From Sayings to Texts:
The Literary Contextualisation of Jesus's Words in The Writings of Tertullian and Origen

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Doctor of Philosophy
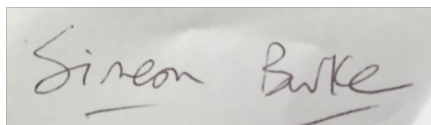**New Testament and Christian Origins**
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Declarations

I confirm that this thesis presented for the degree of PhD, has
i) been composed entirely by myself
ii) been solely the result of my own work
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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis addresses the subject of the early Christian re-use and interpretation of the words of Jesus. Unlike previous studies, which focus predominantly on the text of, and sources for, citations of Jesus's sayings in the first two centuries, I examine the neglected hermeneutical principles and methods that early Christian authors employ when reading Jesus's words. I begin by demonstrating that the dominant paradigm for reading Jesus's words in the first two centuries of the common era was the non-contextualized saying. This trend matches the broader use of the words of wise figures among contemporaneous Greco-Roman authors. To be sure, one finds evidence of literary contextualisation—the process of drawing on the literary context for interpretive purposes—in Roman-era commentaries on Homer and the Hebrew Bible. Early Christian authors like Irenaeus, Justin and Clement, however, rarely apply such practices to the words of Jesus and rarely reflect on the methods and principles they employ when reading his sayings.

I argue that two significant early Christian authors—Tertullian of Carthage (ca. 155–220 CE) and Origen of Alexandria (ca. 180–253 CE)—are the first to develop hermeneutical principles for the interpretation of Jesus's words. They do so by elevating the immediate literary context of Jesus's words to the level of a normative principle. By "literary" context, I refer to the immediate narrative in which Jesus's sayings appear. I substantiate this case by focussing, in particular, on their re-use of climactic sayings of Jesus that reside within larger pronouncement stories in the Synoptic Gospels. A key example is Jesus's command to "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" which memorably concludes the tribute passage (Matt. 22.15-22 and parallels). Literary contextualisation therefore refers to the use of the immediate textual context of Jesus's words for explicitly interpretive purposes. The crucial assumption that underlies Tertullian and Origen's practice of literary contextualisation is that the significance of Jesus's words is tied to, and mediated by, their immediate literary context. Tertullian and Origen's use of the immediate literary context of Jesus's words resulted in, and was a core component of, a disciplined effort to exegete his sayings.

With Tertullian and Origen, the *perception* of Jesus's sayings, and the *principles* used to interpret them change in significant ways. First, Tertullian and Origen understand Jesus's climactic sayings not as non-contextualized, individual fragments of teaching but as pronouncements that belong within larger literary units. Furthermore, they conceive of his sayings as scriptural texts that require interpretation in light of a larger scriptural corpus that they connect with the immediate context of Jesus's words. Second, and in so doing, they transform the standard methods used to interpret Jesus's sayings. I argue that Tertullian and Origen's "hermeneutic of literary contextualisation"—the practice of reading Jesus's sayings in light of their literary contexts—consists of three reading strategies. First, and most significantly, both authors reproduce the entire biographical narrative in which Jesus's sayings reside as a way of intentionally countering perceived "non-contextualisation" of Jesus's pronouncements. Second, and relatedly, Tertullian and Origen employ fine, textual details from the anecdote as a way of interpreting and clarifying the significance of Jesus's words. Third, both authors interpret Jesus's sayings in light of intertexts drawn from the Christian scriptures more broadly, which they connect with the co-text of Jesus's words. Taken together, these reading practices reflect a significant shift away

from reading Jesus's words as *sayings*, or literary fragments, to interpreting them as *texts* embedded within a literary context.

To account for this development, I argue that the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation employed by Tertullian and Origen fundamentally emerges from a complex set of historical, ideological and literary factors. Most crucial of all, I suggest, are the shifting principles involved in early Christian debate. Whereas early Christian authors were naturally more focussed on debating the *authority* of Jesus's sayings, and the textual sources in which they resided, such issues no longer remain as pertinent for Tertullian and Origen. Instead, they take up issues centred on the *interpretation* of Jesus's words. I therefore argue that Tertullian and Origen are among the first early Christian authors to explicitly consider the hermeneutical implications of reading Jesus's words in light of their literary contexts.

Lay Abstract

This thesis addresses the subject of the early Christian re-use and interpretation of the sayings of Jesus. Unlike previous studies, which focus predominantly on the text of, and sources for, early Christian citations of Jesus's sayings, I examine the neglected principles and methods that early Christian authors employ when reading Jesus's words. I begin by demonstrating that the dominant paradigm for reading Jesus's sayings in the first two centuries of the common era was the non-contextualised moral pronouncement. This trend matches the broader use of moral sayings among Greco-Roman authors. I argue that two significant, early Christian figures—the Latin, Western writer, Tertullian of Carthage (ca. 155–220 CE) and the eastern author, Origen of Alexandria (ca. 180–250 CE)—are the first to develop rules that prioritise the literary context of Jesus's words. I substantiate this argument by focussing, in particular, on their re-use of climactic sayings of Jesus that reside within larger pronouncement stories in the Synoptic Gospels. A key example is Jesus's command to "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" which memorably concludes the tribute passage (Matt. 22.15-22 and parallels). Both authors, I contend, elevate the literary contexts of Jesus's sayings to the level of a normative principle. By "literary" context, I refer to the immediate biographical narrative in which the sayings of Jesus in question appear as well as broader set of scriptural texts which these two authors associate with that biographical narrative. In documenting Tertullian and Origen's use of literary context when interpreting Jesus's sayings, I offer the first extensive analysis of the development among early Christian writers of rules for reading Jesus's words as lines of text embedded within a literary context. The result is a fresh contribution to the study of how early Christians both interpreted Jesus's words and reflected on that interpretive process.

