of rhetorical proofs or arguments (*hai koinai pisteis*) (*Rhetoric* 2.20.1, 1393a21-25) were recognized as means of discovering the truth in circumstances where truth had been obscured. These two types of rhetorical proofs are paradigms (*paradeigma*)⁴ and enthymemes (*enthumema*) (*Rhetoric* 2.20.1, 1393a21-25).

Paradigms may be either real or fictional (invented) and may be further sub-divided into (1) historical parallels (*to legein pragmata proegenemena*, *Rhetoric* 2.20.2-4, 1393a30-1393b3), (2) comparisons from arts and skills (*parabolai*, *Rhetoric* 2.20.3-4, 1393b4-9), and (3) parables (*logoi*, *Rhetoric* 2.20.3-9, 1393b9-1394a9).⁵

The second type of rhetorical proof, the enthymeme (*Rhetoric* 2.20.1, 1393a21-25; 2.22.1, 1395a20 - 2.23.30,

⁴ Aristotle used the notion of *paradeigma* in slightly different ways. See *Topoi* 157a, 14ff. These slight differences, however, do not significantly alter his general theory (Lloyd, 1966, p. 407, n.1).

⁵ For a good explanation of these three types of paradigmatic arguments see Lloyd, 1966, pp. 403-10.

1400b33), Aristotle defines as a rhetorical syllogism, (*rhetorikon sullogismon*) (*Rhetoric* 1.2.8, 1356b5; also *Analytica Posteriora* 1.1, 71a.5-71a15). What its essence and accidents are is moot;⁶ however, he does give some clues. Aristotle claims it is short, does not give all the steps, and avoids stating the obvious (*Rhetoric* 2.20.3, 1395b25-33). From this description some scholars have come to define an enthymeme as a syllogism with a suppressed or missing premise.⁷ Other scholars dispute this definition, claiming that the missing premise is accidental to the enthymeme and that the enthymeme, while formally incomplete, lacks nothing which would make it more persuasive (Ryan, 1984, 41-47). It is, as Baldwin says, "the strongest proof possible to actual discussion" (1924, p. 9). Regardless of definition, it is clear that an enthymeme is a line of reasoning aimed at persuading (McBurney, 1974, p. 127).

⁶ For a discussion of the question of what Aristotle considered the essence and accidents of the enthymeme, see Bitzer, 1974, pp. 141-55; McBurney, 1974, pp. 131-2 and Ryan, 1984, pp. 42-7.

⁷ See, e.g. Crem, 1974, p. 57-8; see also McBurney's review (1974, pp. 131-32) of the development of this theory and discussion of its weaknesses.

3.4.1 Enthymemes: Topoi

In contrast with formal induction, the enthymeme proceeds not from universals but from generally held opinions (*Rhetoric* 2.22.3, 1395b30-1396a3). And unlike a syllogism, which must be formally complete - i.e. with both major and minor premises - and is best suited to abstract investigations, the enthymeme is concrete and suited to "public reasoning" (Baldwin, 1929, p. 13-14).

In his second book on rhetoric Aristotle suggests twenty-eight "topics" (*topoi*) for enthymemes (*Rhetoric* 2.23.1-30, 1397a6- 1400b34), more correctly⁸ he suggests twenty-eight places (*topoi*) in the mind (Kennedy, 1963, 1.101) to which one may resort for possible lines of argument. The expectation is that one of these lines of argument will apply to the argument at hand.

These twenty-eight lines of argument are certainly not a comprehensive collection; rather, they are generally accepted lines of argument with wide application potential. Even Aristotle's larger

⁸ Cicero, in his discussion of Aristotle's topics, states that "Itaque licet definire locum esse argumenti sedem" - "Accordingly, we may define a topic as the region of an argument" (*Topica* 1.2.8, Hubbell, 1960, p. 387).

collection, *Topoi*, is not intended to be a complete collection.⁹ Since, as Crem says, "rhetoric is the power of observing the means of persuasion on any subject which presents itself" (Crem, 1974, p. 62), every argument is not equally served by all enthymemes. Furthermore, Cicero advises one to use judgement in choosing the strongest enthymeme and rejecting the weaker in any given situation (*De Partitione Oratoria* 3.8). Therefore, when one discusses lines of argument (enthymemes) it is not requisite to show an example of each one in order to demonstrate effective use.

Aristotle offered no relationships between, or categorization of, the enthymemes; discussing them in the *Rhetoric*, he simply introduces his examples with "Another from" (*Allos ek*). This apparently random discussion of the twenty-eight enthymemes is cumbersome. To facilitate our discussion of the enthymemes we adopt the modern structure proposed by W. Grimaldi (1974, p. 183). Grimaldi suggests that the enthymemes can be divided into three groups by the logical pattern they follow. His three groups are (1) "antecedent-

⁹ *Topoi* 108b 7ff and 23ff, as explained by Lloyd, 1966, p. 410; McBurney (1974, p. 121) notes that the *Topoi* lists almost two hundred *topoi*.

consequent" (7, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 23, 24), (2) "moreless" (4, 5, 6, 20, 25, 27), and (3) "some form of relation" (1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 26, 28) (ibid.).

3.5 Rhetoric in Ancient Education

After a student had passed through the basic education of primary school and been sent to a secondary school in which literature was studied, he was sent to study under either a philosopher or a rhetor (Marrou, 1956, p. 197)¹⁰. Rhetoric, often preferred over philosophy, was the most advanced study a person could pursue, taking up to eight years after secondary school (ibid., p. 204). In one sense it is even correct to say that a person never finished the study of rhetoric (ibid.).

The rhetorician was expected to be a polymath (Marrou, 1956, pp. 54-55; Clark, 1956, p. 54-55). He had to have vast amounts of information at his disposal in order to find solid parallels, to impress his audience with his knowledge, and to present convincing arguments in any situation. Indeed, a reading of any

¹⁰ For a discussion of higher education in Hellenistic times see Marrou, 1956, pt. 2, chaps. 5-11.

ancient rhetorical manual will reveal the breadth of knowledge a rhetorician was expected to have. The rhetorician was to be knowledgeable in rhetoric, literature, history, poetry, religion, mathematics, politics, military, medicine and a host of other subjects. In studying Macarius' rhetoric, one sees his knowledge in a number of these areas.

Aristotle's works were part of any good liberal education in the later empire (Clarke, 1971, p. 82, 87, 102-07) as was rhetoric¹¹. Certainly Aristotle's *Rhetoric* would have been studied by many, as would the works of Quintillian, Cicero, and others, including at a later time, the rhetorical manuals of the Second Sophistic.

3.6 Macarius as a Christian Rhetorician of the Second Sophistic

For most rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic there were few meaningful topics to discourse on. For the Christian rhetoricians, however, there was a peculiarly Christian cause (Baldwin, 1928, pp. 4-7). This cause - the defence

¹¹ See Grant, 1960, pp. 68-76, for a survey of the place rhetoric occupied in education and Roman society; also Clark, 1957, 59-66, and Clarke, 1971, p. 34.

and exposition of their faith - set Christian rhetoricians apart from their pagan contemporaries who valued eloquent speech simply for its own sake (ibid., p. 12). The Christian rhetoricians have a unique place in rhetorical history as the people who re-developed rhetoric with purpose.

Rhetoric was particularly well suited to the Christian cause for two reasons. (1) Rhetoric was designed to deal with non-scientific data. Christianity's truth is not based on data which can be scientifically manipulated. (2) Rhetoric is a tool for persuasion. Part of the Christian mandate was to persuade people of the truth of Christianity. The ancients understood the limitations of pure reason and the element of personal choice in achieving their highest goal of philosophy and/or religion and so were open to rhetorical argument as a means of persuasion where pure reason failed. Since there was a strong contingent of Christians who viewed their religion as the best philosophy,¹² one sees how they would naturally

¹² See, e.g., Justin Martyr, who speaks of Christianity as the best philosophy (*Dialogue with Trypho* 8) and Augustine who claimed that philosophy leads to Christ (*Confessions* 8.3).

seize on rhetoric as the most suitable means of persuading their pagan contemporaries to abandon their pagan philosophies and embrace the Christian persuasion (*pistis*).

Macarius, who claims to have had the benefit of a Hellenic education (*paideuseos hellenikes*, 2.17), would certainly have studied rhetoric¹³. We cannot tell if Macarius actually read or used Aristotle's work. His arguments, however, fit the Aristotelian system of rhetorical argument, and it is not unlikely that he knows Aristotle either first- or second-hand in view of the continued use of the *Rhetoric* on into late antiquity, also by other fourth-century Christians in their defence and exposition of the Christian faith, e.g., Gregory of Nazianzus (Kennedy, 1983, 3:221) and Athanasius (*ibid*).¹⁴ Macarius belongs in this tradition of Christian rhetorical defence.

Macarius' rhetoric is certainly characteristic of the rhetoric of the Second Sophistic. His writing exhibits full explanations in which embellishment

¹³ See Marrou, 1956, p. 196, for the place of rhetoric in Hellenistic education.

¹⁴ In the fifth-century Isidore of Pelusium, for one, is known to have used Aristotle (*ibid.*, pp. 256-57).

follows upon embellishment, and he uses a range of different rhetorical devices. Despite his lack of rhetorical finesse, he is nevertheless an effective rhetorician, as I shall attempt to demonstrate.

A full analysis of the rhetorical structures and devices used in the *Apocriticus* would exceed the scope of this thesis. Our discussion of rhetoric will therefore be limited to those aspects which illumine Macarius' method of argument and bear on the analysis of the arguments. It is against this background of rhetoric that one must examine and evaluate the quality of the arguments and so develop a proper critical understanding of the *Apocriticus*.

4. THE RHETORIC OF THE APOCRITICUS

4.1 Invention: Macarius' Use of the Rhetorical Proofs

As was indicated above (p. 61), Aristotle sets out two types of rhetorical proofs - the paradigm (*paradeigma*) and the enthymeme (*enthymema*). A discussion of each follows. One basis for defending Macarius as an competent apologist is his effective use of Aristotle's two main rhetorical proofs, paradigms and enthymemes, which constitute a considerable portion of the arguments in the *Apocriticus*.

4.1.1 Paradigm Arguments

A paradigm argument is one in which the point is made by presenting commonly known or accepted events and claiming that these events are analogous to the situation at hand. As previously mentioned (p. 62), paradigm arguments are of two types: (a) real (*to legein pragmata proegenemena*) and (b) fictional (*to auton poiein*). Real paradigmatic arguments are those which arise from contemporary or historical events. Fictional paradigmatic arguments compare the issue being discussed

with either arts and skills or with a fitting anecdote or parable. Examples of each type will be presented in the following order: real contemporary, real historical, fictional arts and skills, and, finally, a fictional anecdote or parable.

4.1.1.a Paradigm Arguments: Real

An example of a paradigmatic argument from a real contemporary event is Macarius' response (4.25) to the charge (4.19) that Paul's teachings about forgiveness (from 1 Cor. 6:11) promote a wanton lifestyle. The objector states that if a person believes he can do anything he wishes and yet be forgiven, he will live a dissolute life. Since Paul is responsible for teaching this socially destructive doctrine in the Christian scriptures, both he and the scriptures are to be condemned.

Macarius replies in part by citing the following real contemporary event. The previous day a group of criminals supplicated a king for clemency. The king granted their request in spite of the fact that they deserved their punishment, while other criminals who did

not plead with the king were punished¹. Whether or not it is a true story is irrelevant to the discussion here, since it is Macarius' intention to use it as an argument from a real contemporary event even if both he and his audience both knew it to be fictional. Surprising as it might be to the contemporary reader, the audience may have knowingly accepted some such fictional event as fact on the grounds that it allows Macarius to use a different rhetorical argument (Baldwin, 1928, pp. 15-20). Following common rhetorical practice, Macarius leaves it to the reader to draw the analogy between the king's prerogative of pardon for criminals to the larger context of God as king with the prerogative of pardoning whomever he chooses.

An example of a paradigmatic argument from a real historical event is Macarius' response (2.19) to an objection (2.14) arising from Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. The objector asks why did Jesus not appear to the Roman authorities and so make his resurrection officially accepted, saving all the trouble and suffering that resulted in the early church as a result

¹ See Crafer, 1919, p. 140, n. 1, for a discussion on the truth of this story.

of official condemnation?

Macarius replies by arguing that the official treatment of Jesus before his crucifixion is a real historical paradigm of the treatment he would have received had he appeared to them after the resurrection. Macarius claims that since both Jewish and Roman authorities rejected Jesus while he was alive, they would reject him after he rose from the grave.

Another example of a paradigmatic argument from a real historical event is Macarius' response (4.11) to the objection (4.1) to Paul's statement that "the form of this world (*schematos tou kosmos*) is passing away" (1 Cor. 7.31). Macarius claims that Paul's statement does not necessarily mean that the world is going to be annihilated. It may point to any number of things, one of which is the vicissitudes of human life. Macarius gives four real historical paradigms to vindicate Paul's statement. This accords with Aristotle's dictum that when one is unable to find an appropriate enthymeme one should attempt to give a goodly number of examples in order to be convincing to the audience (*Rhetoric* 2.20.9, 1394a). He cites the changes of fortune experienced by Croesus, who was defeated by Cyrus, and

Cyrus himself, who was conquered by Tomyris.²

He then adds some familiar historical examples. He notes the fall of the great city Babylon, decimated by the Persians, and the dissolution of the Macedonian empire at the hands of Rome. These changes of fortune, says Macarius, point out that indeed "the form of this world is passing away."

One of Macarius' real paradigmatic arguments draws on his familiarity with the philosophical school of Pythagoras. The objection (4.8) is that Jesus' reference to the mustard seed is a senseless and unlikely analogy to the kingdom of the heavens. Macarius replies (4.17) that certain Greeks (the Pythagoreans) used the bean symbolically as a sign of purity. Arguing from this practice, Macarius claims that given the properties of the mustard seed as a cleaning agent, a spice, and a fast-growing plant, Jesus has demonstrated superior wisdom in using it as an analogy

² Modern books on ancient history often neglect to mention Tomyris. Herodotus, however, has information on Queen Tomyris. The chronology and progression of the events Macarius is discussing is as follows. Cyrus II defeated Croesus in 547 B.C.E. (Roux, 1980, p. 355). Cyrus II was himself defeated by Queen Tomyris of Massagetae (Herodotus 1.212-14) in 529 B.C.E. (Roux, 1980, p. 375).

of the purity, utility, and growth of the kingdom.

Macarius makes particularly significant use of a real historical paradigm argument in answer to an objection about gospel discrepancies. One highly esteemed form of evidence was that based on documents. Documentary evidence was used in the courts in all types of cases, and so a rhetorician needed to know how to deal with such evidence. We find an important paradigmatic argument dealing with historical documentary evidence in Macarius' response (2.18) to the objection (2.13) about the piercing of Jesus' side, found only in John. The objection is that since only the Gospel of John records that Jesus' side was pierced by a soldier's spear (Jn. 19:34), and since none of the other evangelists do, John's account must be fictional.

Macarius responds that the Gospel of Luke is the only gospel to contain an account of the beggar Lazarus and the rich man (Lk. 16:19-31). Since no one disputes the veracity of this account on the basis of its being exclusive to Luke, then, by analogy, neither should anyone attempt to discredit the story of the pierced

side because it is found only in the *Gospel of John*.³

4.1.1.b Paradigm Arguments: Fictional

Arguments from fictional events are many in the *Apocriticus*. Aristotle notes that these arguments are the easiest type to use since they rely solely on the creativity of the rhetorician; however, as fiction they have a drawback in that they lack the authority of real events (*Rhetoric* 2.20.7-8, 1394a).

An example of a fictional paradigmatic argument drawn from arts and skills - a *parabola* - is Macarius' reply (3.10) to the objection that no writings of Moses exist that would substantiate the Christian claim that Moses witnessed to Jesus. The objector claims (3.3) that all Moses' writings were destroyed in a fire in the temple and that the books which go by his name are actually the works of Ezra.⁴

Macarius develops a fictional paradigm from architecture. An architect is able to rebuild a building

³ See below, p. 138, where this reply is discussed as an example of Macarius' use of allegorical interpretation.

⁴ This objection follows a rabbinic tradition (2 Esdras 14 and Justinian, *De Culpa Feminarum*) known to Porphyry. For an explanation of the Esdras passage see Metzger, 1957, pp. 28-29.

that has fallen down, and though in rebuilding he may put some stones in a different order, the end result is the same. So too, says Macarius, the Holy Spirit may reconstruct the writings of Moses, though perhaps in a slightly different order, and yet produce the same result.

Macarius uses a fictional paradigm from arts and skills in replying (3.37) to the objection (3.30) that Paul is inconsistent in his attitude to the law. Macarius argues that in some circumstances diplomacy is more effective than force. He gives as examples of such circumstances the relationship between teacher and student, doctor and patient, and general with barbarian chief. Since diplomacy works better than force in these situations, in the similar situation of Paul - who (it is implied) is attempting to teach, heal, and conquer the Jews - diplomacy in the form of circumcising Timothy would likely work better than force.⁵

An example of an anecdote or a fictional paradigm developed from a parable (*logos*) is Macarius' response to the objector's point (3.22) that Peter's escape from

⁵ For another example of a *parabola* see *Apocriticus* 3.31.

prison (Acts 12:5-11) resulted in the deaths of the guards (12:18-19). In reply (3.29) Macarius tells the following parable. A shepherd whose dogs fail to capture a stag may beat them to death. Surely no one would blame the stag for the cruelty of the shepherd ⁶. From this parable Macarius argues paradigmatically that no one ought to blame Peter for Herod's cruelty in having the soldiers killed.⁷

4.1.2 Enthymemes

The enthymeme, the second of Aristotle's rhetorical proofs, functions like a syllogism except that it does not need to state the obvious premises and does not begin with universals but merely with generally held opinions (see above pp. 63-63). V. M. Grimaldi (1974, p. 183) suggested that the enthymemes can be divided into three groups according to the logical pattern they follow: (1) "antecedent-consequent," (2) "more-less," and (3) "some form of relation." A few of the many

⁶ Animals were a common topic for parables in antiquity, Lloyd, 1968, p. 406.