Abbreviations

I use the following abbreviations for early Christian and ancient works.

1 Apol.	Justin, *1 Apology*
1 Clem.	*1 Clement*
2 Clem.	*2 Clement*
AM	Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*
Adv. Prax.	Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean*
Ben. Isaac	Hippolytus, *On the Benedictions of Isaac*
CC	Origen, *Against Celsus*
CommDan	Hippolytus, *Commentary on Daniel*
CommCant	Origen, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*
CommJo	Origen, *Commentary on John*
CommMt	Origen, *Commentary on Matthew*
CommRom	Origen, *Commentary on Letter to the Romans*
De Bapt.	Tertullian, *De Baptismo* (Concerning Baptism)
De Carne	Tertullian, *De Carne Christi* (*Concerning the Flesh of Christ*)
De Cor.	Tertullian, *De Corona Militis* (*Concerning the Military Crown*)
De Fuga	Tertullian, *De Fuga in Persecutione* (*Concerning Flight from Persecution*)
De Idol.	Tertullian, *De Idololatria* (*Concerning Idolatry*)
De Mon.	Tertullian, *De Monogamia* (*Concerning Monogamy*)
De Praes.	Tertullian, *De Praescriptione Haerticorum* (*Concerning the Prescription of Heretics*)
De Pud.	Tertullian, *De Pudicitia* (*Concerning Modesty*)
Did.	*Didache*
EP	Clement, *Eclogae Propheticae*
HE	Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*
Haer.	Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*
Hom. in. Ex	Origen, *Homilies on Exodus*
Hom. in. Gen.	Origen, *Homilies on Genesis*
Hom. in Jer.	Origen, *Homilies on Jeremiah*
Hom. in Lev.	Origen, *Homilies on Leviticus*
Hom. in Luc.	Origen, *Homilies on Luke*
Hom. in. Num.	Origen, *Homilies on Numbers*
Hom. Quaest.	Porphyry, *Homeric Questions*
Il.	Homer, *Iliad*
Inv.	Cicero, *De inventione*
PA	Origen, *On First Principles*
Paed.	Clement, *Paedagogus*
Phil.	Origen, *Philocalia*
Praep. Ev.	Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*
Scorp.	Tertullian, *Scorpiace*
Strom.	Clement, *Stromateis*

I use the following abbreviations for the secondary literature.

ACW	Ancient Christian Writers

BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
CBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CR	*Classical Review*
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EC	*Early Christianity*
EKK	Evangelisch Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhundert
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
IJST	*International Journal of Systematic Theology*
JbAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christianity*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library for New Testament Studies
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSupp	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
SBR	Studies in the Bible and Its Reception
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SecCent	*Second Century*
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	*Studia Patristica*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VCSuppl	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
Weber-Grayson	*Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, *Editio quinta*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAC	*Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum*

Introduction

The words of Jesus were central to the life and identity of the earliest Christian communities. Within a generation of his death, his followers appear to have reflected upon, transcribed and collected his sayings for preservation. While of immense significance and authority, Jesus's sayings were not always the subject of disciplined exegesis. This raises an important question: When did Jesus's words become the object of early Christian interpretation?

In this study, I trace the significant point at which early Christians began to treat Jesus's words as lines of text embedded within a broader literary context. I investigate the development among early Christian writers of hermeneutical reflection and exegetical rules for reading and interpreting Jesus's words. I argue that the standard way in which early Christian authors read Jesus's words in the first two centuries was to employ them as literary fragments without attending to the immediate textual milieu surrounding Jesus's pronouncements. When early Christians read Jesus's words as literary fragments, their focus was not primarily on exegeting those words—clarifying, explicating and explaining their meaning and significance in a methodical and disciplined fashion—but on using them for further ends.

I trace the initial steps that early Christian authors took in both employing and drawing attention to the literary context of Jesus's words when interpreting his sayings. I argue that two significant early Christian authors—Tertullian of Carthage (ca. 155–220 CE) and Origen of Alexandria (ca. 180–253 CE)—are the first to develop hermeneutical principles for the interpretation of Jesus's words. They do so by elevating the immediate literary context of Jesus's words to the level of a normative principle. By "literary" context, I refer to the immediate narrative in which Jesus's sayings appear. I substantiate this case by focussing, in particular, on Tertullian and Origen's citations of climactic sayings of Jesus that reside within larger pronouncement stories in the Synoptic Gospels. A key example is Jesus's command to "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" which memorably concludes the tribute passage in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 22.15-22 and parallels). Literary contextualisation therefore refers to the use of the immediate textual context of Jesus's words for explicitly interpretive purposes. The crucial assumption that underlies Tertullian and Origen's practice of literary contextualisation is that the

significance of Jesus's words is tied to, and mediated by, their immediate literary context. Tertullian and Origen's use of the immediate literary context of Jesus's words resulted in, and was a core component of, a disciplined effort to exegete his sayings.

Tertullian and Origen's contemporaries and predecessors, by contrast, tended to read Jesus's words as non-contextualised "sayings" and not as textually embedded pronouncements. These authors—figures like Justin Martyr (ca. 100–165 CE), Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130–200 CE) and Clement of Alexandria (150–ca. 215 CE)—emphasised the vitality and power of Jesus's words and employed them as fragments, without recourse to their immediate literary context. As a consequence, they rarely sensed the need to negotiate the meaning of Jesus's words through the surrounding narrative. I suggest that it is not that Tertullian and Origen's predecessors were necessarily *unaware* of the larger textual sources in which Jesus's words could be found. Rather, these authors' concerns when using Jesus's sayings centred on the authority—establishing the prominence and importance of Jesus's words—and their sources—the textual basis of his pronouncements. What was the status of Jesus's sayings? Where could one reliably find and read the text of his words? These, I argue, were the pressing issues these earlier authors faced when using Jesus's words. It was only once these preliminary questions had been addressed that early Christian authors could turn to the endeavour of interpreting and forming hermeneutical principles for the reading of Jesus's words. I argue that Tertullian and Origen are the first to take up this hermeneutical task. That is, they are the first to develop a deliberate discourse and employ a purposeful practice that explicitly prioritises the immediate literary context of Jesus's utterances. In short, I demonstrate that Tertullian and Origen represent the birth of disciplined hermeneutical reflection on Jesus's words. At the heart of these efforts is the literary context of Jesus's words which, for these two authors, anchors and shapes the interpretation of Jesus's sayings. The aim of this thesis is to investigate the nature of Tertullian and Origen's literary contextualisation of Jesus's words, identify the origins and causes of this reading strategy in their writings, and detail its significance for early Christian hermeneutics.

In doing so, I seek to re-orient the study of the early Christian use and citation of Jesus tradition by addressing the *hermeneutical methods* associated with the early Christian use of the words of Jesus. In other words, I explore early Christian perceptions of Jesus's words and the practices they developed to read and interpret

them. What were Jesus's words to early Christians? How were they to be read? According to what rules was one to interpret them? It is my contention that these hermeneutical questions have not been satisfactorily addressed in the scholarship; in many cases, they have hardly been asked.[1] The main reason for this neglect is the scholarly interest in a different set of issues. In particular, previous studies of the patristic use of Jesus's words have predominantly focussed on the text of, and sources for, the citations of Jesus's sayings in the first two centuries.[2] The investigation of the textual form of early Christian citations represented part of an earlier, and in some cases ongoing, quest to locate the sources and development of gospel traditions.[3] Elsewhere, text-critics have sought to identify the text-types that characterise these citations, with the goal of reconstructing the early text of gospel literature.[4] A third

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[1] Notable exceptions include: G. Stanton, "Justin Martyr and Irenaeus" in *Jesus and Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 92-109 (see 97: "how does Justin understand the relationship of the sayings of Jesus transmitted through the writings of the apostles to scripture?"). See also the suggestive discussion of J. Barton, *Holy Writings, Sacred Texts: The Canon in Early Christianity* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997) 79-91. There has been a great deal of interest in late antique Christian scholarship though little of this has touched on the gospels or the re-use of Jesus's sayings. One important exception is M. Crawford, "Ammonius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea and the Origins of Gospels Scholarship", NTS 61 (2015): 1-29 has also discussed the work of Ammonius and Eusebius in gospels scholarship. My study explores at length earlier precedents to gospels scholarship and in particular focusses on one scholarly method: literary contextualisation.

[2] On textual transmission of Jesus's sayings, see for example: H. Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern* (TU 65; Berlin: AkademieVerlag, 1957); A. J. Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (NovTSup 17; Leiden: Brill, 1967); D. A. Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (NovTSupps 34; Leiden: Brill, 1973); L. L Kline, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (SBL Dissertation Series 14; Missoula, MT: Scholars' Press, 1975); J. Delobel (ed.), *Logia: Les Paroles de Jésus—The Sayings of Jesus* (BETL 59; Leuven: Peeters, 1982); T. Baarda and J. Helderman, eds., *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian, and the Text of the New Testament. A Collection of Studies* (Amsterdam: VU Boekhandel/Uitg., 1983); R. Cameron, *Sayings Traditions in the Apocryphon of James* (HTS 34; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984); D. A. Hagner, "The Sayings of Jesus in the Apostolic Fathers and Justin Martyr", in D. Wenham (ed.), *The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels* (Gospel Perspectives 5; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 233–68; C. N Jefford, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (VCSup 11; Leiden: Brill, 1989); the studies in B. Aland and W. L. Petersen (eds.), *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text, and Transmission* (Notre Dame / London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989) and especially, H. Koester, "The Text of the Synoptic Gospels in the Second Century" (19-38); H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (London; Philadelphia: SCM Press; Trinity Press International, 1990); W. L. Petersen, J. S. Vos and H. J. de Jonge (eds.), *Sayings of Jesus: Canonical and Non-Canonical: Essays in Honour of Tjitze Baarda* (NovTSupp 89; Leiden: Brill, 1997); A. F. Gregory and C. M. Tuckett, (eds.), *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), and *eadem* (eds.), *Trajectories Through the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and especially the chapter, H. Koester, "Gospels and Gospel Traditions in the Second Century" (27-44); C. P. Cosaert, *The Text of the Gospels in Clement of Alexandria* (SBLNTFG 9; Atlanta: SBL, 2008).

[3] See Bellinzoni, *Sayings*, 3 writing in 1967: "the most satisfactory approach to the question of Justin's dependence on gospel tradition has been made available by Form Criticism"; "it is possible to…indicate Justin's place in the development of the gospel tradition" (139).