⁷ Other examples of parables may be found in *Apocriticus* 3.43, which discusses the problem of leaving one city gate open in time of attack, and in 4.30, on branded royal horses.

examples in the *Apocriticus* will be cited by way of illustration.

4.1.2.a Enthymemes of Antecedent-Consequent

The enthymemes of antecedent-consequent operate along such lines as: if "b" exists then "a" has likely occurred, or if "a" exists then "b" likely occurred, or if "a" has not occurred then "b" does not likely exist. An example of an enthymeme in this category is the enthymeme of explicated motives (*Rhetoric* 2.23.24, 1400a29-40) which Macarius uses when the objector taunts him with Jesus' fear of death in the Garden of Gethsemane (3.2). The objector points out that Jesus once taught, "Do not fear those who kill the body" (Mt. 10:28), but in facing his own death he prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Mt. 26:39).

The enthymeme of explicated motives is an argument that justifies an action by explaining what the person had in mind when committing an act. In his reply to the above objection Macarius argues that Jesus considered the consequences of his actions and chose the best possible action. Macarius then adds the enthymeme from motives by giving the reader Jesus' motives for acting

as he did. Macarius says Jesus realized that the devil had seen his mighty works, knew he was divine, and was therefore hesitant in trying to kill him. Since Jesus came to earth to suffer, and if the devil did not bring about the Passion (antecedent), his mission would be in vain (consequent); therefore Jesus had to tempt the devil to kill him by exposing his humanity and pretending to be afraid⁸ in order that he might suffer and fulfill his mission of saving humankind (motive).

Another enthymeme of antecedent-consequent Aristotle calls an enthymeme of consequents (*Rhetoric* 2.23.14, 1399a17-29). The enthymeme of consequents is specifically concerned with the good or evil that may result from any given act. Macarius uses this enthymeme to refute the objector's claim (3.4) that Jesus made an error in judgement in allowing the demon(s) to drown the swine of Gerasenes. Macarius, in substantiating his claim that Jesus chose the best possible course of

⁸ This explanation of Jesus' feigning fear in the garden is a common patristic explanation of this difficult passage; cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechetical Orations* 21-26; Rufinus, *Commentarius in symbolum Apostolorum* 14; Origen, *Commentariorum Psalm*; on Ps. 22:6; etc.; see also p. 101, n. 6 below, where Macarius contradicts himself when he says that the devil did know his reign was over if Jesus suffered the Passion.

action, puts the following argument into the mouth of the demon(s). The demon(s) in his (their) effort to persuade Jesus to send him (them) into the swine says, "The result will be that henceforth the whole world will look down on us and realize our powerlessness before you."⁹ Since the consequence of allowing the demons to enter the swine is good, Jesus should allow it (see below, p. 149).

4.1.2.b Enthymemes of More and Less

Enthymemes of more and less function on probabilities such as, if the more likely has not happened, then probably the less likely has not happened; if most people do "x," then likely this person has done "x."

An enthymeme of more and less in which the argument of the speaker is reversed (*Rhetoric* 2.23.7, 1398a3-14) is used by Macarius in his discussion of the Incarnation (4.28). When the objector states that it would be better to think of the gods as dwelling in statues than

⁹ It is interesting to note that while in this instance Macarius portrays Jesus as working in conjunction with the powers of evil, elsewhere (3.26) he builds an argument on the premise that if Jesus had taken the devil's advice he would have been defeating himself.

incarnated (4.22), Macarius, by demonstrating the greater value of humans over statues, turns the argument back on the objector. The conclusion is that if god(s) are to be incarnated it would be better and hence more likely that they would be incarnate in a human body than in a still lower body, namely an inanimate body made by human hands.

4.1.2.c Enthymemes of Some Form of Relation

Enthymemes of some form of relation operate by pointing out relations between the persons, objects, or events under discussion. They are enthymemes such as: if "a" has position "x," it is unlikely that he/she would be found in position "y," or if "a" has relation "x" with "b," it is unlikely that "c" occurred.

An example of this type of enthymeme is found in Macarius' reply (3.14) to the objector's challenge that Jesus is inconsistent. The objection (3.7) is that in one place in the gospels Jesus says, "for you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me" (Mt. 26:11); yet in another place he says, "I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt. 28:20).

Macarius replies using an enthymeme of situation-

a sub-category of enthymemes of relation (*Rhetoric* 2.23.19, 1399b20-30). In the first situation Jesus, in his ephemeral physical body, spoke truthfully. He spoke to the disciples in his relationship to them as human to humans. In the second situation Jesus, in his resurrected body, was speaking in a different relationship. He spoke to them as God to humanity. Thus Jesus spoke truthfully since in his resurrected state he is not limited by time and space.

4.1.2.d Enthymematic Maxims

A maxim (*Rhetoric* 2.21.1-15, 1394a19-1395b20) may be the premise or the conclusion of an enthymeme. The maxim was an important rhetorical device and Macarius makes use of it. One example may be found in his response (2.17) to a criticism (2.12) concerning discrepancies in the gospels. The objector points out that though the Christians claim that the gospels contain historically accurate facts, the "factual" accounts of the crucifixion differ significantly. These differences, he argues, invalidate the Christian truth claims of the Gospels.

Macarius replies with two maxims. He states (1)

that truth is not found in words and (2) that any account begins with the event, not words. Macarius is relying here on an unstated maxim - truth lies in an event itself. From these two maxims he concludes that different words for the same event do not invalidate the truth of the event and so the gospel record is not marred by the discrepancy the objector has pointed out.

These are but a few of the enthymemes in the *Apocriticus*. Among the others: enthymemes of dilemma (*Rhetoric* 2.23.1, 1397a6-19; in *Apocriticus* 4.14, 3.29, 3.26); enthymemes of contradiction (*Rhetoric* 2.23.23, 1400a21-28 in *Apocriticus* 3.29); enthymeme of precedence (*Rhetoric* 2.23.12, 1399a7-10; in *Apocriticus* 3.8); enthymemes of relation (*Rhetoric* 2.23.3, 1397a23-b12; in *Apocriticus* 4.12; 2.21); the enthymeme of alternatives (*Rhetoric* 2.23.26, 1400b4-8; in *Apocriticus* 3.24); and a false enthymeme, confounding absolutes (*Rhetoric* 2.24.10-11, 1398a32-1399b6; in *Apocriticus* 3.12).

In addition to his use of paradigms and enthymemes, Macarius uses rhetoric in other ways to best his opponent. Some of these will now be illustrated.

4.2 Arrangement, *Taxis* or *Dispositio*

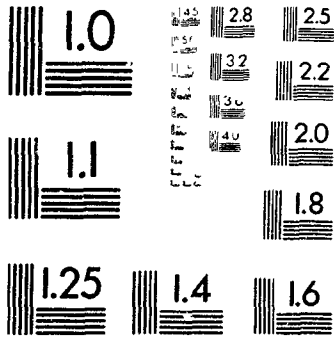
Macarius clearly follows the accepted arrangement of rhetorical speeches using the prooemium, narration, proof, and epilogue. This is easily demonstrated by a brief description of his use of these components.

4.2.1 Prooemium

Cicero declares that winning the audience's favour is the most important thing for the rhetorician to accomplish (*De oratore* 2.42.178). Winning favour and pointing out the main theme are the main objects of the prooemium.

Accordingly, Macarius begins his discourses with a prooemium in which he describes his own inadequacy in dealing with the many objections (3.8), his dependence on his friends (4. Prooemium), and his dependence on divine aid (2.17). This inadequacy combined with his profession of fear and trembling (4.11) is part of Macarius' attempt to ingratiate himself with his audience. It is not likely a reflection of a real situation or even an attempt at verisimilitude but merely the common purpose of the prooemium - to gain the sympathy of the audience (Kennedy, 1963, 1.11 and 1.91).

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The other part of ingratiating oneself with the audience involved the depiction of one's opponent. When introducing his opponent (2.12) Macarius describes him as wearing a heavy frown. This frown, taken by some to be an indication of a real encounter, is nothing of the sort. Indeed it is a common rhetorical facial expression used in delivery adding to the speaker's air of authority (Baldwin, 1928, p. 16) and likely a further attempt of Macarius to ingratiate himself with his audience.

As to the main theme, Macarius points out that the heart of the objector's polemic is the attack on Jesus' teachings (3.23), or the attacks on the apostles Peter (3.27) and Paul (3.37), all of which Macarius refers to as the foundations of the church.

4.2.2 Narration

Macarius' narrations - the explanation of the evidence pertaining to the issue - are not sterling but are nonetheless effective. In one instance, if it were not for his narration (3.42), the point of the objection (3.35) would be obscure. Oftentimes Macarius builds his proofs from his narration; he reiterates the scripture

used by the objector and then proceeds to give an explanation from the context or to offer an alternative interpretation. This use of information introduced in the narration is quite acceptable.

4.2.3 Proof

Macarius' proofs are of three types (see above p. 54): rhetorical, allegorical interpretation, and Christian theology. He has no set methodology in his use of proofs but it is not uncommon for him to use all three in answer to a single objection. Since this thesis is primarily concerned with analysis of the proofs or arguments, each of these three has been or will be fully discussed. Rhetoric has been discussed above (chap. 4.1) and allegorical interpretation and Christian theology will be discussed in Part 4, below.

4.2.4 Epilogue

The epilogues, like the narrations, are simple and to the point. Macarius avoids summary statements and merely says something to the effect that he has now answered the objections and if there are any further objections to the Christian faith let them now be aired

(2.21 and 3.43); or more boldly, on occasion he challenges the objector to bring forth other objections (3.14 and 4.13).

4.3 Style, Lexis or Elocutio

Since, as mentioned earlier, to do a comprehensive study of the rhetoric of the *Apocriticus* goes beyond the scope of this thesis, a brief examination of three stylistic devices - word plays, tropes, and syntax - will be offered by way of illustration.

4.3.1 Word Plays

As would be expected from a rhetorical treatise, the *Apocriticus* is replete with word plays. For example, Macarius makes an extensive play on the homonyms *rome* (might) and *Rome* (the city) (3.38). He justifies Paul's claim to Roman citizenship by saying that Paul of Rome came in the power (*rome*) of the Holy Spirit.

In another passage Macarius achieves the effect of paranomasia by using the word *plege*, "a blow," and *pege*, "a spring": "and out of his side salvation began to stream [*sprang*], from the wound [*he plege*] in his side, from the spring [*he pege*] in his side" (2.18); or as

Crafer translates, "From His side did the blow spring, from His side flowed also the spring of life" (Crafer, 1919, p. 42).

Still another example occurs in Macarius' discussion (4.16) of the destruction and renewal of the earth. Macarius makes various uses of the word *logos* in reference to rational essence (*logike ousia*), the *logos* as the principle in creation, and as Jesus' *Logos* which will remain after heaven and earth pass away. By making this word play Macarius is able to strengthen his contention that the world will be recreated on the basis of its *logike ousia*.

4.3.2 Macarius' Use of the Tropes

The tropes have long been a significant part of the rhetorician's art, adding ornament to the oration. Quintillian defines a trope as "the conversion of a word or phrase, from its proper signification to another, in order to increase its force" (*Education of an Orator* 8.6.1; Watson trans., 1902, p. 124).

Macarius uses a variety of tropes in his efforts to mount effective counter-arguments to the objector's criticisms as well as to embellish his speech. Among

those he employs are metaphor, allegory, metonymy, synecdoche, catechresis, and antonomasia.

4.3.2.a Metaphor

One of the many instances in which Macarius uses a metaphor to respond to the objector occurs in 3.25. The objector remarks (3.17) that Jesus taught that if a Christian had faith as a grain of mustard seed, the Christian could cast a mountain into the sea. The objector claims that since no Christian has cast a mountain into the sea, none ought to be counted among the faithful.

Macarius replies (3.25) by examining the context of Jesus' statement. Jesus has just descended from a mountain and cast a demon out of a young boy. Macarius argues that no teacher enjoins his pupil to do what he has not done. From this pedagogical premise, Macarius argues that, since Jesus himself never cast a mountain into the sea, neither should his followers be expected to do so. He then goes on to explain the meaning of the passage metaphorically. Jesus is using the term "mountain" as a metaphor for "demon." Macarius believes that this interpretation is justified by the context.

The reader is left with the implied conclusion: since Christians have cast out demons (mountains), they are faithful followers of their teacher, Jesus.

4.3.2.b Allegory

Among Macarius' many uses of allegory one of the most notable is the one he creates to explain Jesus' metaphor, "he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life" (Jn. 6:54). This passage from the Gospel of John, one source of the pagan accusation of cannibalism which was leveled against earlier generations of Christians (see, e.g., Irenaeus, *Fragment* 13; Tertullian *Ad nationes* 1.7), remained highly objectionable to pagans even though at least some realized it was not to be taken literally.

In the *Apocriticus* the pagan objector recognizes that Christians did not eat the flesh and blood of real people and that the passage was not usually interpreted literally. Nevertheless, the pagan strongly objects (3.15) to the passage even as a metaphor. Macarius, in his answer (3.23), replies with a long allegory explaining how Jesus is feeding followers who have become like children with the mystic milk of his blood.

This allegory turns on Macarius' understanding that a mother's milk is really blood that has turned white as a result of contact with air¹⁰ using this combined sense of blood as milk and the blood of Jesus as a mystic milk, Macarius is able to create a credible allegory explaining how the metaphor chosen by Jesus is actually a very good metaphor, graphically and realistically portraying the nurturing, mystical relationship between Jesus and his "infant" followers. Other allegories have to do with such things as mercenary soldiers (3.39), herbal medicine (3.14), and fishing (3.9).

4.3.2.c Metonymy

The objector declares (2.15) that the gospels are nonsense, containing foolish sayings such as, "now is the judgement of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out" (Jn. 12:31). How, asks the objector, can this world be judged since it has done nothing wrong? It has remained unchanged since the beginning and is therefore blameless. The objector concludes that since the world has done no wrong, Jesus' statement is

¹⁰ For a fuller explanation see the warrants from medicine, below, p. 111.

foolish and hence the gospels are worthless.

In reply to this criticism of the gospels, Macarius uses metonymy. His response (2.20), consists in part of the following argument: since Paul uses the term "world" to mean his "flesh," when he says "I [am crucified] to the world" (Gal. 6:14), in the Gospel of John Jesus may use the term "world" to mean "all humanity." The result is that the criticized passage now reads, "now is the judgement of all humanity," which presumably would be acceptable to the objector.

4.3.2.d Synecdoche

An objection (3.4) from the disparity between the synoptic gospels on the number of demoniacs that came out to meet Jesus in Gerasa is answered by Macarius using synecdoche. Macarius replies (3.11) that sometimes a group may be referred to in the singular when it is the speaker's intention to emphasize the members' identical character.

Macarius lays out two possible solutions, both of which include the use of synecdoche. Perhaps Matthew was referring to the number of demons in the man while Mark referred to the one man possessed by the demons; or

perhaps Matthew spoke of the number of persons affected by the demons and Mark refers to the nature of the ailment without recording the number of demons. Macarius then develops a paradigmatic argument to support his theory. He says that educated people regularly use the singular in synecdoche when referring to the nature of a homogeneous group and so, paradigmatically, when the evangelists' records diverge, it may simply be because one is referring to nature and the other to number.¹¹ Macarius' use of synecdoche here is an adroit refutation of a difficult objection.

4.3.2.e Catechresis

Catechresis, "the use of a kindred word in place of the proper one" (*Ad Herrenium*, 4.33.45), is used effectively by Macarius in developing an answer to the previously discussed (section 4.3.1.c) criticism (2.15) stemming from Jesus' statement, "now is the judgement of the world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." In addition to the metonymy defence, Macarius also

¹¹ This kind of argument is also found in Aristotle's *Categories*, i.e., quantity (*poson*; 6, 4b20-6a36) contrasted with quality (*poion*; 8, 9a25-11a40).

observes that the word *kosmos*, "world," may actually mean "humanity" (2.20), which indeed it does (see Liddell, Scott and Jones, s.v. *kosmos*). Macarius is arguing that Paul's use of rhetoric is confusing the objector and by pointing it out to the objector, Macarius scores twice: he has refuted the objector's criticism and has shown a superior ability in discerning rhetorical embellishments.

4.3.2.f Antonomasia

Antonomasia, the use of an epithet in place of the proper name, is used occasionally. The title of the work contains antonomasia: *Monogenes*, "the only Begotten" or "the only one," is a name for Jesus used in reference to his relation to the Father. When referring to Paul, Macarius says "the Apostle" (*ho Apostolos*, 3.43).

Macarius also uses antonomasia when referring to his opponent. He calls him *tauth' ho tes hellenikes deinotetos*, which Crafer translates as "the exponent of Hellenic cunning" (3.8 Proem; Crafer, 1919, p. 51).

Macarius' use of the various rhetorical devices discussed above suggest that he must have had

considerable education in rhetoric. He demonstrated a good grasp of the principles as well as an effective use of them.

5. LITERATURE

Following the ancient intellectual tradition in which literature figures under politics, we will discuss literature as a subdivision of practical philosophy.¹ We will consider specifically those arguments Macarius develops from his knowledge of grammar, textual criticism, and hermeneutics.

5.1 Grammar

In his response to a number of objections, Macarius demonstrates a fair knowledge of various aspects of linguistics. One example is his response (2.21) to the criticism (2.16) directed at Jesus' attack on the Jews as children of the Slanderer (Jn. 8:34-59). The objector claims that Jesus ought not to gainsay the Slanderer

¹ Concerns about the influence of the social and political content of literature motivated the ancients to consider literature as an integral part of political science. Unlike today, in antiquity poets and playwrights were highly esteemed political sages (see, e.g., Aristophanes' *Frogs* and the introduction by Barrett, 1964, pp. 149-53). Recognizing the political influence of playwrights, Plato, for example, expresses concern about Homer's work and specifically excludes it from his city in *Republic* 378d.

because the Slanderer is not the one who has done wrong. The objector argues that if God has given opportunity for slander then it is God who is at fault, not the Slanderer. Furthermore, if on the one hand, the Slanderer spoke evil words because he was subject to human emotions, he ought to be forgiven, not condemned; on the other hand, if the Slanderer is not subject to human emotions, then he would not have slandered. Finally, concludes the objector, if the Jews were following their ancestor then they have done wrong but were honouring their ancestor and are not deserving of condemnation.

Macarius responds to this subtle argument against Jesus by using a favourite patristic reading² of the pericope (3.21). The intended meaning of *Pseustes esti kai ho pater autou*, "He is a liar and the father of it," according to Macarius' patristic reading, is best understood by reading the passage, "He is a liar and so is his father," the implication being that the Jews are offspring of the same evil source which motivates the Slanderer. That is, Macarius is reading *Pseustes* as geritive of subject (the *autou* refers to *Pseustes* as

² See Crafer, 1919, p. 49, n. 1.

subject) instead of genitive of object (the *autou* referring to *Pseustes* as object) (Smyth, 1920, paras. 1328-34, pp. 318-319). Consistent with rhetorical method, Macarius does not make explicit the full force of his argument here but leaves it to the reader to realize that the core of the objection has been shattered.³

5.2 Textual Criticism

Macarius is dexterous in the use of textual criticism. Textual criticism had a long history even in Macarius' time. Although there is evidence of critical awareness of differences in Homeric texts in the fifth century B.C.E.,⁴ it was not until the fourth century B.C.E., when concern was raised over wording in a number of works, that textual criticism seems to have received the impetus to develop extensively in the ancient world

³ Other examples of Macarius' acquaintance with grammar may be found in the following passages: (3.14) where punctuation of Jesus' statement, "I say to you(,) today(,) you will be with me in paradise" is an issue, and in (3.27) where Macarius notes Peter's use of the definite article in his Mt. 16:23 confession.

⁴ Herodotus 2.116 is the only extant evidence of this awareness; see Sandys, 1921, p. 34; Pfeiffer, 1968, pp. 44-45.

(Sandys, 1921, p. 57; *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. "Textual Criticism").

Christians too soon learned the importance of establishing the text of their sacred writings. Origen, for example, produced a critical Old Testament (*Hexapala* and *Tetrapala*).⁵ As heir to this tradition, Macarius is equipped to make a defence of Jesus' statement about the judgement of the world and its ruler being cast out. Macarius points out (2.20) a New Testament textual variant. He observes that the text may read *blethesetai exo*, "cast out," or *blethesetai kato*, "cast down." If the latter is the correct reading, the objector's point - the passage is ridiculous because there is no other world into which the cast out ruler could be thrown - becomes a meaningless objection.

Incidentally, this argument is another good example of how Macarius' rhetoric functions. In his discussion of the alternative reading Macarius does not spell out the meaning of the variant reading. He does not tell the reader that if the alternative reading "cast down" is accepted, the objection is meaningless; instead,

⁵ See Eusebius' description, *Church History*, 6.16.1-4, and Chadwick's explanation (1967, pp. 102-03).

Macarius simply observes its existence and allows his readers to draw the conclusion for themselves. He does not force the point upon the reader nor calumniate the objector in the way the objector does when given the opportunity. Macarius' way of arguing does not necessarily weaken his case; he may simply be approaching the audience differently than did the objector. Whereas the objector may have addressed the audience from a sophistical view point, Macarius used rhetorical convention.

5.3 Hermeneutics

As one might surmise, a large number of the arguments revolve around questions of hermeneutics. Often, Macarius charges that his opponent has misinterpreted or missed the meaning of a passage and then proceeds to fashion his reply from the correct interpretation.

In answer to an objection about Peter, Macarius draws attention to context. The objection (3.19) arises from the incident in which Jesus tells Peter that he will establish his church on Peter (Mt. 16:17-19, 16:23) but then rebukes him as Satan. How is it that Jesus can confidently build his church on a person he later calls

Satan and yet claim to be consistent? Macarius replies (3.27) that the objector has not properly interpreted the passage because he has neglected to include the context. When Jesus decided to build his church on Peter, it was in response to Peter's confession of Jesus' divinity. However, when Jesus rebuked Peter as Satan, it was in the context of Peter's (Satan's)⁶ attempt to dissuade Jesus from going to the cross.⁷

In fact, Macarius uses some form of hermeneutical argument in most of his answers. Some of the hermeneutical arguments, however, arise from allegorical interpretation and Christian theology and as such do not belong to literature in this Aristotelian framework. As part of his Christian consciousness they are best discussed under the headings of allegorical interpretation and Christian theology below.

⁶ Macarius argues that Satan knew Jesus' death would result in the overthrow of this (Satan's) evil dominion and so it was Satan and not Peter who tried to obstruct Jesus and whom Jesus rebuked.

⁷ For another example of an argument in which Macarius refers his opponent to the context of the passage see below pp. 113.

5.4 History

The study of history was certainly important in antiquity. In our discussion history has been included under practical philosophy, specifically, literature, because it would certainly have been part of Aristotle's educational programme (Taylor, 1955, p. 21) and Aristotle's discussion of it is found in his work on poetics, which concerns literary composition (*Poetics* 7, 1451b1-7 and 23, 1459a22-29). Aristotle himself was well versed in history and wrote and directed a considerable number of histories on various topics (Jaeger, 1934, pp. 128-30, 335-36). Scholarship owes much of its information about early Greek thought and philosophy to Aristotle's historical surveys (Durant, 1953, p. 53).

Macarius occasionally draws on his knowledge of history to substantiate his claims. When the objector characterizes the story of the demoniac(s) of Gerasa (Mt. 8:31; Mk. 5:1; Lk. 8:26) as unlikely on the basis that one would not find so many unclean animals in the province of the Jews (3.4), Macarius responds with an argument from history (3.11).

Macarius agrees that the Jews would not have kept swine, especially not in such large numbers; however, he points out that the Jews were not in control of the land in Jesus' time. He notes that the Romans had held control of Palestine since before the times of Tiberius and Augustus⁸ and then hypothesizes that the herd belonged to the Romans. This argument from history is an effective argument proving that the gospels are consistent with known historical facts.⁹

Macarius also has arguments which display historical consciousness inasmuch as they imply or demonstrate a philosophy of history and knowledge of historiography. For example, Macarius offers a philosophy of history when he responds (3.13) to the objector's criticism (3.6) that Jesus could not have walked out to the disciples in the fourth watch since the lake is so small that it could be crossed in matter of a few hours. The philosophy of history Macarius offers unfolds a progression which begins with the patriarchs, moves to the Law, then to the prophets, and

⁸ Macarius makes a mistake in his chronology in this answer. Augustus was before Tiberius; Macarius claims the reverse.

⁹ For another example see *Apocriticus* 4.30.

finally to Christ who ends the night of human fear by the light of his love. These four stages, says Macarius, correspond to the four watches of the night.¹⁰

Knowledge of historiography is evident in his answer to a charge about discrepancies in the gospels. The objection (2.12) is that the gospels are unreliable because they contain differing accounts of the same event. In part of his reply (2.17), Macarius notes that good history may be stylistically objectionable in order to present an accurate account of events. He supports his view from Herodotus' use of non-Hellenistic names in his history. His point is that the gospels may be considered good history precisely because they are at times stylistically objectionable.¹¹

This answer is a good example of an answer that evades the objection. The objection is not that the gospels are stylistically objectionable, but rather that they are historically inaccurate. Macarius, by

¹⁰ See the discussion of this reply in chapter 10.2 below p. 142f.

¹¹ It is interesting that Macarius refers to Herodotus' work in defence of the Gospels. Herodotus was widely read, but Macarius may have referred to him, in part, because Aristotle expresses admiration for Herodotus' work (*Poetics* 7, 1451b1-7).

digressing onto the previously unmentioned topic of poor style, has developed a paradigm argument supporting the historicity of the gospels. Assuming that his reader accepts the historicity of Herodotus, Macarius implies that a parallel exists between Herodotus and the gospels, vindicating the historical claims of the gospels.

6. OTHERS

6.1 Ethics

As mentioned earlier (p. 57, n.1) Aristotle sees ethics as a division of political science which in turn is a division of practical philosophy. Ethical arguments are not particularly common in the *Apocriticus*, although they do appear. One example is Macarius' reply to an objection based on the accounts of the demoniac(s) of Gerasa. The objector observes (3.4) that Jesus' casting the demon out of one man, only to let it destroy thousands of pigs and the livelihood of several people, is not the act of a divine being. The objector states that Jesus' action on this occasion is grounds for calling him a scoundrel who cannot be trusted to save.

While Macarius' reply (3.11) implicitly admits that part of the local population was hurt by the event, the main point of his argument is that the overall good far outweighs any negative consequences. By casting the demon(s) into the swine Jesus visually demonstrated his power over demons, removed animals prohibited by Mosaic law from the Palestine, caused the people to fear him,

and instructed the witnesses with a powerful lesson concerning the fate of those who reject him.

Another example of an ethical argument occurs when the objector raises the issue of Peter's responsibility in the deaths of certain guards (see pp. 78, 148-49). The problem is raised in the third book along with several other attacks on Peter. The objector contends (3.22) that since Peter was the one who escaped from the prison, he is ultimately the one responsible for the resulting execution of the guards who were watching him.

Macarius responds with an ethical argument which traces the lines of responsibility. Macarius' point is that the victim is not the liable party in a given situation. Rather, it is the perpetrator who must bear the responsibility (3.29). Macarius argues paradigmatically from an analogous situation which involves a hunter, his dogs, and a stag. If the stag gets away, the hunter may kill the dogs. The punishment, however, is not the result of the stag's cruelty and so it is not the stag's responsibility. More correctly, the punishment, which is dependent upon the hunter's disposition, is the responsibility of the hunter. So, even as a stag has no responsibility in the death of

pursuing dogs, so Peter is not liable for the death of the guards at Herod's hand.

This reply is worth noting as a good example of Macarius' ability to draw on a number of ancient rhetorical devices which would make his replies convincing to an ancient reader. For example, this paradigm functions as the enthymeme Aristotle calls an enthymeme of relations (*Rhetoric* 2.23.3, 1397a23-1397b11; see above, chap. 4.1.2.c). An enthymeme of relations operates by detailing the relationship between the two parties - in this case a perpetrator and a victim. As well this reply could be classified as an argument from Herod's motives, which rhetoricians placed under forensic concern. Aristotle discusses the role of motives for committing a particular crime in his explanation of establishing guilt and innocence. Among the motives he gives is embitterment (*Rhetoric* 1.10.4, 1368b21-22). Accordingly, this reply may be classified as an ethical argument functioning along the lines of an enthymeme of relations using the forensic concern of motive.¹

¹ For examples of other ethical arguments see *Apocriticus* 3.28, 3.29, 3.41, and 4.30.

6.2 Military Strategy

Any discussion of politics must take military matters into account. Aristotle discusses in passing various military matters and strategies in his *Politics* (7.14, 1334a2-16 and 2.9, 1271b1-10). A few of Macarius' answers are drawn from military knowledge. One example is his reply to an objection stemming from the early death of the disciples. The objection (4.14) is that Jesus is untrustworthy because he promised protection to both Peter and Paul, yet both were killed early in the church's history. Macarius responds (4.4) that God has a plan that cannot be frustrated. No one will be martyred until that person's part in that plan has been carried out. After this theological argument Macarius adds that Christians are like soldiers whose highest honour is to die fighting for their cause. In allowing Peter and Paul to die as martyrs, God acted as a wise general, giving them the highest possible honour.²

6.3 Medicine

Aristotle does not discuss medicine as it relates to his

² For other examples of warrants from military conventions see *Apocriticus* 3.40 and 4.30.

system; rather he takes it up in his *Problems*. His definitions, "medicine is the science both of producing health and of dieting" (*Topics* 2.3, 110b18) and "the knowledge of what makes or health in animals and humans" (*Topics* 5.3, 141a19), display the dual nature of medicine. Since it concerns both abstraction and practical application (Merlan, 1968, p. 74), it may be placed on the border between theoretical and practical philosophy.

It was not uncommon to find educated persons in late antiquity who had some knowledge of medicine³. Macarius refers to a number of interesting medical practices and beliefs to substantiate his arguments. One example is his response to an objection about Jesus' teaching on wealth. The objection (3.5) arises from Jesus' teaching that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 19:24). The objector points out that if this teaching is true then (1) the most virtuous thing to do is to become a beggar and (2) righteous rich people have no hope. Macarius replies

³ Chadwick, e.g., mentions Tertullian's knowledge of medicine (Chadwick, 1966, p. 2.).

(3.12) that the objector has misinterpreted the passage. The context makes it clear, he says, that Jesus is not making an absolute statement; rather that it is in reference to a certain man who was consumed by an interest in wealth. Macarius argues that it is neither wealth nor the lack of it that makes a person good or bad, worthy or unworthy of heaven. He likens wealth to a medicine which may cause one person to recover but cause another person to decline.⁴ As the effect of a drug depends not on the drug itself but rather on the person receiving it, so too wealth neither heals nor corrupts a person but is dependent for its effect on the person who possesses it.

Another instance where Macarius draws on knowledge of medicine is found in his reply to an objection concerning the eucharist. The objector (3.15) criticizes Jesus' statement that unless people eat his flesh and blood, they will not have eternal life (Jn. 6:54). Not even the uncivilized Scythians, says the objector, speak of eating human flesh.

Macarius points out (3.23) that Jesus' statement is

⁴ On the different effects of various drugs (*pharmaka*) see Aristotle, *Problems* 1.40-49, 863b30-865a32.

quite acceptable and even chides his objector for lacking what every schoolboy should know about physiology. He states that all humans eat the flesh and blood of their mothers when they receive nourishment as infants. Milk is actually blood exposed to air, and with this understanding of the passage one finds that Jesus' statement is perfectly acceptable. He is giving his blood or milk to his infant followers.⁵

6.4 Metallurgy

Metallurgy is discussed under practical philosophy because it concerns issues with practical application. Macarius uses arguments from metallurgical processes in one of his explanations of the resurrection. When the objector has noted that some of the bodies to be resurrected have been eaten, burned, and in other ways destroyed, and their remains scattered, making the resurrection a seemingly impossible feat (4.24), Macarius argues from refining processes (4.30). By burning soil humans are able to draw together whatever

⁵ On this notion of milk as blood exposed to air see Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 4.8, 77.7a1-25. Other examples of arguments substantiated from medicine may be found in *Apocriticus* 3.9, 3.14, 3.28, 3.37, and 4.30.

precious metals may be scattered in it. Though subjected to severe fire, the metals are not harmed in the least but, rather, are purified. So too is it with God, who, having created the fire which can separate gold from soil, can restore the more precious rational treasure (*keimeleion logikon*) of humans though they be scattered all over the world.

Elsewhere in this response (4.30) to the criticism (4.24) of the resurrection, Macarius uses another argument from metallurgy. The objector has noted the Christian claim that the heavens are going to melt and argues that if God is willing to stand by and watch the destruction of something so beautiful, it is unlikely that he will raise something as lowly and corrupted as decomposed human bodies.

Macarius does not respond directly to the main point of this objection. Perhaps the objector's reference to the apocalyptic end has set his mind onto another, related concern or possibly it had brought to mind another common objection, namely, that Christians, like the pagans, would not survive the great fiery final destruction. Macarius replies to this unstated objection by saying that the Christian is like a sword dipped in

fire; through the heating (*puroi*) process the sword is tempered. Likewise, the Christians are made "inviolable" through their relationship with God and are harmed neither by fire nor by judgement. By means of this digression Macarius is able to make the point that no future event - i.e., bodily corruption - can destroy the possibility of the resurrection. The person has been "tempered" so that neither a cataclysmic end nor bodily corruption poses any hindrance to the final resurrection (see pp. 126-27; 155).

This examination of arguments from practical philosophy makes it clear that Macarius was well versed in this kind of knowledge and was a person at home in antique culture. The same is true of his knowledge of themes and topics classified by Aristotle as belonging to theoretical philosophy, to which we now turn.

PART 3
ANALYSIS OF THE *APOCRITICUS*:
THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY

THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY

Theoretical philosophy covers those topics which Aristotle considered as belonging to disinterested knowledge. Specifically, it includes physics, mathematics, metaphysics, and analytics, specifically logic.

7. PHYSICS AND MATHEMATICS

The category "physics" (*physika*) includes the order of nature (*schema tou kosmou*), change or motion (*kinesis*), and astronomy (*ouranos*).

7.1 Order of Nature

Macarius substantiates some of his arguments from the order of nature (*tou schematos tou kosmou*). One example is Macarius' reply (4.11) to the objection (4.1) brought against Paul's statement that the form of this world is passing away (1 Cor. 7:31). The objector declares that it is preposterous to think of the world as a changing thing, let alone as passing away.