[4] See especially, C.E. Hill and M. J. Kruger (eds.), "Introduction" in *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 2: the volume "intends to provide an inventory

avenue of scholarship, the reception of Jesus tradition in early Christianity, might seem to address the questions taken up in the study. Reception-historians seek to understand the subsequent early Christian interpretation of Jesus's sayings.[5] While the recent surge in reception history, and the history of biblical exegesis more broadly, has certainly led to greater interest in the subsequent readings of Jesus's sayings, much of this effort has coalesced around the exegetical *results* of patristic interpretation. While of immense value, this work often stops short of addressing underlying questions associated with early Christian reading habits employed when re-using Jesus's words.

      The lack of scholarly attention given to the methods used to interpret Jesus's words is surprising for two reasons. To begin with, there is a sizeable bibliography of items on the hermeneutical and rhetorical dynamics involved with the *composition* of Gospel stories and sayings, particularly within the synoptic gospels.[6] It is even more startling given the recent "rhetorical turn" within the field of patristic exegesis, as it has been pioneered by Averill Cameron, Frances Young and Margaret Mitchell among others.[7] Following the work of Young, a growing number of scholars have drawn

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and some analysis of the evidence available for understanding the pre-fourth century period of the transmission of the NT materials". The third part of the volume takes up the text of the NT in the Apostolic Fathers, Justin, Clement, Irenaeus, Tatian and Marcion.

[5] On the interpretation of Jesus's sayings, see, for instance: J. C. Edwards, *The Ransom Logion in Mark and Matthew: Its Reception and its Significance for the Study of the Gospels* (WUNT II 327; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012); D. W. Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field: Early Christian Reception of the Gospel of Matthew* (SBR 6; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016). Such work is symptomatic of the larger interest in the history of exegesis reflected in commentary series like *Evangelisch Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*—see especially U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (3 Bde; EKK 1,1-3; Zürich: Neukirchen-Vluyn 1992-1997)—as well as *The Church's Bible*, *Ancient Christian Commentaries* and *Novum Testamentum Patristicum*.

[6] See for a small sample, B. L. Mack, *Anecdotes and Arguments: The Chreia in Antiquity and Early Christianity* (Occasional Papers, Institute for Antiquity and Christianity 10; Claremont, Calif.: Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, 1987); R. C. Tannehill, "Introduction: The Pronouncement Story and its Types", *Semeia* 20 (1981): 1–13; R. C. Tannehill, "Varieties of Synoptic Pronouncement Stories", *Semeia* 20 (1981): 101–19; V. K. Robbins, "Pronouncement Stories and Jesus's Blessing of Children: A Rhetorical Approach," Semeia 29 (1983) 43-74', *Semeia* 29 (1983): 43–74; V. K. Robbins, "The Chreia", in D. E. Aune (ed.), *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament* (SBL Sources for Biblical Study 21; Atlanta, GA: Scholar's Press, 1988); V. K. Robbins, "Chreia & Pronouncement Story in Synoptic Studies", in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Synoptic Gospels* (ed. B. L. Mack and V. K. Robbins; Foundations and Facets; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1989), 1–29.

[7] A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); F. M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); M. M. Mitchell, "Patristic Rhetoric on Allegory: Origen and Eusthatius Put 1 Kingdoms 28 on Trial", in *The Belly-Myth of Endor: Intepretations of 1 Kingdoms 28 in the Early Church* (ed. R. A. Greer and M. M. Mitchell; Writings from the Greco-Roman World 16; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), lxxxv–cxxiv; M. M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); *eadem.*, "The Corinthians Correspondence and the Birth of Pauline Hermeneutics", in T. J. Burke & J. K. Elliott, (eds.)., *Paul and the Corinthians: A Community in Conflict. Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall* (NovTSupp, 109; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 17-54.

attention to the complex ways in which early Christians adopted, adapted, legitimised and re-appropriated the standard Greco-Roman practices of grammar and literary criticism (γραμματική).[8] Very little of this important research has been brought to bear on patristic perceptions of Jesus's words, and the hermeneutical methods that drove the interpretation of Jesus tradition. Consequently, in this study I aim to address some of the neglected hermeneutical principles and methods that early Christian authors employ when reading Jesus's sayings. More specifically, I examine the movement towards the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words.

To fully understand the hermeneutical development which, I argue, takes place with Tertullian and Origen requires taking account of the practices of the authors that came before them. In the remainder of this chapter, I present non-contextualisation as the major trend that characterises the re-use of Jesus's sayings among Tertullian and Origen's predecessors and the use of the sayings of the wise by their non-Christian contemporaries. By non-contextualisation, I refer to the use of the words of a wise figure apart from any explicit reference to the co-text, or immediate literary context, of those words. I then move on to present the argument and method for this study and outline its contents.

The Non-contextualisation of Moral Sayings in the Roman Period

I contend that the dominant paradigm for reading Jesus's words prior to Tertullian and Origen was the non-contextualised saying, rather than the line of text embedded within a larger literary context. In other words, the extant evidence reveals that Christian readers of Jesus's sayings before Tertullian and Origen tended to read Jesus's

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[8] Young, *Biblical Exegesis*. For Origen, see B. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (vol. 2; Schweizerische Beiträge zur Älterumswissenschaft 18.1-2; Basel: Reinhardt, 1987); P. W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012); S. Hong, "Origen, the Church Rhetorician: The Seventh Homily on Genesis", *SP* 41 (2006): 163–68. For Irenaeus, see L. Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians: Toward a Rethinking of Patristic Exegetical Origins", JECS 23.2 (2015): 153–88; and the two-part study, A. Briggman, "Literary and Rhetorical Theory in Irenaeus, Part 1", VC 69.5 (2015): 500–527; *idem*, "Literary and Rhetorical Theory in Irenaeus, Part 2", *VC* 70.1 (2015): 31–50. On the complex negotiations of educational practices by late antique Christians more broadly, see the essays in P. Gemeinhardt, L. Van Hoof, P. Van Nuffelen (eds.), *Education and Religion in Late Antique Christianity Reflections, Social Contexts and Genres* (New York: Routledge, 2016) and L. I. Larsen and S. Rubenson *Monastic Education in Late Antiquity: The Transformation of Classical Paideia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). L. I. Larsen has discussed the appropriation of the classical pedagogical tradition in the Sayings of the Desert Fathers. See L. I. Larsen, "The Apophthegmata Patrum and the Classical Rhetorical Tradition", *SP* 39 (2006): 409–16; *eadem*, "On Learning a New Alphabet: The Sayings of the Desert Fathers and the Monostichs of Menander", *SP* 55 (2013): 59–77.