Macarius observes that the world is constantly changing, as is evident from the seasons and the constant motion of the sea. Thus, since the world is not static, Macarius concludes that one may assume it will undergo other changes such as an end. In combination with other arguments, Macarius thus disputes the view

that the world cannot have an end.¹

7.2 Change

Macarius develops an argument from generation and corruption which fits under physics (*Meta.* 1.8, 989a24) in reply (4.30) to an objection (4.24) about the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. Macarius points out that it is ridiculous to think of the earth as in a state of eternal corruption. Since the creator did not create earth for the purpose of corruption, argues Macarius, God will re-create it in a new, incorruptible way.

7.3 Astronomy

Astronomy was certainly an object of Aristotelian investigation,² and Macarius develops a few arguments from his knowledge of astronomy. The objector claims

¹ See also chap. 8, *Metaphysics*, below on the eternity of the world. Other examples of his use of the order of nature can be readily seen in *Apocriticus* 3.8; 3.25; 4.11; 4.12; 4.13.

² See Aristotle, *On the Heavens*, which treats the structure of the universe (*ouranos*). He discusses the three senses in which *ouranos* is used as a term for (1) the outermost sphere of the gods, (2) the next sphere of the heavenly bodies of sun, moon, and stars, and (3) the whole universal structure (*On the Heavens* 1.9, 278b11-23).

(4.8) that Jesus' parables are devoid of meaning, and that Jesus' teaching about revealing the divine mysteries to the foolish and not to the wise makes ignorance the pivotal factor in gaining divine wisdom (4.9). Macarius responds (4.17)³ by comparing the symbolism Jesus used with that of other teachers. Since the objector has substantiated his claim about the meaninglessness of Jesus' parables on the basis of Jesus' comparison of the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed, Macarius turns the reader's attention to a similar practice of contemporary philosophers. These philosophers claim that it is possible to compare the earth to a grain of wheat in order to gain a sense of earth's relation to the heavens. Similarly, says Macarius, Aratus (a Cilician astronomer), who believed the heavens could be described by something as lowly as a circle. He leaves it to the reader to infer that Jesus' use of lowly symbolism is perfectly acceptable since such symbolism was used by other noteworthy teachers.⁴

³ Also above p. 75, where this reply is discussed as a paradigm argument.

⁴ Another argument involving the nature of the stars is to be found in *Apocriticus* 4.29.

7.4 Mathematics

Mathematics in Aristotle's system constituted the transition between physics and metaphysics (Taylor, 1955, p. 19). Accordingly, I have placed Macarius' argument from mathematics between physics and metaphysics. Macarius puts his knowledge of geometry to use in defending Matthew's statement concerning the time of the end. The objection (4.3) is that Matthew said that once the gospel has been proclaimed everywhere the end will come. The objector declares that the gospel has been preached everywhere and since the end has yet to come, the gospel is false.

Macarius replies (4.13) with a paradigmatic argument from geometry. He claims that God is able to delay the movement of time without altering the total time of the universe just as the arithmetician is able to change a triangle into a square without loss of area. Though the time of the end may now be here, says Macarius, God is able to delay the end in order that more unconverted may yet receive mercy.

8. METAPHYSICS

Aristotle treats this topic in *Metaphysics*. The objector criticizes the statements in the *Apocalypse of Peter* (4.6) and Isaiah (Isa. 34:4) (4.7) about the destruction of the heavens and earth. Even the idea that the heavens and the earth are passing away is absurd. Besides, given the importance assigned to heaven and earth in Christian scriptures, if heaven and earth were annihilated there would be no place for either Jesus or God to exist.¹

Aristotle's notion of final cause (*hou heneka*) (*Meta* 7, 1044a36-b11; cf. *Physics* 2.7, 198a24f), which in part states that something is finished or fulfilled once it reaches its final cause or purpose, is used by Macarius in his reply (4.16). Macarius argues that the world was created as an abode for humans, so that once humanity is removed from it, earth has no further purpose and hence will be destroyed. Once humans are

¹ The objector uses this same argument - that only one world exists - in his objection (2.15) to Jesus' saying (Jn 12:31) that the ruler of this world is cast out.

resurrected and need a new place to dwell, God will remake the world, and in a new way, as an abode for a renewed humanity.²

Macarius uses another argument from metaphysics in replying to the objector's criticism (4.1) of Christians for their belief in Paul's statement (1 Cor. 7:31) that heaven and earth will pass away. The objector argues that if the creator (*demiourgos*) re-creates the world better than it was before, he convicts himself of not having created it as good as possible in his first attempt.

Macarius' reply (4.11) is built on the metaphysical principle that only the uncreated is without end; all that has a beginning must by nature have an end. From this principle he argues that since the world is created, it too must have an end. In using this argument Macarius is following Aristotle (*On the Heavens* 1.12, 282a31ff; Armstrong, 1965, pp. 77, 80-81) who argued that things which change are not infinite.

Macarius' argument here is interesting because of

² Macarius uses the same argument, that the world was created for humanity, in another answer (4.30) refuting an objection (4.24) to the resurrection. See below p. 149.

the way in which he deals with two different Aristotelian ideas. Macarius takes the Aristotelian idea that change is indicative of finitude and on this basis argues for the finitude of the world. In doing so, Macarius is using this Aristotelian notion of change and finitude to refute the Aristotelian belief that the world is eternal (Taylor, 1955, p. 57).³

Macarius also draws on metaphysical principles in his response to the objector's statement (4.24) that the resurrection is an absurd notion because God would not raise up rotten, corrupted corpses.⁴ To refute this objection, Macarius argues (4.30) paradigmatically that just as an architect builds and then rebuilds a house which has become decrepit, so God created and will re-creat his reasoning beings (house, *oikou logikou*), preserving the essence of the rational treasure (*keimelion logikon*) he placed in humankind, thus reconstituting humans (cf. Tatian, *Address to the Greeks* 6).

³ On the whole problem of earth's eternity in Aristotelian thought in Macarius' time, see Wallis, 1972, pp. 102-03.

⁴ A common pagan view; see Celsus in Origen, *Against Celsus* 5.14, also discussed above pp. 115.

Another argument from metaphysics occurs in Macarius' reply to the objector's criticism (4.21) of the Christian rejection of images (*eikonas*). Since Jesus admitted that the angels lived in heaven, the objector argues, they too must share in the divine nature. Therefore, Christians are wrong in not honouring them as divine beings through images and sacrifices.

Macarius replies (4.27) that Jesus' reference to the angels was made in order to attract thoughtful hearers by telling them about a rational existence in the heavens (*ourano logike ousian*). Since Jesus knew this knowledge would encourage them to abandon the cares of lower earthly life for the higher heavenly life, Jesus was right in telling humankind about it. Implied is that Christians are right in not honouring images.

Since Aristotle deals with problems of measurement in his *Metaphysics* (*Meta.* 10. 1, 1052b1-1053b8; 14.1, 1087b33-1088a14), when one of Macarius' answers (3.40) deals with an argument from philosophy of measurement, it may be fittingly be discussed here under the heading of metaphysics. The objection (3.33) to which Macarius replies is that Paul is inconsistent in his use of the Jewish law. Macarius responds by putting the law into a

post-resurrection perspective. The law has now been superseded by the lawmaker himself. Only the person who makes a standard of measurement can judge, re-measure, or replace that standard. So, Jesus, who made the law, is the only one who can replace it with yet a better measure, which he did through instituting the Christian religion.

9. ANALYTICS

Having discussed the rhetorical paradigmatic argument, i.e., induction (Ryan, 1984, p. 122; above p. 69-77) and the rhetorical syllogism, i.e., deduction (*Rhetoric* 1.2.8, 1356b5; above pp. 77-83), what remains to be discussed is Macarius' use of the syllogism and general lines of argument.

9.1 Syllogisms

Syllogisms are found throughout the *Apocriticus*. For example, the objector argues (4.21) that the Christian doctrine of the incarnation is a repulsive idea and wholly inconsistent with the nature of the divine. Macarius' response (4.28) includes the following syllogism: the Logos is without defilement; if anything is without defilement it is incorruptible; therefore the Logos is incorruptible. Macarius then expands on this syllogism arguing that the Logos is not excluded from incarnation on the basis of corruption through the birth

experience.¹

Another time Macarius uses a syllogism to reply to an objection (3.3) concerning Jesus' claim that Moses prophesied or pointed to his coming. The objector takes the saying, "If you believed Moses, you would have believed me" (Jn. 5:46), and remarks that nowhere does he find Moses proclaiming that Jesus would come. Furthermore, the objector reminds Macarius that none of the books bearing Moses' names was written by Moses because they were all destroyed in a fire. The Mosaic books were in fact written by Ezra.²

In reply (3.10), Macarius lays down a major premise (the Holy Spirit inspired Moses as he wrote the Pentateuch), followed by a minor premise (the same Spirit inspired Ezra as he re-wrote the Pentateuch) and a conclusion (therefore we may assume that both Pentateuchs are alike).

Elsewhere, Macarius argues (4.26) along the line of

¹ Tertullian uses a similar argument in *Adversus Marcion* 4.7.

² On Porphyry's awareness of the tradition of Ezra's involvement in the compilation of the Pentateuch see above p. 77, n. 2. It is interesting to note that Porphyry also criticized the Christian dating of the Pentateuch (see Wilken, 1984, p. 137).

Aristotle's *Categories* (1.1, 1a6-8)³ that synonymous words are not always meant in the same way. When the objector claims (4.20) that there are lower gods, who as gods ought to be worshipped, Macarius states that "god" in the latter sense is not the same as "God" in the former. Macarius argues that "warm" as descriptive of fire is different from "warm" as applied to a human sitting at the fireside. The warmth of the fire is actively warming the person sitting next to it who is passively receiving the fire's warmth. From this Macarius argues paradigmatically that the gods' divinity is not intrinsic, but, like human warmth at a fireside, derives from their proximity to the one source of divinity, God.⁴

9.2 Sorites and Pure Hypothetical Arguments

Macarius uses sorites and pure hypothetical arguments

³ See also *De Sophisticis Elenchis* 19, 177a10-31; 6, 168a24-25.

⁴ Macarius uses the example of human warmth as contrasted with a fire's warmth (2.9) in a discussion about the meaning of the word "good" in relation to God and humans. Apparently, this ability to reuse an example was perfectly acceptable and even cause for admiration in rhetorical practice in the Second Sophistic (Baldwin, 1928, p. 15). See also pp. 147-48 below for further discussion of *Apocriticus* 4.26.

(Werkmeister, 1948, pp. 321-22 and 352-53). A brief look at one example of each will serve to illustrate his use of these lines of arguments.

A good example of a sorites is found in the fourth book of the *Apocriticus*. The objector has argued against the incarnation on the grounds that the divine would never expose itself to the impurities and degradation of the womb (4.22). Macarius reply (4.28) circumvents the objection. The method used in this argument is also referred to by Aristotle as an argument by division (*ek diaireseos*; *Rhetoric* 2.23.10, 1400a21-27) since, rather than directly counter-attacking, Macarius breaks down the presuppositions of the objection and replies in turn to each one.

Macarius begins his reply with a series of three arguments from the nature of the Logos. (1) Humans feel shame at having endured the process of birth; however, the Logos is without feeling and since it has no feeling it would not experience any shame at being born from a woman. (2) Macarius starts with the premise that the Logos is without defilement (also above p. 129). If anything is without defilement, it is incorruptible. Therefore the Logos is incorruptible. (3) The third

argument develops from the conclusions of the former two. The conclusion of the first, that the Logos endured no shame, here becomes his first premise. The conclusion of the second argument, that the Logos is incorruptible, becomes his second premise. From these two premises he concludes that the Logos was not in any way humiliated through the incarnation and therefore could still function as an elevating intermediary between God and humans.⁵

There are a number of pure hypothetical syllogisms in the *Apocriticus*. One is Macarius' adroit response to the objector's criticism (2.14) of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. The objector states that if Jesus had shown himself to the authorities instead of to the lowly women and disciples, there would have been no persecutions and the new religion would have spread more effectively and more peaceably (also above pp. 73-74).

Macarius replies (2.19) that there are a number of good reasons why Jesus did not show himself to the authorities. After observing that both the Roman and Jewish leaders had rejected Jesus, Macarius states that

⁵ Other examples of sorites may be found in *Apocriticus* 2.21; 3.40; 4.16; 4.28; 4.29.

we may infer from the Jews' hatred of the Romans that if Jesus had shown himself to the Roman officials and they in turn tried to support his testimony by their power, the Jewish populace would have rejected Jesus as an impostor collaborating with the Romans.⁶

From the preceding discussion we may conclude that Macarius was well versed in the arts and sciences. He is skilled in his use of rhetorical method, is able to draw on a considerable store of knowledge of both practical and theoretical philosophy, and employs his diverse knowledge in paradigmatic and enthymematic arguments, effectively countering the objections of his opponent.

In Part 4 we turn to two other resources Macarius draws upon, both of which fall outside Aristotle's system, namely, allegorical interpretation and Christian theology.

⁶ Another example of a pure hypothetical syllogism is *Apocriticus* 3.10.

PART 4

ANALYSIS OF THE *APOCRITICUS*:

ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

10. ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION

10.1 Historical Background

The validity of allegorical interpretation in late antiquity was much different than it is today. Whereas today data from allegorical interpretation would not even be proffered as proof, in Macarius' world such interpretation carried considerable weight.

Allegorical interpretation has a long and complex history (Pepin, 1976, p. 91). It first came into use in the Greek world sometime in the sixth century as part of an effort to re-interpret some of Homer's myths (Pfeiffer, 1968, p. 237; Rollinson, 1981, p. 3). From the sixth century on, many allegorical commentaries were written on Homer's works offering alternative explanations of some of the offensive immorality in the myths (Sandys, 1921, p. 29). The allegorical method became widely, though not universally accepted. Aristotle, for example, rejected it (Pfeiffer, 1968, p. 237), and Plato excluded Homer's works from his city regardless of whether or not they were interpreted

allegorically.¹

After a short period of declining popularity in the third century B.C.E., the allegorical method was revived by the Stoics (Rollinson, 1981, pp. 3-5; Pfeiffer, 1968, p. 237)² and then picked up by other philosophical-religious groups such as the Middle Platonists (Dillon, 1977, pp. 140-143), Neoplatonists (Armstrong, 1966, p. 197; Pfeiffer, 1968, p. 266), and Neopythagoreans (Whitman, 1987, p. 267). These groups used allegorical interpretation to find correspondences between their own views, the writings of the ancients, and their leaders on everything from cosmology and politics to science (Pfeiffer, 1968, p. 140). In short, the allegorical method was a very popular method of exegesis for most philosophical schools in both classical and Hellenistic times (Grant, 1963, p. 87).

¹ *Rep.* 378d; Plato's term is *hyponoia*, which Rollinson (1981, p. 5, n. 5) notes had become fully synonymous with *allegoria* even as early as Plutarch's time (Plutarch, *Moralia* 19e-f).

² See the detailed discussion of Stoic allegorical interpretation in Zeller, 1962, pp. 354-69.

10.2 Allegorical Interpretation as a Biblical Hermeneutic

It seems that it was in Alexandria that allegorical interpretation was first accepted as an universally applicable biblical hermeneutic (Longnecker, 1964, pp. 62-63). Philo Judaeus comprehensively applied the method to the Pentateuch, finding in Moses' writings answers to, and adumbrations of, almost everything the Greeks considered perplexing and/or important (Dillon, 1977, pp. 140-44).

In Alexandria also the Christian application of allegorical interpretation to the New Testament developed. In the tradition of Philo, the Alexandrian Christians sought to explain and convince others of the wisdom of their faith through allegorical interpretation of the New Testament.

Clement of Alexandria, an early practitioner of Christian allegorical interpretation, studied under Pantaenus³, a Stoic convert to Christianity (Gilson, p. 45). Clement, like most of the well-educated Greeks of his day, had an extensive knowledge of the Homeric

³ Origen, Clement's successor at Alexandria, also notes his debt to Pantaenus' philosophy (Eusebius, *Church History* 6.19.13).

allegories. Unlike his pagan counterparts, however, Clement used the allegories to demonstrate how pagans had plundered Jewish and Christian writings for doctrines and ideas, and then applied this pilfered information to their mythical pagan heroes and heroines (Daniélou, 1973, pp. 89-99). In charging the pagans with stealing their ideas, Clement was following an old tradition from the Greek synagogue (Chadwick, 1967, p. 76).

Though other Christians, both in and outside the mainstream of Christianity (Daniélou, 1973, pp. 82-89), first applied allegorical interpretation to the Christian scriptures, Clement was the first Christian that we know of who attempted to justify its application to the Christian scriptures (*Miscellanies* 5.4; Grant, 1963, p. 79).⁴

Despite Clement's justification of allegorical interpretation it did not become the hermeneutic of choice in the Christian tradition during his lifetime. Under his pupil Origen, however, allegorical

⁴ For an excellent discussion of Clement's contribution to allegorical interpretation and his methodology see Daniélou, 1973, pp. 89-99, and chapter 10, "Clement of Alexandria as Exegete."

interpretation became thoroughly integrated into Christian theology (Grant, 1963, p. 81) and developed into the mainstay of Christian interpretation, a position it was to hold through the Middle Ages (ibid., p. 119).

Origen believed that there were three levels of meaning in the scriptures: one for the simple, a literal, fleshly meaning; another for the person who has partially ascended (an intermediate level of meaning equated with the soul); and a spiritual or mystical level for the advanced believer (*On First Principles* 4.1.11). In Origen's system the highest or mystical level of meaning was only available through allegorical interpretation. The three levels of meaning that Origen found in scripture follow the Platonic trichotomy of *soma*, *psyche*, and *pneuma* (Altaner, 1959, p. 231).

Similarities in thought between Origen and Macarius have been noted with respect to allegorical interpretation and other points of doctrine (Crafer, 1907, pp. 405-07, 565-66). As well it is interesting to note that Porphyry, whose work may stand behind the objections of the *Apocriticus*, also made extensive use of allegorical interpretation in his work on Plato

(Dillon, 1977, p. 142).

Against this background of allegorical method as a respected mode of argumentation among both pagans and Christians, we now turn to discuss Macarius' use of allegorical interpretation in his defence of the Christian faith.

10.3 Allegorical Interpretation in the Apocriticus

Macarius relies heavily on allegorical interpretation. Indeed the majority of his answers include some type of meaning derived from an allegorical interpretation of scriptural texts, and he often criticizes his opponent for missing the mystical (*mystikon*) meaning of the text. Macarius sometimes uses the term "mystical" and at other times the term "allegorical."

One of the instances in which he identifies his approach as mystical is in reply to the objector's questions (3.6) about the account of Jesus walking on the water (Mt. 14:25, Mk. 6.28, and Jn. 6:16). Macarius tells the objector to look below the surface meaning. The objector has criticized the gospel account of the event on a number of grounds but especially because of the gospel claim that the disciples were still out in

the fourth watch on a lake that takes at most two hours to cross.

Macarius replies (3.13) that the objector is missing the deeper, mystical, divine meaning (*esti kath' heterou thespesiou grammatos to musterion*). The four watches, Macarius explains, are not the standard time measures of the night but are, rather, allegories of the four periods of world history. The first watch signifies the period of the patriarchs; the second the law; the third the prophets; and the fourth watch the end of the night, Christ i.e., his entry into the world bringing the light of love.

Another example of an allegorical interpretation which Macarius refers to as a mystical meaning occurs in his defence of John's account of the pierced side of Jesus. The objector has argued that since only John records this happening, his record should be rejected (2.13). One of the grounds Macarius gives for retaining it is that it has mystical value which can be derived through allegorical interpretation. The mystical meaning of the pierced side is that it is an inlet into the divine, and an outlet of divine grace and of the cleansing waters of baptism.

Another example of an allegorical interpretation which Macarius designates as a mystical meaning is found in reply to a criticism (4.2) of Paul's teaching that believers will be caught up in the clouds at the parousia (1 Thess. 4:15-17). The objector claims that any notion of gross, bodily life in the clouds is ridiculous. Macarius replies (4.12) by explaining that the clouds are allegorically symbolic of angels. Arguing paradigmatically, Macarius states that as the clouds are able to lift up the heavy waters of the sea, the angels will be able to lift up humans from the earth.

In some passages Macarius explicitly identifies his interpretation as allegorical. In his response to an objection concerning a statement of Jesus', Macarius specifies that the correct interpretation is from an *allegoria*. The objector attacks (3.17) Jesus' saying that a follower with faith as a grain of mustard seed could cast mountains into the sea (Matt. 17.20). Since none of Jesus' followers has cast a mountain into the sea they all must lack faith or have it misplaced in Jesus (also p. 91).

Not so, says Macarius (3.25). The word "mountain"

is to be taken allegorically. "Mountain" is an allegory for a demon which the disciples were unable to cast out. Macarius next infers two premises from his allegorical interpretation and then draws his conclusion. Since the words are to be taken allegorically, (1) Jesus never intended his followers to cast literal mountains into the sea. Interpreting mountains as demons, (2) Christians have cast allegorical mountains into the sea by casting out demons. Since Christians have followed Jesus faithfully by casting out demons (mountains), Macarius is able (3) to vindicate Christian faith in Jesus as not misplaced.

In reply to the criticism (4.6, 4.7) that if God destroyed heaven and earth - his throne and footstool - he would have no place to exist, Macarius' replies in part by reference to *allegoria*, specifically, allegorical interpretation of the passage (Isa. 66:1) in which the statement is made. Macarius explains (4.16) that the passage informs us of the twofold nature of humanity. "Heaven," says Macarius, is an *allegoria* for the human soul, the throne of the Word, and "earth" is an *allegoria* for the human body, which Jesus took as his footstool. Since humanity (heaven and earth) has

fallen, it must be made anew to accommodate God's presence.⁵

Thus, Macarius makes extensive, creative, and cogent use of allegorical interpretation. He does not hesitate to employ allegorical interpretation when substantiating his claims. Unlike his luminary Origen, who refrains from allegorical interpretation in defending his faith (*Contra Celsum* 2.37), and other early Christians who completely rejected the method,⁶ Macarius uses it freely. Contrary to what might be expected, Macarius does not resort to allegorical interpretation only as a last line of defence in a failing argument; rather, he often introduces it when his answer would easily stand without any further buttressing. Allegorical interpretation stands as an important weapon in Macarius' apologetic armory.

⁵ Other examples of Macarius' use of allegorical interpretation may be found in *Apocriticus* 3.9; 3.24; 3.23; 4.16; 4.17. Macarius refers to these allegorical interpretations as meanings which are "standing under" (*hypotithemi*). But he does not use the word (*hyponoia*).

⁶ For example, Tatian, *Address to the Greeks* 21; see also Grant, 1963, pp. 89-101.

11. CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

As one might expect, Macarius marshals evidence from Christian theology in defence of his faith. By discussing these arguments under the heading "Christian Theology" I do not wish to imply that pagans would reject all the theological data Macarius adduces here; indeed, in some of what follows the reader will find considerable similarities between Macarius' theology and the various theological affirmations of Hellenistic philosophies. Rather, I have grouped these arguments together under "Christian Theology" for three reasons: (1) to bring out the theological character of the apology; (2) to place Macarius more distinctly in his Christian context; and (3) because most of the theology discussed here is not readily integrated into the Aristotelian system. Though not necessarily the most convincing arguments one could submit to a pagan objector, they are illustrative of another purpose of the *Apocriticus*.

Macarius likely wrote the work not only as an apology against pagan criticisms of Christianity, but

also to teach Christians who might read the work what he believed to be orthodox doctrine. Whether or not his theology is orthodox is another matter¹. Nevertheless, in Macarius one sees what at least one fourth-century Christian - and probably a good many more - considered sound Christian doctrine to be.

11.1 Theology Proper

Under this heading fall those arguments based on theological "facts" about the nature of God (*theos*). To a large degree many of Macarius' theological arguments depend on certain theological data related to theology proper. For example, all of his arguments from creation depend on the tacit assumption that God created the universe in the first place.

One example is Macarius' long and detailed response to the objector's criticism (4.24) of the Christian belief in the resurrection. Macarius argues (4.30) in part that creation is an independent entity in relation

¹ Macarius was charged with heresy by Nicephorus in the tenth-century iconoclast controversy (Nicephorus, 1852-58, 1.305). Specifically, Nicephorus condemned Macarius for his belief in the Origenistic doctrine of the non-eternity of punishment (Crafer, 1907, p. 565 and n. 4).

to the divine after the act of creation. He then adds that the divine alone is unchanging. From these two premises he concludes that since creation is not divine it may change while the divine yet remains untouched. His argument here depends on a theology that makes a clear distinction between the divine creator and the created.

When the objector criticizes the Christians for not sacrificing to the lower gods or angels (4.23), Macarius again replies (4.29) with an argument from theology proper. He declares that while there may be lesser gods they are not gods in a true sense in that their divinity arises only from their association with the one God whereas the divinity of the latter is intrinsic to his nature (4.29).

Another example is Macarius' response to an objection (3.22) about Peter's conduct (Acts 12:6-17). The objection is that Peter who had been taught to face death courageously should not have fled when given the opportunity. Macarius begins his line of defence with an argument from the nature of God's will (3.29). Peter did not fear death; rather, it was in obedience to the divine will that he fled. It was God's will that Peter

preach in Rome and that Herod should not be permitted to frustrate the divine will. Therefore, as Peter was waiting to fulfill the divine will by preaching in Rome, it was incumbent upon him to flee when the opportunity was presented.²

11.2 Creation

The arguments discussed here are those which derive their validity from a particular view of creation. Oftentimes Macarius has recourse to the purpose and order of creation for proof of his points.³ One example is his reply to certain objections about the destruction and remaking of the world (4.6-7). Macarius argues (4.16) that since the world was made so that humans would have a place to live, when there are no longer any humans alive the earth may cease to exist. And when humans are re-created and require a new type of dwelling, the earth too will be re-created.

Another time Macarius (3.23) refers to creation in order to substantiate an argument for Jesus' saying

² For other arguments based on assumptions about the divine see *Apocriticus* 3.8 and 4.30

³ This argument has also been discussed above in chap. 8, *Metaphysics*.

"eat my flesh and drink my blood" (Jn. 6:5b). Macarius argues that because Jesus created the earth it is his, and since it is his, both the body he was wrapped in (*ex anthropou to soma labon enethropesen*) and the bread and wine which he had before him and which came from this same earth are in some sense equivalent in his eyes. Therefore, as creator, it was Jesus' prerogative to say that it was his flesh and blood or bread and wine which was being eaten.⁴

11.3 Christology

Of the many arguments founded upon certain views about the human and divine natures of Jesus, one example will serve to illustrate the point.

The combined human and divine natures are the crux of Macarius' answer to the criticism that Jesus acted inconsistently. The objector points out (3.7) that in one instance Jesus made the statement that he would not always be with his disciples (Mt. 26:11) and then later comforts them with the words, "I am with you always to the close of the age" (Mt. 28:20).

⁴ Other arguments based on creation are found in *Apocriticus* 3.43, 4.28, and 4.30.

Macarius' reply assumes that the objector believes Jesus was human, so he focuses his energy on proving Jesus' divinity. In his answer he refers to certain "scoundrels" who limit Jesus' omnipotence to his post-resurrection existence, comparing them to a certain group with the suggestive name of "*christomachoi*"⁵. He then appears to get sidetracked in his reply and begins attacking these *christomachoi* instead of directly answering the objector as one might expect.

Macarius' argument with the *christomachoi* develops as follows. He takes Jesus' promise to the thief on the cross, which the *christomachoi* used to prove Jesus' limited divinity, and renders it with the standard punctuation, so that instead of reading with the *christomachoi* punctuation, "Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise," it reads, "Verily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." The point of the altered *christomachoi* punctuation is that Jesus, as a man, did not have power to take the thief to Paradise, but after he had risen, as fully God, he could. Macarius exposes the

⁵ The term "*christomachoi*" was applied to some of the early Arians.

christomachoi with the sarcastic question, Did the thief alongside Jesus believe in him as a human or divine being? Macarius implies that it is impossible to separate the two natures, leaving it to the reader to puzzle out the dilemma⁶ he has constructed for the thief.⁷

Interestingly, having followed Macarius through his excursus against the *christomachoi* we find that it actually helps him to develop a stronger foundation for the rest of his argument.⁸ Since he has proven that the thief could not have meant humanity without divinity, Macarius has strengthened his position that Jesus is

⁶ Macarius identifies the problem here as a dilemma. The enthymeme of dilemma is discussed in *Rhetoric* 2.23.15, 1399a17-29.

⁷ If on the one hand he believes in Jesus only as a man, what is the logic in hoping in a man who is in the same predicament? On the other hand, how is he able to believe that Jesus is exclusively divine when he is able to see him suffering in a fleshly experience when he knows that God is incorporeal? The unstated conclusion Macarius wishes the reader to come to is that Jesus was both human and divine.

⁸ Another good example of how a digression actually augments his main argument can be found in 2.18 where a digression into the mystical value of a text ends up in adding another type of credibility to a challenged text. Not all his digressions are as successful. See further, chap. 12.4, Answers to Non-existent Objections.

both human and divine. And since it is from Jesus' two natures that he develops the rest of his answer his digression strengthens his case. He argues, then, that in the one instance when Jesus said he would not always be with them (Mt. 26:11) he was focusing on his humanity and, in the other, concerning his role as their eternal companion (Mt. 28:20), he was emphasizing his divinity.⁹

11.4 Soteriology

In these arguments Macarius draws on the church's teachings on salvation. When the objector criticizes Jesus' behaviour at his trial, comparing him to Apollonius of Tyana (3.1), Macarius (3.8) defends Jesus with an argument from soteriology. The objector has asserted that Jesus should have given signs at his trial as Apollonius of Tyana did (Philostratus, *Vita Apollonius* 8.1-14) and thus vindicate his claim to divinity. Macarius replies with the soteriological argument that it was necessary for Jesus to die, and so if he had given some sign of his divinity he would have

⁹ Further examples of arguments based on christological doctrines are *Apocriticus* 3.9, 3.14, 3.26, 3.27 and 4.28.

ruined his soteriological mission.¹⁰

11.5 Demonology

Macarius uses his considerable knowledge of demonology in a number of arguments. From such peculiar bits of information as the unsavoury odour of evil demons, Macarius finds further justification for Jesus' destruction of the herd of swine in Palestine (3.11). Crucial to Macarius' argument in this passage is the idea that demons can feel heat without corporeal bodies but are unable to gain relief from heat without the agency of corporeal bodies. Because the demons felt the burning fire of Jesus' gaze they wished to cool themselves off in the sea; however, since they could not achieve cooling in their incorporeal form they needed the agency of the pigs' bodies. Jesus was able to use this demoniacal quirk to demonstrate his power. Macarius thus uses his knowledge of demons to justify and explain Jesus' actions.¹¹

¹⁰ Other examples of soteriological arguments are to be found in *Apocriticus* 3.8, 3.9 and 3.41.

¹¹ Other examples of answers which depend on details of information about the devil and demons are *Apocriticus* 3.11; 3.27, and 3.42.

11.6 Eschatology

There are relatively few eschatological arguments in the *Apocriticus*. In his lengthy defence of the resurrection, however, Macarius argues from doctrines of the end-times. The objector has argued (4.24) against the destruction and subsequent restoration of the earth on the basis that the creator would not create things of such beauty and then stand by and watch as they melt.¹²

Macarius replies (4.30) that the earth does not perish without hope; rather, says Macarius, since the earth will be re-made, it is a cause for joy.¹³ Macarius could only have assurance about the positive outcome of the earth's re-creation from Christian theology, and by arguing as he does in this instance he is unlikely to

¹² The objector is here using an argument similar to that in 4.1: if the creator destroyed heaven and earth, he would be convicting himself of a poor job in making the first creation or would make himself culpable in changing the earth.

¹³ This answer is interesting because the objector in 4.1 has specifically stated that even if creation is to be re-made how can one know that it will be re-made for the better. In giving the answer he has, Macarius has either forgotten or purposely ignored the previous set of objections which contained the objection (4.1) that it is impossible to know whether or not a new creation would be made better than the present one.

convince a non-Christian.

11.7 Christian Hermeneutics

As one might surmise, a large number of the arguments revolve around questions of hermeneutics. Many such arguments arise from Macarius' allegorical interpretation. These have already been discussed as part of the general culture of the times and thus not peculiar to Christianity. Here we will focus on those hermeneutical arguments arising from strictly Christian beliefs.

As mentioned earlier (above, chaps. 5.3 and 10) Macarius often charges his opponent with misinterpreting or missing the true meaning of a text. In fact Macarius explicitly states (4.25) that the pagans do not understand Christian teachings and that their interpretations lead to contradictions; therefore, he exhorts his pagan objector to listen to the Christians and accept their interpretation (*di' hemon soi ten hermeneian epagontos*). Oftentimes Macarius does not state that the pagan has misinterpreted the scripture; rather, his usual method is first to give the correct interpretation and then proceed to reply from the new

interpretation. In these instances he usually does not present the rationale - premises and conclusions - for his interpretation but simply explains the doctrine or scripture from the Christian perspective.

For example, in answering an objection about Peter, Macarius simply gives a contradictory interpretation and proceeds to answer from it. The objection (3.19) arises from the incident in which Jesus tells Peter that he will establish his church on Peter (Mt. 16:23) but then later rebukes him as Satan. How is it that Jesus can confidently build his church on a person he later calls Satan and still claim to be consistent? Macarius replies (3.27) that the objector has neglected to include the context. When Jesus decided to build his church on Peter, it was in response to Peter's confession of Jesus' divinity. When Jesus rebuked him as Satan, however, it was in the context of Peter's attempt to dissuade Jesus from going to the cross.

In other instances he does argue in support of his alternative interpretation. In responding to an objection based on the use of the Old Testament in the New, Macarius employs a hermeneutic of proof from

prophecy. The objector states (3.3) that Jesus was wrong when he said Moses spoke of him. Macarius replies (3.10) that the objector ignores Moses' statement that a prophet would arise in his stead. Macarius claims that the objector has ignored what everyone acknowledges to be the proper interpretation, namely, that the prophet Moses referred to was Jesus.¹⁴

From these examples one sees that Macarius has a respectable understanding of theology and theological issues and draws on them effectively in responding to the objections.

¹⁴ This reply is one of the few instances I am aware of in which Macarius uses a fallacious argument--here an argument *ad populum*.

PART 5

CRITIQUE AND CONCLUSION

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12. CRITIQUE

12.1 Rationale

No evaluation of an argument is complete without some discussion of the efficacy of the answer in relation to the objection. Unfortunately we are unable to measure the effect of Macarius' answers on his pagan objector since the pagan is never given opportunity to question Macarius further or allowed to rebut an answer. It is possible, however, to examine the efficacy of the answers via a different route, namely, to note each point of the objector's argument, and then evaluate Macarius' reply to each of the points raised by the objector. One is then in a position to assess the cogency of Macarius' replies and to discuss the efficacy. One must remember, however, that a convincing argument in one circumstance is not necessarily the best possible argument.