words without reference to the immediate literary context surrounding those words, even if they knew of that context. To demonstrate the pattern of decontextualizing Jesus's sayings, I discuss the approaches of various works from the collection known as the Apostolic Fathers, as well as three of the most significant of Tertullian and Origen's Christian contemporaries and predecessors—Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Clement. I then show that their decontextualizing approaches tend to match those of non-Christian authors employing the words of wise figures.

To be sure, this is not to deny the presence of literary contextualisation as a broader phenomenon among late antique reading communities. In a recent and significant essay, the classical philologist René Nünlist presents important evidence for literary contextualisation in the work of the Homeric scholar Aristarchus of Samos (ca. 310–230 BCE).[9] Indeed, significant strides towards documenting contextual exegesis in ancient literary criticism have recently been made, particularly among classicists and scholars of early Judaism. Of particular note is the research of Nünlist, Francesca Schironi, and Maren Niehoff which has revealed the rich set of contextual reading practices that abounded in Roman-era commentaries and commentary-like works.[10] This important body of research has shown that literary contextualisation appears in genres where one might reasonably expect an author, editor or scribe to pay devoted attention to the context of a word, line or passage—that is, in commentaries on larger corpora such as the Hebrew Bible, or the Homeric corpus. Both Homeric commentaries and rabbinic midrashim on scripture contain a wealth of examples that exhibit authors interpreting words in light of a larger unit of text and reading lines of text within the context of larger passages. In chapter 4, I will discuss examples of these practices which, I argue, offer a broader framework for understanding the contextual reading strategies applied by Tertullian and Origen to the words of Jesus.[11] My point here is that while attested in commentaries on Homer and the Hebrew Bible, *literary*

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[9] R. Nünlist, "Kontext und Kontextualisierung als Kategorien antiker Literaturerklärung" in U. Tischer, A. Forst and U. Gärtner, (eds.) *Text, Kontext, Kontextualisierung: Moderne Kontextkonzepte und antike Literatur* (Spudasmata 179; Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2018) 101-118.

[10] On Homeric commentaries, see Nünlist, "Kontext"; *idem.*, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); F. Schironi, "Greek Commentaries", *DSD* 19 3 (2012): 399–441; *eadem.*, *The Best of Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the Iliad* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018). On literary contextualisation in Jewish commentaries and writings, see M. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014) (esp. 49-51). See chapter 4.2, section 1 for further discussion.

[11] See chapter 4.2 (sections 1 and 2) for further discussion.

contextualisation rarely affected the reading of Jesus's words prior to Tertullian and Origen. It is to the task of substantiating this case that I now turn.

1. *The Non-contextualisation of Jesus's Words among Tertullian and Origen's Christian Contemporaries and Predecessors*

Christian writers of the late first and second centuries prize Jesus's words as sayings (Gk. λόγια; Lat. *dicta*) and consider their exegetical significance to lie primarily within the words of those sayings. While, for the sake of space, I present a smaller number of pertinent examples from early Christian writers, a fuller list that illustrates the case is found in table 1 below. It is also important to note that I do not examine *allusions* to Jesus's words, by which I mean the re-use of a shorter excerpt of material that contains some kind of verbal parallel to Jesus tradition. Rather, to maintain a manageable handle on the data, I limit my discussion to cases in which the author cites Jesus's sayings in full. I include citations that contain an explicit formula ("as Jesus says") as well as references that contain no such formula.[12]

Before discussing cases of this reading strategy, however, there are two clarificatory points that must be attached to the use of the term "non-contextualisation". First, when certain authors use a climactic saying of Jesus—a pronouncement such as "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's"—they might simply have remained unaware of the full context of the anecdote surrounding it when using the utterance. This situation almost certainly obtains for some of the writers known as the "Apostolic fathers", who appear to have been using gospel traditions that in some cases pre-date the composition of gospel texts.[13] Since in such cases the author is not actively removing the saying from its larger literary contexts since that context is not known, I use the label non-contextualisation rather

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[12] Hippolytus's *CommDan* 3.22.1 provides an example of an allusion to a short extract of Jesus's words: "And so it is needful to see the piety of the blessed Daniel, how he did not even pretend to be devoted to the royal affairs but rather adhering in prayer each day *he rendered the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God*". On the blurry boundaries between allusion and quotation in inner-biblical interpretation but which apply equally well in this case, see W. A. Tooman, *Gog of Magog: Reuse of Scripture and Compositional Technique in Ezekiel 38-39* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 52; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011) 5.