One does not need look long to find weaknesses in Macarius' arguments. As the scholars of the last century were quick to point out, Macarius misses some important objections and neglects to give substantial answers to

other significant criticisms of certain points of Christian faith.

Having spent most of the preceding discussion examining Macarius' more effective answers, we will now consider some examples of Macarius' weaker arguments and then evaluate the effect of these arguments on the overall cogency of specific answers, and on the strength of Macarius' apology in general. The terms "argument," "answer," and "apology" will be used as follows: (1) "Argument" will be used to refer to the smallest complete unit of thought. An argument includes one or more premises and one or more conclusions drawn from those premises. (2) "Answer" will be used to refer to a single chapter. The chapters usually answer one chapter of objections and contain between three and eighteen arguments. (3) "Apology" will refer to the sum of all Macarius' answers.

The weaker answers may be divided into three categories: (1) answers in which Macarius fails to respond to an objection raised by the objector, (2) answers in which Macarius appears to have missed the point of the objection, and (3) answers to objections not raised by the objector. Each of these will now be

discussed in turn.

12.2 Neglected Objections

Among the answers in which Macarius neglects to respond to one or another of the objections, perhaps the most egregious one is his failure to respond to the objector's criticism of the New Testament's credibility and Jesus' wisdom in dealing with the herd of swine of Gerasa. The objector (3.3) inveighs against Christianity with nine related accusations of wrongdoing and stupidity: (1) Matthew reports two demons, while Mærk reports "many." (2) Jesus gave consideration to the wants of the murderous spirits, i.e., the demons. (3) He granted evil spirits their wish.¹ (4) Jesus drove the demons from one man and turned them loose on a herd of helpless swine. (5) Jesus terrified the swineherds. (6) To loose one person from bonds only to

¹ Macarius, in defending Jesus' cooperation with demons here, contradicts an earlier answer in which he too objects to Jesus' cooperation with demons. In fact, Macarius argues specifically against an objection (3.18) which charges Jesus with not following the best course of action simply because the better course of action was suggested by demons (3.26). The objector, too, contradicts himself, arguing at one point that God must work within the natural order (4.24) and elsewhere that he does not (4.2).

inflict the same bonds on others, or to free one person from fear only to bind others, is reprehensible. (7) Jesus is like a king who, unable to vanquish his foes, must drive them from one part of his domain to another, ruining each part in the process. He is unworthy of absolute confidence and lacking in potency. (8) How is it that a country in which swine are prohibited had a herd of so many thousand? (9) How could all those pigs be drowned in something as small as a lake (not a sea as the gospel writers claim)? The force of these objections may be summarized as follows: Jesus' integrity and wisdom is suspect and the New Testament is a collection of fanciful tales.

In his answer (3.11) Macarius ignores seven of the objections. His answer is made up of seven separate arguments which focus on restoring the credibility of Jesus and the New Testament.

(1) Macarius begins by arguing that the difference in the synoptic accounts may be explained by noting that Matthew's account speaks not of two people but only of two demons, while Mark identifies only one person possessed by many demons. Macarius offers a variety of possible reasons for the difference in the record but

offers none as the superior alternative. He has not proven anything but merely demonstrated that there are other possible conclusions than the one drawn by the objector.

(2) Macarius then turns to argue from the common use of language. He notes that sometimes a multiplicity of objects is referred to in the singular when the author is directing attention to the character of the objects as opposed to their quantity. He leaves the reader to infer the conclusion: when one reads a singular object in this gospel account, one must not assume that a singular object is the subject of discussion. Again Macarius has not disproved a legitimate criticism, nor has he declared that his interpretation of the record is necessarily correct, nor yet has he claimed that he has vindicated the accuracy of the gospels. He has simply - but for the reader, probably convincingly - implied that the gospels may be correct and are readily harmonized.

(3) His next argument is an argument from demonology. Demons needed relief from the burning torment of Jesus' gaze and needed to possess corporeal bodies to gain relief. In itself this argument adds

nothing directly to Macarius' answer but it is a necessary premise of his main argument explaining Jesus' release of the demons in argument seven below.

(4) To explain the existence of so many swine in the country of the Jews, Macarius draws the objector's attention to the fact that it was not only Jews who lived in the area. Historically the Jews had been under Roman dominion since the time of the Augustus and, even before him, Tiberius.² Macarius argues that the swine belonged to the Roman legions stationed there. He makes no conclusion explicit here but leaves it to the reader to infer that the New Testament claim of so many swine in Palestine is now credible. He adds that by driving the swine into the sea, the demons were acting as guardians of the Jewish law.

(5) His fifth argument corresponds to no extant objection. It is that Jesus is not demonstrating a lack of omniscience by asking the demon its name; rather, says Macarius, Jesus asks the question for the sake of those who stood by that they might know his power over a great number of demons. Again Macarius provides no

² Macarius' chronology is mistaken: Augustus was before Tiberius.

conclusion, but leaves it to the reader to see that Jesus is not precluded from divinity by asking his question.³

(6) The sixth argument is the heart of his answer. In it he argues from a number of premises in an attempt to persuade his reader that by allowing the demons to ruin the herd of swine Jesus did the best thing. He argues from an imagined dialogue between Jesus and the demons that (a) since demons have a foul smell, they wished to have a vehicle for their smell; (b) demons sought out some y, filthy animals to show the vileness of evil; (c) the spectacle of the demons bringing the swine to destruction would be a good warning to the bystanders of the peril of ignoring Jesus; and (d) the weakness of the demons would be manifest in that they had to ask permission even to seek out some lowly swine. From these four premises Macarius argues that the people would see the dire consequences of following evil and that by allowing the demons to destroy the swine Jesus taught a wise lesson.

(7) Macarius' final argument augments the previous

³ For a full discussion of the problem of answers to non-existent objections see below chap. 12.4.

one. Beginning with a premise established in the third argument - that demons need a corporeal body to obtain relief - Macarius adds an argument from human nature. He argues that people are reluctant to believe what they cannot see. Since without some tangible evidence the people would not believe Jesus had brought relief to the man and had actually driven the demons away, Jesus gave the demons leave to go into the pigs. As part of this argument Macarius mentions that the demons went into the abyss (via the sea) and stopped their rampage. Here again, without making his reply explicit, Macarius has refuted the charge that Jesus drove the demons from one group to another.

In summary Macarius' answer is that the gospels do not necessarily contradict one another and are not precluded from being accepted as historically accurate documents; and, furthermore, Jesus acted prudently in the situation. Macarius has not dealt a death blow to the objector in any one of his counter-arguments, nor has he proven any particular point positively. Rather, what Macarius has done is to undermine the basis of the objector's conclusions by offering an array of reasonable alternative explanations, alternative

emphases, and worthy motivations and goals, and by highlighting different aspects of the drama than did the objector.

No direct answers, however, are given to any of these seven objections. Has Macarius failed in his attempt to answer these objections? In answering this question I will examine these seven missed objections and in doing so will reconsider Macarius' arguments. The missed objections fall into groups.

First, objections (1) (Jesus was base to drive the demons from the man only to afflict the swine) and (3) (Jesus was base to harm the innocent animals), both of which disparage Jesus' actions in this instance. If we recall that Macarius has argued that the overall outcome was good, we may gain a different perspective on the whole event. In answer to (1) we might note that the pigs were removed from the Holy Land. While not a solution to the charge of cruelty (objection 3), by turning the focus of the argument, Macarius is able to justify the suffering of innocent animals to some degree.

On the issues of fear of the swineherds and the bystanders - objection (2) (Jesus was base to terrify

the swineherds) and objection (5) (it was wrong to instill fear in the bystanders) - Macarius vindicates Jesus indirectly by creating a fictitious dialogue in which the demons state that seeing the example of the swine would cause the people to fear a similar horrible end. From this perspective the fear is justifiable as a warning to people of the evil that will befall those who reject Jesus.

Though neglecting to confront directly the issue of Jesus' driving the swine from one group into another (objection 4) Macarius replies indirectly by noting that the demons at least left humans completely by plunging into the sea and thence into the abyss.

In reply to objection 6 - Jesus cooperated with this evangelizing demon - Macarius argues that the objection cannot be sustained for, as we have just noted, the demon, as presented by Macarius in the hypothetical dialogue, is most charitable to Jesus and his cause and suggests that Jesus use the event to teach the witnesses the consequences of following evil. And so, though Jesus may have worked with the demons in this

instance,⁴ the way Macarius presents the case, to have done otherwise would have been a morally inferior alternative.

The only objection that is not dealt with at all here is objection (7), that Gennesaret is a shallow lake, not a deep sea. However, Macarius deals with this objection elsewhere (3.13),⁵ when the objector criticizes (3.6) the gospel (Mt. 14:25, Mk. 6:48) for claiming that the disciples took twelve hours to cross this very stormy sea.⁶

To recapitulate the entire exchange, the objector has charged that inaccuracies and discrepancies in the gospels render them untrustworthy and that Jesus foolishly killed a large herd of swine and needlessly frightened the populace of an area. Macarius has

⁴ As noted in chap. 11.5, Demonology, Macarius seems to contradict himself because he explicitly states (3.26) that Jesus did not throw himself from the temple in order to avoid cooperating with the devil and so defeat himself at the very outset of his mission.

⁵ Answers 3.11 and 3.13 are part of the same larger answer that replies to the series of objections found in 3.1-3.7. Thus while Macarius does not deal with the problem directly in reply 3.11, he does deal with it in the same set of answers.

⁶ This objection appears to be taken from Porphyry; see Jerome, *Quaestiones hebraicae in Genesim* 1.10.

replied that the gospels contain no significant inaccuracy or discrepancy in this instance and that Jesus dealt with the situation in a commendable way, teaching the truth about evil. Thus in spite of what he has missed, it seems that Macarius would have persuasively answered the objection for his readers, removing its potential as a threat to the Christian faith. One must also keep in mind that Macarius may well have answered all of the objections, but since the history of the text is so obscure, it is impossible to know how the text may have been compiled, edited, or otherwise changed.⁷

No particular pattern emerges in the type of objections to which Macarius fails to respond. These include objections to such simple things as the evil of the person who accepts slander (2.21) as well as such complex issues as why Christians should suffer on account of their faith in an omnipotent loving deity

⁷ Other examples of Macarius' failure to reply to certain parts of the objection may be found in *Apocriticus* 2.17; 2.18; 2.19; 2.20; 2.21; 3.12; 3.23; 3.24; 3.25; 3.28; 3.29; 4.11; 4.12; 4.14; 4.27; and 4.30.

(2.19, 4.14).⁸

While some of the neglected questions are very difficult it does not seem that their difficulty has kept Macarius from answering them. Some of his other answers to equally difficult questions display a resourceful, ingenious mind, not given to retreat in the face of the perplexing discrepancies and hermeneutical problems found in the New Testament and Christian doctrine. A more plausible explanation would be that he considers his reply persuasive enough to mitigate the force of the objection and to turn the reader's attention from issues of logic to the greater issues of faith. In summary it is fair to say that what has been missed is of minor significance once the other parts of the objection have been dealt with as demonstrated in the example discussed above.

12.3 Misunderstood Objections

These weak answers result from Macarius' misunder-

⁸ This is the only time that an objection which Macarius has failed to answer is raised again later, albeit in a different context. A related argument may be found in 3.22 in which the objector points out Jesus' failure to protect Peter after promising him protection. We might note that Macarius fails (3.22) to address the problem in this answer as well.

standing of the objection, though relatively few in number (3.23; 4.17, and 4.25), are important since he has been criticized by modern scholars on this score.

In his reply (3.23) to the objection (3.15) about the crudity of the metaphor by which Jesus taught the importance of his own flesh and blood to salvation, Macarius mistakes the intent of the objection. The objector exclaims that no one, not even the uncivilized Scythians, condone such disgusting activities even metaphorically. Macarius understands the objection simply to mean that no one else has ever used the metaphor. Taken this way Macarius' reply is a good one. He claims that no one else has ever been entitled to use the metaphor since it is a metaphor suited only to its creator.

In fact Macarius goes on to claim it is not a metaphor but is to be taken literally as the body and blood of Jesus. Macarius explains his position as follows. Flesh and blood are the dry and wet products of the earth. Since Jesus made the earth, and from the earth made human bodies, of which he too partook (*ex anthropou to soma labon enenthropesen*), he may say that by offering bread and wine he is offering himself

through his body, which is as much a product of the earth as the bread and wine.

What is interesting here is the possibility that Macarius may have purposely misinterpreted the objection. This seems to me to be a reasonable possibility in this case, because by doing so he is able to move into a didactic discourse on the Christian doctrine of the necessity of Jesus' flesh and blood for salvation and to demonstrate Jesus' uniqueness as the creator incarnate and Jesus' brilliance in explaining the incarnation.

The other two places (4.17)⁹ and (4.25)¹⁰ where

⁹ 4.17 is a reply to two objections (4.8 and 4.9). In 4.8 the main point of the objection is that great things ought not to be represented by such lowly things as a mustard seed. Macarius does not reply that it is right to use a mustard seed to represent great things. Rather Macarius merely points out how Jesus' choice of the mustard seed is superior to the choices of other philosophers who also used similar lowly things to represent great concepts.

¹⁰ 4.25 is Macarius' reply to the objection (4.19) that the easy forgiveness offered by Paul discourages people from making an effort to live morally. The main point of the objection is that people will sin extravagantly if they know they can get forgiveness simply by receiving baptism. Macarius' extensive reply, made up of eleven different arguments, avoids the heart of the objection. He simply expounds on the divine prerogative to forgive and the doctrine of baptism, noting in particular that baptism does not change a person's character. He fails to address the problem of

Macarius fails to address the main point of the objection are not quite as obvious. What is obvious is that while his answers move one's thinking in a direction parallel to that which is called for in the objection, afterwards one finds that while the objection has not been answered it has lost its unsettling potential.

In a way the effect of Macarius' misunderstanding of objections is not unlike the effect of those answers in which he diverges from his topic. In these latter answers, in which he appears to broach a topic not raised or even one relevant to the argument, Macarius is able to bring the point of his digression back to bear on the topic of discussion. Likewise, in the answers in which he avoids the main point, Macarius is able to obscure the weakness pointed out by the attack. Whether Macarius is intentionally obscuring the issue is unclear, but by bringing up related issues his answer distracts the reader and thus serves to blunt the force of the objections.

easy forgiveness as promoting sin.

13.4 Answers to Non-existent Objections

A third problem with the answers in the *Apocriticus* is the presence of arguments which respond to no corresponding objection. The very real possibility exists that the objections may be somewhere in the missing books or that the objections may have been lost in editing processes. Goulet suggests that possibly Macarius is answering commonly known objections which he has chosen to edit out of the text (1984, p. 452). If Macarius is answering questions implied but not explicitly stated, readers in the twentieth century who are not aware of the implications each question carried would certainly miss them. In dealing with this problem, therefore, it should be kept in mind that we are not dealing with a complete or unedited MS, and so in making judgements about these answers we should remain cognizant of the fact that objections may have appeared elsewhere in the debate or in other earlier editions.

As with the previous problems there are not many answers with arguments responding to non-existent objections (2.17; 2.20; 3.10; 3.14; 4.13; 4.25; 4.30¹¹).

¹¹ There exists the possibility that Macarius was able to draw the arguments of this last reference (4.30) back to bear on the topic. We are unable to be certain

Nevertheless, they should be studied as they have been brought up as examples of Macarius' incompetence as an apologist.

First it should be noted that this "defect" may not be a defect at all, for according to Aristotle (*De Sophisticis Elenchis* 17, 176b26-28) a most effectual means of embarrassing one's opponent is to reply to an objection before he can raise it. It could be that Macarius knows what his objectors are thinking and anticipates their questions just as the objector does in one instance. The pagan (4.24) preempts the Christian apology that the resurrection is possible because God can do anything by pointing out a number of things God cannot do because of his nature. It may be that Macarius, too, has anticipated a question related to the passage and has chosen to answer it before it was raised.

One example of a response to a non-existent objection is Macarius' reply (2.17) to a criticism (2.12) about discrepancies in the gospels. The point of

because the MS ends in mid sentence in this chapter. If Macarius was able to tie in the seemingly irrelevant arguments in 4.30, the chapter would be an example of arguments that appear to be irrelevant . . . are later used to support another part of the argument.

the attack is that the gospels are not credible witnesses to the truth. In his reply Macarius gives four arguments in favour of the value of the gospels. One of these, an argument from historiography, answers no extant objection. Macarius argues that the goal of historical writing is to produce an accurate record of events. Accurate history, says Macarius, may require the author to use some barbaric words or poor style. Macarius then argues that since it is accurate history that the gospels are trying to give, their poor style is not to be criticized.

The objection, however, is not about the poor style of the gospels; rather it is about inconsistency in records which causes the objector to question the reliability of the historicity of the account of Jesus' death. Obviously, Macarius' argument defending the poor style of the gospels is quite off topic.

What is the impact of this irrelevant argument on the overall cogency of the answer? The other three arguments of the answer focus on the linguistic and circumstantial problems of reporting an event. What Macarius argues is that words are ambiguous indicators of events and that circumstances such as the earthquake

recorded in Matthew (27:51), greatly hamper any effort an observer/recorder might make to provide a calm, accurate account of the event. The conclusion is that different words may be used by different witnesses to describe the same event, and that discrepancies therefore reflect the confusion in the circumstances themselves rather than point to contradictory accounts.

The irrelevant argument evidently does not weaken the answer. Therefore, remembering that the attack focuses on the historical value of the gospels, Macarius' answer may actually be strengthened by the irrelevant argument if one accepts (1) Macarius' argument that the historical value of a work may be enhanced by certain sacrifices in style and (2) his attempt to argue this point by comparing the poor style of the gospels to the occasional barbarism of the great Greek historian, Herodotus.

In summary, the irrelevant arguments at least do not hinder the apologist's attempt to answer the objections. While not all of the seemingly irrelevant arguments support Macarius quite as well as the one just discussed, they usually serve as opportunities to teach the Christian faith.

This assessment of Macarius' answers may be concluded by noting that none of the problem arguments has any significant negative effect on the overall strength of the apology. In fact most casual readers would be likely to miss the discrepancies altogether since the arrangement of the work into series of seven or so chapters of objections followed by seven or so chapters of answers is not particularly conducive to remembering each point of the objection and evaluating the corresponding replies. In retrospect it is fair to say that none of the above faults - neglecting certain objections, misunderstanding the objection, and answering non-existent objections - has any serious negative consequences on Macarius' apology. Indeed, if these faults have any effect, it is likely positive effect and that Macarius has done well in replying to the biting criticisms put forth by the objector.

13. CONCLUSION

Only a few of the plethora of arguments which Macarius has used have been discussed in this thesis. An example of an argument not discussed here is drawn from his observations of human nature and daily life. These observations are one of the most fertile sources from which a sense of Macarius as a person and as an inhabitant of the Later Roman Empire can be gained.

One argument that draws on observations of human nature occurs in 3.26. Macarius notes the well-known phenomenon that if a person agrees to one suggestion, he is more likely to give in to another subsequent suggestion even if it is less agreeable than the first. On this basis, Macarius argues - contrary to the objection (3.18), which asserted the opposite - that Jesus was wise in not giving in to the devil's first suggestion that he throw himself from a temple turret to demonstrate his divinity, for, as the record indicates, the devil finally asked Jesus to worship him (Mt. 4:6-7). Macarius argues that had Jesus given in to the first suggestion he might also have given in to the

subsequent ones, which would have resulted in the complete failure of his mission.

Another such example is his reply (3.28) to the objection (3.21) that Peter was excessively harsh in his dealings with Annanias and Sapphira in the early church (Acts 5:1-11). Macarius makes his case from the observation that humans are inclined to do wrong if they see others getting away without receiving punishment.¹ On this basis, Macarius suggests that by cutting off Annanias and Sapphira at the beginning, God prevented their dishonesty from corrupting the whole group of early Christians.

Another argument that draws on observation of human nature is Macarius' response to a sly criticism (4.10) extrapolated from Jesus' statement, "Those who are well have no need of a physician" (Mt. 9:12, Lk. 5:31). The point of the objection is that since Jesus called only those who were unrighteous, those who are not called and not in need of the healing word of the Christians are the righteous. From this the objector concludes that the farther a person is from the healing word of the

¹ Aristotle discusses this phenomenon in his chapter on the criminal frame of mind *Rhetoric* 1.12.1-4, 1372a4-15.

Christians, the more righteous he is. A second, related objection from the same passage stems from the fact that the pagan forefathers needed healing just as much as the generation to which Jesus came; therefore Jesus is irresponsible for not coming earlier or does not care for all people.

Macarius' reply (4.18) is made up of several smaller arguments, by which he proves that Jesus came at a good time and that his work was retroactive. His argument from human nature comes later on in the answer. He first states that Jesus called everyone's ancestors and that each had opportunity to respond. That salvation was available to the ancestors is indicated by the indefinite or "horizonless" aspect of the aorist tense which Jesus used when he said, "I came not to call the righteous" (Mt. 9:13, Mk. 2:17, Lk. 5:31).² Since Jesus used the aorist, there is no time limit imposed. Thus Jesus places the responsibility on the ancestors' shoulders if they rejected his call. Here to prove his point he introduces experience from everyday life in the form of an allegory. He says that Jesus is like the sun.

² Mt. 9:13 and Mk. 2:17 have the aorist twice (*elthon kaiesai*) but Lk. the perfect followed by the aorist (*elelutha kaiesai*).

The sun is available to all people; however, some drunks prefer to avoid the sun and remain in darkness.³ The sun is not to be blamed for their choice any more than Jesus is to be held responsible for the pagan rejection of his message. Presupposed is the common habits of drunkards, who choose shade over sunshine.

Pedagogy would have been common knowledge to an educated person of that time. Accordingly, Macarius uses pedagogy to substantiate his refutation (3.25) of the accusation (3.17) that Christians do not cast mountains into the sea as Jesus said they would. No teacher asks his pupil to do something the teacher himself has not done. Thus Christians are correct in not casting mountains into the sea because Jesus their teacher did not do so.⁴

Our discussion of Macarius' arguments has led us through a maze of ancient scholarship, ancient thought,

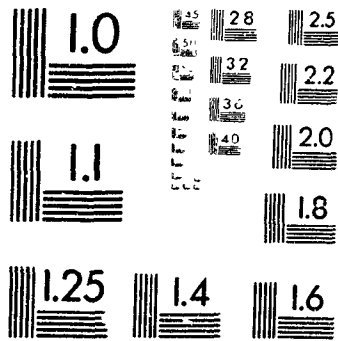
³ Aristotle holds the opposite opinion on the matter. He says drunks like the sun because they lack warmth which they then can get from the sun (*Problems* 3.29, 875b5-6).

⁴ Other arguments from human nature and daily life may be found in *Apocriticus* 3.12, 3.26, 3.38, 3.39, 3.42, 4.30, and 4.13.

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and early Christian doctrine. We have examined Macarius' use of arguments from many areas of science and philosophy. He offers arguments from ancient ideas of rhetorical theory, from allegorical interpretation, from Christian theology, as well as from observations of the society and culture of his time. We know no more about the identity of our author than we did at the beginning of our thesis; however, we have learned a number of other things.

Our study has pointed to the differences between ancient and contemporary methods of argumentation. By looking at Macarius' arguments through the eyes of his contemporaries, we have been able to evaluate his arguments more fairly and, as a result, have found that for readers in his day they are forceful, legitimate arguments, well suited to his purpose.

It is important for a modern reader of the *Apocriticus* to keep in view that background against which Macarius wrote and against which his ancient readers would have heard and evaluated what he said. The modern reader would also do well to note the wealth of information that the author had at his disposal and how he was able to use it in defending a particular

religious point of view.

This leads to our first conclusion. Macarius may not be an apologist of Origen's or Augustine's stature, but his apology certainly deserves more credit than it has been given in the past. I think his work has been too readily dismissed, often on invalid grounds. While not claiming to have proven this conclusively, I do think the present study certainly establishes grounds for further study and re-evaluation of the *Apocriticus*.

As previously mentioned, the identity of the author remains obscure. As a result of our study, however, we do know more about the person who stands behind the text. He was a well-educated, sensitive, thoughtful man who made an honest effort to deal with many serious and difficult objections to a cherished faith. He is a person who fits into what became a popular model in the late Roman empire: a man of education, a rhetorician, and an adherent to the Christian religion. He is very much a man of his times, who is best understood in his own context.

Metaphorically speaking, a mountain of research remains to be done. For example, one could search out all the references to various persons in the text,

identify them and try to compile more information about Macarius' education. Another study could look at the similarities between the objector and the author. Still another worthwhile project would be to trace the influence of the various pagan philosophies on the work. Another interesting study would be a detailed examination of the questions in a format similar to the examination here, or a thorough comparison of their rhetoric. If Macarius is responding to Hierocles - as suggested by Duchesne and Crafer - and if, as Eusebius says, Origen has sufficiently responded to Hierocles, a person could profitably compare the *Against Celsus* with the *Apocriticus*.

APPENDIX 1

Crafer and Harnack on Authorship

Since Crafer has summarized and responded to the eleven points and three summary statements made by Harnack in *Kritik des Neuen Testaments von einem griechischen Philosophen des 3. Jahrhunderts* (Harnack, 1911, pp. 137-40), we will follow Crafer's abbreviated version (pp. 96-141; cf. Crafer, 1914, pp. 363-75). Harnack thinks there are significant similarities between Porphyry and Macarius' objector in regard to the following:

(1) The religious philosophies of Porphyry and the objector are both Neoplatonic. Crafer replies that the *Apocriticus* displays no deep original thinking and that the author could as easily be Hierocles as Porphyry (Crafer, 1914, p. 363)

(2) The two authors manifest a generally humane ideology and disdain violence. Crafer notes that Harnack himself undermines this argument elsewhere (Harnack, 1911, p. 98, n. 1) by stating that many other pagans held these same views (Crafer, 1914, p. 363).

(3) Both the objector and Porphyry share a common belief

in the eternity of the heavens and earth, in an immutable, omnipotent God, and in "lower gods" and demons. Crafer notes that these beliefs were common to many thinkers of that time period, including the Neoplatonic schools (Crafer, 1914, p. 363).

(4) They both hold a favourable view of the Old Testament and Judaism "as opposed to Christian lawlessness." Crafer suggests that this so-called favour is nothing more than a means of attack and goes on to ask the question, "how did Porphyry favour Judaism?" (Crafer, 1914, p. 363).

(5) Both the *Apocriticus* and Porphyry's *Against the Christians* were written about the same time. Crafer objects that while Porphyry's work appeared c. 270, the objector in the *Apocriticus* wrote at least 20 years afterwards (Crafer, 1914, p. 363).

(6) Though both are from the East, they display an intimate knowledge of the traditions of the Roman church, suggesting a period of residence there. While admitting that this point concerning residence in Rome "suits well with Porphyry," Crafer asks why Macarius would direct his opponent's attention to the East, unless the opponent was well connected to the East to

begin with. Porphyry, who left Tyre early in life, is not to be considered an Easterner (Crafer, 1914, p. 364).

(7) That the objector and Porphyry use "a Western text and canon of the New Testament" is Harnack's next argument. Crafer notes that this point could apply as easily to any of Porphyry's followers as to Porphyry (Crafer, 1914, p. 364).

(8) Both use discrepancies in the gospels and apostolic practices to discredit the church. Crafer replies that this was a common Neoplatonic method for attacking Christianity (Crafer, 1914, p. 364).

(9) Harnack next points out that both critics share "method of controversy...learning and penetration." Crafer makes two points in answering this argument: (a) Porphyry, along with the other students of Plotinus, learned the same method; and (b) the sharp arguments against Christianity suggest "a clever use of existing philosophic arguments, combined with a full knowledge of the Christian writings, more than the actual language of ... an abstruse thinker." Hence, any of Plotinus' followers could have been the *Apocriticus'* objector (Crafer, 1914, p. 364).

(10) Both the objector and Porphyry share a number of specific words, phrases, and ideas in a number of places (twenty-four) (Crafer, 1914, pp. 365-9). Crafer considers only five of these in need of any extensive comment, the other nineteen being of minor significance or dealt with in his answers to 1-9 above (Crafer, 1914, p. 365).

The five Crafer addresses will now be set out.

(a) The *Apocriticus* 2.12-13 is an attack on the conflicting accounts of Jesus' death. Harnack observes that Jesus is not blamed for this and then suggests that this deference to Jesus is evidence of Porphyry, who treated Jesus with respect. Crafer points out that Harnack himself notes that a strong parallel exists between the objector's treatment and that of Hierocles (Crafer, 1914, p. 365; Harnack, 1911, p. 114).

(b) In the *Apocriticus* 3.6 and 3.4 the objector claims that the evangelists have misrepresented the lake of Genessaret as a sea. That this objection is Porphyry's we know from Jerome (*Quaest. Gen.* 1.10). Crafer simply states that it does not mean that the objector is Porphyry for it could easily have been taken from Porphyry by one of his followers (Crafer, 1914, p.

366).

(c) In the *Apocriticus* 3.15 the pagan objects to the symbolic cannibalism of the eucharist in a way that corresponds with Porphyry's views on the subject. In answer, Crafer cites Geffcken's comment that Macarius' objector is much milder in his objection than Porphyry is elsewhere on the same topic (Crafer, 1914, pp. 366-67; citing Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten*, Leipzig, 1907, p. 302, n. 1).

(d) The objector (4.10), asks, If Jesus came for the sick, why did he not come sooner, for certainly there were many sick in past generations? Augustine claimed Porphyry used this argument (Augustine, *Ep. ad Deograt.* 8). Crafer, however, draws attention to the fact that Augustine sees it as a common objection; he suggests therefore that a shortened version might well have been used by a follower (Crafer, 1914, pp. 367-8).

(e) The objection in the *Apocriticus* 4.24 is that a destroyed body cannot be resurrected. Augustine is supposed to have attributed this argument to Porphyry (*Ep. ad Deograt.* 2). However, there does not appear to be a veiled reference to Porphyry in this section of the epistle which deals with the topic of the resurrection.

Crafer notes this lack of explicit reference and moves on to Harnack's last main point and conclusions (Crafer, 1914, pp. 368-9).

(11) Both the objector and Porphyry seem once to have been close to Christianity and then to have left it. Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 10.28, and Socrates, *Church History* 3.23, are both cited as supporting this assertion. As well, Harnack thinks a tone of "bitter regret" can be detected in the statement, "it is no use flying to Jesus" (*Apocriticus* 3.4), as well as a remaining sympathy for Jesus. Crafer remarks that these findings of Harnack are rather weak and require some interpretation (Crafer, 1914, p. 369).

Furthermore, Crafer points out that a fragment of missing Book One deals with a miracle of Jesus, which suggests that Jesus was attacked in the first book (Crafer, 1914, p. 369). Also, the title "*Monogenes*," and Macarius' sentiment that his Master is being attacked, is better interpreted, says Crafer, with the understanding that Jesus was indeed attacked (Crafer, 1914, p. 370). Perhaps too much has been made of the objector's sympathies for Jesus.

Against Harnack's assertion that the objector seems

to defend Jesus, Crafer observes that elsewhere the objector defends the devil! Apparently, the objector "is ready to assume any position" to further his attack on Christianity (Crafer, 1914, p. 370).

Crafer then moves on to discuss Harnack's proposition that the objections were drawn from a collection of extracts of Porphyry's work.

With regard to the explicit reference to Porphyry and his work *Philosophy from Oracles* (*Apocriticus* 3.43), Harnack, while admitting that apparently Macarius did not know he was dealing with Porphyry, suggests Macarius' ignorance may have been the result of the suppression of Porphyry's work under Constantine (Crafer, 1914, p. 371; Harnack, 1911, pp. 141-2). Crafer suggests that a better interpretation might be that the work of Porphyry had a special significance to the objector which Macarius wished to capitalize on. As well, Crafer observes that Macarius likely had some knowledge of Porphyry's work, for he confidently refers to another of his books and so likely would have known if he was arguing with Porphyry in the *Apocriticus* (Crafer, 1914, p. 371).

Crafer then notes that a comparison of what is

known about Porphyry's book and the questions of the objector of Macarius conclusively disproves the identification of the objector with Porphyry. The final reason Crafer gives is that the order of the questions in Macarius is so completely opposite to what is known of Porphyry's work as to make the supposed book of excerpts highly unlikely (Crafer, 1914, p. 371).

Harnack observes that the tone of the objector is more animated than in the work of Porphyry (Harnack, 1911, p. 142). Crafer hypothesizes that this different tone is not suggestive of someone who has simply taken excerpts from Porphyry, but rather of a different author, whose work was based on Porphyry (Crafer, 1914, p. 372).

APPENDIX 2

Eusebius on Hierocles

Eusebius wrote *Contra Hieroclem* early in the fourth century (McGiffert, NPNF, 2 series, 3.32).¹ In his answer to Hierocles, Eusebius notes three important things. First, Eusebius points out that Hierocles has written a unique treatise; he knows of no other book like it (*Contra Hieroclem* 1.1, p. 487). This information is valuable in that it limits further conjecture about the possibility of other books with a similar theme.

Second, Eusebius supplies us with information about the contents of Hierocles' book. He claims that Hierocles drew parallels between Apollonius of Tyana and Jesus in an effort to discredit the Christian claim of Jesus' unique abilities as proof of his divinity (*Contra Hieroclem* 1.1, p. 485). Although Porphyry did use Apollonius as a platform from which to launch an attack on Christianity (Croke, 1984, pp. 3, 4), it should be

¹ The page numbers cited in this Appendix refer to Eusebius, *Contra Hieroclem* in Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Loeb edition.

kept in mind that Porphyry's comparison was between the disciples and Apollonius and not, as in Hierocles' comparison, between Jesus and Apollonius (Wilken, 1984, p. 159). Likely, the uniqueness Eusebius referred to earlier was this comparison of Apollonius with Jesus.

A third and valuable notation Eusebius makes is that most of the objections in the *Philalethes* (discussed above, chap. 1.4.2.b) are taken from the works of other critics, especially Celsus (1.1 p. 487). Rather than contradicting the first point regarding the uniqueness of Hierocles' work, this last point serves to strengthen the idea that the claim to uniqueness rests on the contrast and comparison of Apollonius and Jesus.

A final point that may further identify the *Philalethes* as the object of Macarius' response is Eusebius' comment that most of the objections Hierocles raised had been sufficiently responded to by Origen (1.1 p. 487). Presumably, then, some of the answers Macarius offers ought to be found in Origen's *Contra Celsum*.

Aside from Eusebius' direct information, much more evidence for Hierocles as objector can be drawn from even a cursory reading of the *Contra Hieroclem*. One notes seemingly similar attacks being answered. Both

Eusebius (1.2 p. 489) and Macarius (blocks 4 and 5; see Appendix 3) respond to attacks on the reliability and intelligence of the Apostles Peter and Paul.