[13] Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung*; M. Ludlow, "Apostolic Fathers", in I. A. McFarland, *et al.* (eds.), *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 28.

than decontextualisation to describe the earlier trend of reading Jesus's words.[14] I wish to stress that the decision to employ the words of Jesus as a stand-alone saying is still a significant one, hermeneutically speaking, since it demonstrates that for a given author, the priority lay with Jesus's words apart from any literary setting. Second, when using the label "non-contextualisation", the context that I refer to is that of the immediate literary context. In cases where I discuss climactic sayings in pronouncement stories, the context is the anecdote or pronouncement story. This point bears repeating since, in the majority of cases, authors place the words of Jesus into a *new* literary context.[15] When an early Christian author employs a saying of Jesus without reference to a larger passage, s/he also *re*-contextualises it within a new literary context. The important point for my purposes is that in these cases, *the immediate literary context is conspicuously absent*.

With these two points in mind, we can turn to the primary evidence. The strongest cases for the non-contextualised use of Jesus's words appear in a number of writings attributed to the Apostolic Fathers.[16] In his letter to the Corinthians, Clement of Rome provides two sets of citations which he introduces with the formula, "remember the words of the Lord" (*1 Clem* 13.1-2 and 46.8).[17] The author follows this preface with citations that resemble Matthew 5.7; 6.14; 7.1-2, 12, Luke 6.31, 36-38 (1 *Clem* 13.1-2) and at the end of the work with a citation that resembles Matthew 26.24; Luke 17.1-2 and parallels. Following the first list of sayings, the author significantly refers to Jesus's words as "precepts" (παράγγελμα) which mirror the "commandment" of God taken from prophetics texts of the Hebrew Bible.[18] In drawing this parallel between

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[14] The question of the state of the text of the gospels in the second century directly impinges on my study to the extent that it is important is to show whether or not a given author knew of a gospel text/s (whether that be the gospel of Matthew or the gospel according to the Egyptians).

[15] W. Wilson, *Love without Pretense: Romans 12.9–21 and Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Literature* (WUNT II, 46; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991) 41: "maxims are meant to be integrated into particular literary contexts and applied to particular rhetorical settings".

[16] The term Apostolic Fathers is a later category imposed on to the texts, and dates to the seventeenth century. See Ludlow, "Apostolic Fathers", 28; thus also, P. Foster, "Preface", in P. Foster, (ed.), *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers* (London: T&T Clark, 2007) vii.

[17] *1 Clem*. 13.1-2. See M. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (Translated by J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer; 3rd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007) 62-63 has μάλιστα μεμνημένοι τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ("let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus, which he spoke as he taught…") while *1 Clem* 46.8 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 106-107) has μνήσθητε τῶν λόγων Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ("remember the words of Jesus our Lord"). On authorship and date, see Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 34-36.

[18] *1 Clem*. 13.3: ταύτῃ τῇ ἐντολῇ καὶ τοῖς παραγγέλμασιν τούτοις στηρίξωμεν ἑαυτοὺς (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 62-63). The commandment, "Let not the wise person boast about their wisdom, not the strong about their strength, nor the rich about their wealth; but let the one who boasts boast in the

the Old Testament commands and Jesus's precepts, the author demonstrates that he perceives Jesus's words as stand-alone sayings that can be cited and read apart from their immediate literary context.

An even more striking case of early Christian use the words of Jesus as non-contextualised sayings is found in *2 Clement*. The author provides eight citations throughout the work which appear with some variation of the formula, "the Lord says".[19] *2 Clement* famously provides the first citation of Jesus's words as scripture. Introducing the saying of Jesus, "I did not come for the righteous but for the sinners", the author adds the prefatory remark, "and another scripture says" (καὶ ἑτέρα δὲ γραφὴ λέγει).[20] A gloss of Jesus's words follows, although tellingly this amounts to a paraphrase of the saying—"he says this (τοῦτο λέγει): it is necessary to save those who are perishing".[21] Rather than provide a reflection on the rules by which one should interpret Jesus's words, the homilist applies the words to the audience as a model of supporting the spiritually weak.[22] That Christ is a model is clear from the author's use of οὕτως καὶ—"So also Christ willed to save what was perishing…". Significantly, the literary background of the remark—a dispute about Jesus's decision to eat with tax collectors and sinners (Mt 9.10-13; Mk: 2:15-17; Lk 5.29-32)—is absent. Francis Watson observes the author's lack of interest in the source of Jesus's words when he writes, "[w]hat matters about 'the gospel' is that the Lord speaks in it, and there is no interest in its literary embodiments as such".[23] Arguably of even more importance than a lack of reference to a gospel text is the absence of authorial engagement with the textual context of Jesus's words as inscribed in the gospel text. Instead, Jesus's words

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Lord, to seek him out and do justice and righteousness" seems to conflate Jer. 9.23-24 and 1 Sam 2.10 (LXX). See Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 60-61.

[19] See *2 Clem*. 2.4 ("And another scripture says", Mk 2.17; Mt 9.13), 3.2 ("Indeed, he himself says", Mt 10.32; Lk 12.8), 4.2 ("For he says", Mt 7.21), 4.5 ("The Lord has said", source unknown), 5.2 ("For the Lord says", Luke 10.3, 12.4-5 Matthew 10.16, 28), 6.1 ("Now the Lord says", Mt 6.24; Lk 16.13), 8.5 ("For the Lord says in the Gospel, source unknown), 9.11 ("For the Lord also said", Mt 12.50; Mk 3.35; Lk 8.21), 12.2 ("For the Lord…said", source unknown although see Clement, *Strom*. 3.13.92 and *Thomas* 22), 13.4 ("God says", Lk 6.32, 35).

[20] *2 Clem*. 2.4 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 140-141). For an introduction to this work, see P. Parvis, "*2 Clement* and the Meaning of the Christian Homily" in P. Foster (ed.), *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers* (London: T&T Clark, 2007) 32-41. On the difficulties of dating and attributing an author to this work, see C. M. Tuckett, *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (OECT; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 14-17.