Eusebius states that Hierocles accused the Christians of "reckless and facile credulity" and of being "mere foolish and deluded mortals" (1.4, p. 495). Macarius' objector certainly holds no high regard for his Christian opponents (e.g., *Apocriticus* 2.15-17, 3.17 etc.). Both Eusebius and Macarius answer to the logic (1.6, p. 499, 501; cf. *Apocriticus* 4.28) and possibility (*Contra Hieroclem* 4, p. 499; cf. *Apocriticus* 4.28) of the incarnation and both mention plagues and miracles in averting them (1.23, p. 54; cf. *Apocriticus* 3.24). Whereas Macarius felt it necessary to respond to the objections raised by comparing Apollonius and Jesus, perhaps Eusebius thought he could avoid having to answer these questions about their respective trials by disparaging the way in which Apollonius defended himself before Domitian (1.34-1.38, pp. 573-83; cf. *Apocriticus* 3.8).

One cannot help noticing the number of identical metaphors in Eusebius' and Macarius' respective replies, e.g., fish in water that are unable to defy nature and

live on land (1.6., p. 499; cf. *Apocriticus* 4.2).

From these similarities it seems that both Eusebius and Macarius were answering some of the same arguments arising from the comparison of Apollonius and Jesus. However, Macarius and Eusebius seem to have taken different approaches in their responses, the former answering the supposed objections and the latter by attacking the person who was being compared to Jesus. Interestingly, Eusebius' method of criticism is quite like that of Macarius' objector. They both attack not only the man but also his disciples and question the reliability of the historical accounts (1.39., p. 587; 3.38, p. 581; cf. *Apocriticus* 2.12-16; 3.1-7, 15-22, 30-36; 4.1-18).

A few questions come readily to mind when one considers the work of Hierocles as the work to which the *Apocriticus* is responding. Crafer seems to have anticipated them, and so I offer his solutions here.

Despite Eusebius' claim that Hierocles plagiarized from Celsus, Crafer counters that from what we know of Hierocles' work, it could not have been taken from Celsus (Crafer, 1914, p. 383). Instead, Crafer suggests it was Porphyry's work on which Hierocles drew (Crafer,

1914, p. 383).

Since so little is known of Hierocles' life no particular contradiction can arise from comparison of the objector's knowledge of Rome and the East and Hierocles' knowledge of them (Crafer, 1914, p. 386).

APPENDIX 3

An Outline of the Arguments in the *Apocriticus*

In what follows, 2.12 is answered by 2.17, 2.17 by 2.18, etc. All references are to chapters of the *Apocriticus*.

BOOK 2

Block 1: 2.12-21

Objections 2.12-16

- 2.12 The gospel narratives are not trustworthy because they contain contradictory accounts of Jesus' life.
- 2.13 The Gospel of John is untrustworthy and the accounts of Jesus' passion and death are guesswork.
- 2.14 Jesus' post-resurrection appearances were so poorly chosen that it seems unlikely that he even rose.
- 2.15 Jesus' sayings are foolish and the gospels are valueless nonsense.
- 2.16 Jesus' judgement is suspect because he cast out the Slanderer without considering all sides of the case.

Answers 2.17-21

- 2.17 The gospels have preserved the essential facts.
- 2.18 The gospels are historical documents independent of one another and have significant mystical meaning.
- 2.19 Jesus made no post-resurrection appearance to the authorities to prove that he was independent of them and that the resurrection involved no intrigue.
- 2.20 A textual variant significantly changes the meaning as does an alternative understanding of the grammar.

BOOK 3

Block 2: 3.1-14

Objections 3.1-7

- 3.1 Jesus' silence at his trial was foolish. In a confrontation with an emperor the divine person should give advice.

- 3.2 Jesus is a hypocrite for telling his disciples not to fear death and then praying in fear for deliverance.
- 3.3 Jesus is ignorant of Old Testament tradition since all of Moses' books were burned and nothing was written about Jesus.
- 3.4 Jesus acted foolishly in Cerasa, harming human and beast.
- 3.5 Jesus' teaching about the difficulty of rich people entering heaven is ridiculous. Poverty is not a virtue.
- 3.6 The gospel story of Jesus' walk on the water is incredible when one considers geographical data.
- 3.7 Jesus contradicts himself, saying once he will always be with his disciples always and elsewhere that he will not.

Answers 3.8-14

- 3.8 Jesus acted wisely at his trial, fulfilling prophecy and proving that he was truly human.
- 3.9 Jesus is not a hypocrite but had to pretend fear in order to fool the devil into attempting to kill him.

- 3.10 Jesus is the central figure of Old Testament prophecy.
- 3.11 Jesus acted wisely, turning the circumstances into a good testimony of his divinity.
- 3.12 Jesus does not teach poverty as a virtue but that riches are not the most important thing in life.
- 3.13 Geography is a problem, but the story is not to be taken too literally; it has a significant allegorical meaning.
- 3.14 Jesus was speaking in his human body on one occasion and in his resurrected body in another.

Block 3: 3.15-29

Objections 3.15-22

- 3.15 The gospels are to be rejected because of such extreme crudities as the saying about eating flesh.
- 3.16 Christians lack faith because they do not perform the miraculous signs Jesus said could be done with faith.
- 3.17 Christians lack faith because they do not cast down mountains as Jesus said those with faith would.
- 3.18 Jesus is not divine or he would have jumped from

the temple and proved it to the multitude.

- 3.19 Jesus is untrustworthy because he was unable to see Peter's impending fall. The church founded on Peter is untrustworthy, as is its leader.
- 3.20 Peter is immoral since he disobeyed Jesus' command to forgive and instead cut off the High Priest's servant's ear.
- 3.21 Peter is unjust in killing Ananias and Sapphira when he had been forgiven for denying Jesus.
- 3.22 Peter is a scoundrel for fleeing Herod, thus bringing death to the guards. Jesus is foolish for choosing him, and a liar because hell did prevail as proven by Peter's martyrdom.

Answers 3.23-29

- 3.23 The saying about eating flesh is an incomparable allegory for what Jesus was trying to teach.
- 3.24 Christians do not lack faith; the objector has misinterpreted the passage. Miracles are of different types.
- 3.25 Christians do not lack faith; the objector has misinterpreted the passage. Mountain is a metaphor for demon.

- 3.26 Jesus acted wisely in the situation at the temple by not cooperating with the devil but then complying with later requests by demons.
- 3.27 Peter had an unshakable divine revelation which the devil wished to discredit. Jesus recognized the words Peter spoke as those of the devil and addressed the devil, not Peter.
- 3.28 Peter is not unjust because he was not acting on his own but merely as an agent of the divine. God is responsible.
- 3.29 Peter is not a hypocrite but obedient to the divine will.

Block 4: 3.30-43

Objections 3.30-36

- 3.30 Paul is weak-minded because he claims to be free and yet a slave to all, to be free from the law and yet circumcises Timothy.
- 3.31 Paul is an untrustworthy liar because he tells one group he is a Jew and then tells others he is Roman.
- 3.32 Paul is greedy and impious, using the scriptures

for worldly gain.

- 3.33 Paul is confused about the law, saying in one place that it is good and in another that it is cursed.
- 3.34 Paul contradicts himself, sometimes using the law authoritatively and at other times condemning it.
- 3.35 Paul's commands are ambiguous, once telling readers to refrain meat offered to idols and another time to eat it.
- 3.36 Paul admits to not knowing God's will and so should not be leading the church.

Answers 3.37-43

- 3.37 Paul was wise in recognizing when to use diplomacy and demonstrated as much by circumcising Timothy when he did.
- 3.38 Paul shows good strategy by leaving those who reject him and joining those who accept him.
- 3.39 Paul was reasonable in requesting support for his work especially as it was mutually beneficial; giving is good.
- 3.40 Paul is not contradicting himself but is merely pointing out problems in following a complex law code.

- 3.41 Paul means that the law added death as the penalty for sin and that if one wishes to flee the penalty one must go to Jesus the law-maker.
- 3.42 Paul realized people had to live in a pagan world and so makes a distinction between temple and commercially butchered meat.
- 3.43 Paul foresaw the problems heretics would introduce concerning virginity and left it to individual choice.

BOOK 4

Block 5: 4.1-18

Objections 4.1-10

- 4.1 Paul is foolish to say the world will pass away. He convicts the creator of wrongdoing.
- 4.2 Paul is wrong about humans being caught up at the parousia. It is impossible and against natural law.
- 4.3 Matthew is wrong when he writes that the end will come when the world is evangelized. The world has been evangelized and the end has not come.

- 4.4 Jesus prophesied protection for both Peter and Paul; yet both met untimely deaths.
- 4.5 Jesus was wrong when he said many would come in his name. Three hundred years have passed with no one making the claim.
- 4.6 Why will heaven undergo judgement when it has done no wrong but has preserved the natural order?
- 4.7 Saying the heavens will be destroyed is impious. If they are destroyed God will have no residence.
- 4.8 The Bible is not a divine book because it has impious analogies and obscure sayings.
- 4.9 The Bible is not a divine book because it promises rewards to the ignorant.
- 4.10 The righteous are not called because they have not strayed and so do not need Christian healing. Christians are the ones who have strayed and are unrighteous.

Answers 4.11-18

- 4.11 The passage is not necessarily literal. Earth does change and so may have an end.
- 4.12 The passage is not necessarily literal but clouds

can draw up water and angels have transported humans.

4.13 The term "end" has different meanings. As well, Macarius offers the names of unevangelized groups.

4.14 The martyrdoms of Peter and Paul were great inspiration to the church. They were often protected from the Jews.

4.15 Jesus was right as is proven by the heretics Macarius lists.

4.16 Earth was created as an abode for humans and so when humans no longer live on it there is no need for its existence.

4.17 Pagans have made similar analogies and, furthermore, the ones in the Bible are better by comparison.

4.18 The righteous referred to are the angels. The unrighteous are humans, so it is a call to all humans.

Block 6: 4.19-30

Objections 4.19-24

4.19 The Christian teaching of forgiveness promotes

lawlessness.

4.20 Christians are wrong in their belief in the monarchy of God because monarchy implies rule by an equal.

4.21 Christians are wrong in not realizing that the angels are gods and are rude in not honouring them by sacrificing to idols.

4.22 The Christian doctrine of the incarnation is disgusting. How could anyone imagine God in the blood and gall of a womb?

4.23 The Bible commands the worship of the gods and God is not petty enough to begrudge the use of the name.

4.24 The doctrine of the resurrection is foolish, and contradictory to the natural order. Furthermore, it is impossible to think of all who ever lived existing together on earth. Finally, earth will not be destroyed.

Answers 4.25-30

4.25 A Christian is only justified once he or she has stopped sinning. To keep sinning is to nullify one's baptism.

- 4.26 Human "monarchy" is different from divine "monarchy." The lower gods are not divine by nature.
- 4.27 The lives of the angels in heaven are an encouragement to humans to live a holy life.
- 4.28 A virgin is the purest means possible of entering human life. The incarnation is unlike the gross pagan stories.
- 4.29 The Bible has been misinterpreted. It does not support the worship of angels and it is not a point of pettiness.
- 4.30 Only the divine is unchanging. God shows his concern in creating the world and so when it is destroyed he will re-make it. The world has to be re-made to end evil, which would otherwise continue perpetually.

INDEX¹

Apocriticus

- (2.12) 84, 87, 106, 177
- (2.12-16) 48
- (2.13) 76, 142
- (2.14) 73, 133
- (2.15) 93, 95
- (2.16) 98
- (2.17) 176
- (2.17) 69, 84, 86, 106, 177
- (2.17-21) 48
- (2.18) 76, 89
- (2.19) 171
- (2.19) 73, 133
- (2.20) 94, 96, 101, 176
- (2.21) 88
- (2.21) 98, 171
- (3.1) 153
- (3.1-7) 48
- (3.2) 80
- (3.3) 77, 130, 158, 162

¹ The index does not include material from the footnotes or appendices.

Apocriticus

- (3.4) 81, 94, 104, 108
- (3.5) 112
- (3.6) 105, 141, 170
- (3.7) 83, 150
- (3.8 Proem) 96
- (3.8) 86
- (3.8-14) 48
- (3.9) 93
- (3.10) 77, 130, 158, 176
- (3.11) 94, 104, 108, 154, 163
- (3.12) 113
- (3.13) 105, 142, 170
- (3.14) 83, 89, 93, 176
- (3.15) 92, 113, 172
- (3.15-22) 48
- (3.17) 91, 143, 184
- (3.18) 181
- (3.19) 102, 157
- (3.21) 99, 182
- (3.22) 78, 109, 148
- (3.23) 87, 92, 113, 149, 172
- (3.23-29) 48

Apocriticus

- (3.25) 91, 143, 184
- (3.26) 181
- (3.27) 87, 102, 157
- (3.28) 182
- (3.29) 79, 109, 148
- (3.30) 78
- (3.30-37) 48
- (3.33) 127
- (3.35) 87
- (3.37) 78, 87
- (3.38) 89
- (3.38-43) 48
- (3.39) 93
- (3.40) 127
- (3.42) 87
- (3.43) 88, 96
- (4. Prooemium) 86
- (4.1) 74, 119, 125
- (4.1-10) 48
- (4.2) 31, 143
- (4.3) 122
- (4.4) 111

Apocriticus

- (4.5) 30
- (4.6, 4.7) 144
- (4.6) 124
- (4.6-7) 149
- (4.7) 124
- (4.8) 75, 121
- (4.9) 121
- (4.10) 182
- (4.11) 74, 86, 119, 125
- (4.11-18) 48
- (4.12) 143
- (4.13) 122, 176
- (4.14) 111, 171
- (4.16) 90, 124, 144, 149
- (4.17) 75, 121, 172, 174
- (4.18) 89, 183
- (4.19) 72
- (4.19-24) 48
- (4.20) 131
- (4.21) 127, 129
- (4.22) 82, 132
- (4.23) 148

Apocriticus

- (4.24) 114, 115, 120, 126, 147, 155, 177
 (4.25) 43, 72, 156, 172, 174, 176
 (4.25-30) 49
 (4.26) 130
 (4.27) 127
 (4.28) 82, 129, 132
 (4.29) 148
 (4.30) 114, 115, 120, 126, 147, 155, 176

Aristotle

- Analytica Posteriora 1.1, 71a.5- 71a15 63
 De Sophisticis Elenchis 17, 176b26-28 177
 Ethica Nichomachia A1, 1094a 18f. 54
 Metaphysics 1.8, 989a24 120
 7, 1044a36-b11 124
 10.1, 1052b1-1053b8; 14.1,
 1087b33-1088a14 127
 11.7, 1064b 54
 Physics 2.7, 198a24f 124
 Poetics 7, 1451b1-7 and 23, 1459a22-29 104
 Rhetoric 1.1.1 1354a1 60
 1.1.1-10, 1354a1-1355b21 58

Rhetoric	1.1.1-2, 1354a-1355b	60
	1.10.4, 1368b21-22	110
	1.2.8, 1356b5	63
	1.2.8, 1356b5	129
	2.20.1, 139321-25	62
	2.20.3-9, 1393b9-1394a9	62
	2.20.1, 1393a21-25;	63
	1400b33	63
	2.20.1, 193a21-25	62
	2.20.2-4, 1393a30-1393b3	62
	2.20.3, 1395b25-33	63
	2.20.3-4, 1393b4-9	62
	2.20.7-8, 1394a	77
	2.20.9, 1394a	74
	2.21.1-15, 1394a19-1395b20	84
	2.22.1, 1395a20- 2.23.30,	
	1400b35	63
	2.22.3, 1395b30-1396a3	64
	2.23.1, 1397a6-19	85
	2.23.1-30, 1397a6-	
	1400b34	64
	2.23.10, 1400a21-27	132
	2.23.12, 1399a7-10	85

Rhetoric	2.23.19, 1399b20-30	83
	2.23.14, 1399a17-29	81
	2.23.24, 1400a29-40	80
	2.23.23, 1400a21-28	85
	2.23.26, 1400b4-8	85
	2.23.3, 1397a23-b12	85
	2.23.3, 1397a23-1397b11	110
	2.23.7, 1398a3-14	82
	2.24.10-11, 1398a32-1399b6	85
	3.1.1., 1403b5-7 and 3.1.7., 1404a13-15	61

Topics 2.3, 110b18 112

5.3. 141a19 112

Augustine

Epistle ad Deogratius 8 21

2 21

Biblical Passages

1 Corinthians 6:11 72

7:31 125

7:31 119

7:31 74

Acts 5:1-11 182

Acts 12:5-11	79
12:6-17	118
12:18-19	148
17	3
Galatians	3
Isaiah 34:4	124
66:1	144
John 12:31	93
19:34	76
5:46	130
6:54	92, 113
6:5b	150
6:16	141
8:34-59	98
Luke 16:19-31	76
5:31	182, 183
Mark 5:1	104
6:28	141
6:48	170
Mark 16:18	13
Matthew 4:6-7	181
8:31	104
9:12	182, 183

Matthew	10:28	80
	14:25	141, 170
	16:17-19, 16:23	102
	16:23	157
	19:24	112
	26:11	150, 153
	26:11	83
	26:39	80
	28:20	153
	28:20	83, 151
1 Thessalonians	4:15-17	143

Cicero

Ad Herrenium	1.2.3	61
	4.33.45	95
De oratore	2.42.178	86

Clement of Alexandria

Miscellanies	5.4	139
--------------	-----	-----

Eusebius

Church History	8.1-2 and 8.1.5	30
----------------	-----------------	----

Homoousios

43

Jerome

Quaestiones im Genesim	1.10	21
------------------------	------	----

Justin Martyr

1 Apology 5-6 4

17 4

Origen

Against Celsus 4

1.14-63 4

2.37 145

Hexapala and Tetrapala 101

On First Principles 4.1.11 140

Photius

Bibliotheca Codex 59 11

Quintillian

Education of an Orator 8.6.1 90

Tatian

Address to the Greeks 6 126

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