[21] 2 Clem. 2.5 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 140-141).

[22] 2 Clem. 2.5 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 140-141).

[23] See F. Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eeerdmans, 2013) 252-262 referring to *2 Clem*. 8.5 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 148-149) although it applies equally well to this verse.

appear as authoritative sayings whose meaning is self-evident and whose context requires no disciplined exegetical negotiation.

Beyond favouring individual sayings, the author of *2 Clement* also draws on climactic sayings of Jesus that belong to larger pronouncement stories. On each of these occasions, the author does not refer to that narrative. The author exhorts his audience to heartfelt praise so that "he may welcome us as sons and daughters. For the Lord also said, "My brothers and sisters are those who do the will of my Father".[24] This saying of Jesus forms part of a larger inquiry narrative in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, where Jesus responds to those who report that his family desire an audience with him (Mt 12.46-50; Mk 3.31-35; Lk 8.19-21). The same trend towards decontextualizing a climactic saying of Jesus appears in *2 Clement* 2.4, where the author cites the saying, "For I came not to call the righteous but sinners" without reference to the larger Synoptic dispute over Jesus's decision to eat with tax collectors and sinners (Mt 9.9-13; Mk 2.13-17; Lk 5.27-32).[25] In both cases, the author does not employ that narrative since it is Jesus's saying that supports his point. Crucially, the author does not seek to interpret Jesus's words but instead employs them as evidence in support of his position. This explains the use of the postpositive γὰρ to introduce Jesus's words. Rather than engaging in disciplined reflection on the interpretation of Jesus's words, the author employs the sayings of Jesus to bolster an argumentative position.

Finally, the first half of the *Didache* provides a long list of exhortations that parallel sayings of Jesus found in the Synoptic gospels.[26] Unlike the examples just discussed, the editors of the Didache rarely preface each citation of the words of Jesus with an introductory formula. The one exception is the citation of the Lord's prayer, which is glossed, "as the Lord has commanded us in his gospel".[27] Moreover, at the beginning of the work one finds the following preface: "the teaching of these words is this" (τούτων δὲ τὼν λόγων ἡ διδαχή ἐστιν αὕτη).[28] The only other clue linking these words to the figure of Jesus is the title of the work found in the third century Latin

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[24] *2 Clem*. 9.11 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 150-151).
[25] *2 Clem*. 2.4. (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 140-141).
[26] For an introduction to the reception of New Testament texts in the Didache, and especially sayings that parallel the Synoptic Gospels, see Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 22-92; C. M. Tuckett, "The *Didache* and the Writings that Later Formed the New Testament" in Gregory and Tuckett (eds.), *Reception of the New Testament*, 83-127 (95-125).
[27] *Did*. 8.2 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 354-356): ὡς ἐκέλευσεν ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ αὐτοῦ. See Mt 6.7-15; Lk 11.1-4.
[28] *Did.* 1.3 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 344-345).

translation—"the teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles by the twelve apostles".[29] As with 1 and 2 Clement, so also in the Didache do the sayings of Jesus appear as stand-alone sayings without any reflection from the author on the process by which the sayings of Jesus might be interpreted. Taken together, these cases demonstrate the view that early Christian authors in the first two centuries of the common era re-use, value and view Jesus's words as fragmented sayings whose significance lies in the wording of those pronouncements. The literary context of Jesus's words, and reflection on the significance of this context for the interpretation of Jesus's pronouncements, are both conspicuous by their absence.

With Justin, Irenaeus and Clement, a slightly different picture emerges.[30] As Barbara Aland noted, in the second century, a growing Textbewusstsein, or awareness of the texts in which one could read Jesus's words begins to develop.[31] However, while there are some examples of literary contextualisation in their works, it is important to emphasise that these reflect incipient, inchoate and at times *ad hoc* practices. In many ways, then, these three authors further bolster the case for the non-contextualised use of Jesus's words as sayings. It is important to stress that there are both points of continuity and discontinuity between the practices of Tertullian and Origen, on the one hand, and these three authors, on the other. I will return to these throughout the study.

Before assessing the evidence for these three authors's use of Jesus's words in the primary texts, however, it is important to note that there has already been some significant scholarly debate on the subject. John Barton has recently proposed that Justin and Ireneaus treat Jesus's sayings as an oral collection transmitted independently of the text of the Gospels.[32] For Barton, while Justin and Irenaeus are clearly aware of the textual sources for Jesus's sayings, they treat the words of Jesus as an authoritative collection distinct from the textual deposit of the gospels.[33] As evidence for his claim, Barton presents Irenaeus's discussion at the end of book 2 of

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[29] Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 344-345.
[30] All references to the critical editions of texts by early Christian authors are taken from SC (Sources Chrétiennes) or GCS, or, if the volume does not exist, OECT (Oxford Early Christian Texts). For Tertullian, I use the critical editions found in CCSL 1 or 2 and texts from SC.
[31] On textual consciousness, see Aland, "Die Rezeption", 5.
[32] Barton, *Holy Writings,* 79-81.
[33] See Barton, *Holy Writings*, 82 argues that "Irenaeus essentially follows Justin in separating the Lord's sayings—which he handles as though they formed almost an independent collection—from the testimony of the apostles. The Gospels are in practice the source for both, but although Irenaeus believes in the sanctity of these Gospels, he continues to cite them as though the sayings and narratives were quite separate".

Against Heresies. There, Irenaeus notes that he will defend the truth faith from four authorities—"the preaching of the apostles (*praedictio Apostolorum*), the authoritative teaching of the Lord (*Domini magisterium*), the predictions of the prophets (*Prophetarum annuntatio*) and the ministration of the Law (*legislationis ministration*)".[34] In book 4, Irenaeus turns his attention to the words of Jesus where he fails to note the fact that he has already treated the text of the gospels—the preaching of the apostles—in book 3.[35] Barton therefore concludes that Irenaeus has in mind a collection of the words of Jesus that travels separately from the gospels. Barton makes a similar distinction for Justin. On the basis of Justin's famous use of the literary genre ἀπομνημονεύματα, or "memoirs of the apostles", Barton argues that he distinguishes between an orally transmitted collection of sayings and written "notes" which relate the events of Jesus's life.[36]

Both Jeffrey D. Bingham and Graham Stanton have taken issue with Barton's proposal, arguing that Justin and Irenaeus were aware of and made appeal to the text of gospels, when employing Jesus's words.[37] In making this argument, they suggest that Barton, like Hans van Campenhausen before him creates too firm a dichotomy in Irenaeus's thought between the *written* text of gospels and *oral collections* of Jesus's sayings.[38] There are two points to take issue with here. First, Barton's notion of an oral collection of Jesus's words is neither entirely accurate nor absolutely necessary.[39] While Justin and Irenaeus cite Jesus's sayings in a free manner, this does not necessarily entail that they had an oral collection of his words. In his analysis of the citation technique of Jewish and Greco-Roman authors from the first century, Christopher D. Stanley has shown that free citation is a natural product of *literate*

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[34] Irenaeus, *haer.* 2.35.4 (SC 294: 364-267).

[35] In the course of discussing these sayings, he also cites a good deal of narrative material, showing that he does rely on Gospel texts. See Barton, *Holy Writings*, 83.

[36] Barton, *Holy Writings*, 81, 85. Barton thinks that Justin does not have in mind the concept of a Gospel bringing together stories and sayings. Yet see Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 103. On Justin's use of ἀπομνημονεύματα, see W. Cirafesi and G. Fewster, "Justin's ἀπομνημονεύματα and Ancient Greco-Roman Memoirs", *Early Christianity* 7 (2016): 186–212.

[37] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108 makes this case for both authors; D. J. Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew's Gospel in Adversus Haereses* (Traditio Exegetica Graeca, 7; Louvain: Peeters, 1998) 97-98 for Irenaeus only.

[38] H. von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972) 192n224, 202 who takes the view that the gospels simply inscribe the sayings of the Lord, providing the documentary evidence for his teachings. Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 107; Bingham, Irenaeus's Use of Matthew, 97-98.

[39] Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 108 may well be right when he observes that "we may have allowed Papias's preference for the 'living voice' over 'the written word' to influence too strongly our reading of Justin and Irenaeus".

authors re-working their source texts.[40] Larry Hurtado also emphasises the importance of literacy and the use of textual sources among second century authors. He concludes that, "differences between citations and the texts of the sources cited often seem to be, not simply the products of imprecise memory, but instead deliberate, sometimes artful adaptations".[41] Second, D. Jeffrey Bingham and Graham Stanton have both rightly warned against the notion that Irenaues (and, in Stanton's case Justin) thought of Jesus's sayings and the Gospels as completely *independent* and *asymmetrical* accounts.[42] As Bingham notes concerning Irenaeus, "though Irenaeus sees the Lord's words as a special category of the testimony of the Gospels, they are still seen by him as elements of the Gospels".[43] Bingham has shown that Irenaeus, and Stanton that both Justin and Irenaeus refer on several occasions to the Gospels and that both authors view these as the sources for Jesus's sayings.[44]

Such correctives notwithstanding, Barton's main point concerning the authoritative status of Jesus's sayings for early Christian writers deserves further scrutiny. That is, even if the claims Barton makes about the oral transmission of these sayings, and their independence from "written gospel texts" are open to contestation, his larger argument about the status and use of Jesus's words as stand-alone sayings still persists.[45] Crucially, when Stanton draws attention to Justin and Irenaeus's awareness of and appeal to the text of "the Gospels", he does not convincingly demonstrate that either author actually employed that narrative context to interpret Jesus's sayings.[46] The same point could be made for Clement who is also aware of

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[40] C. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Techniques in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature,* (SNTSMS 69; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992) 267-291 (for Greco-Roman authors); 292-337 (for Jewish ones).

[41] L. W. Hurtado, "New Testament in Second Century: Text, Collections and Canon" in J. W. Childers and D. C. Parker (eds.), *Transmission and Reception: New Testament Text-Critical amd Exegetical Studies* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006) 3-27 (16). For the importance of *written* texts for Irenaeus, see Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 107, and for Justin, see 103.

[42] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 97-98; Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 107-108.

[43] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 169: "In regard to Matthew, the Lord's words in that Gospel are Matthew's records of the Lord's words" (170).

[44] For Justin: Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 103; see also J. Verheyden, "Justin's Text of the Gospels: Another Look at the Citations in *1 Apol*. 15. 1–8," in C. E. Hill and M. J. Kruger, *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 314; C. E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 337. For Irenaeus, see Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108; Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 97-98.

[45] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 103 appears to agree with this point when he writes, "There is no reason at all why Justin should not have composed harmonized collections of sayings of Jesus for catechetical purposes and have used them alongside written gospels. Indeed, in my view, he almost certainly did just that".

[46] Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 108n45 does provide several examples of literary contextualisation from Irenaeus which I discuss further below.

gospel texts.[47] To put this another way, there is a difference between an author's *awareness of the textual source of Jesus's sayings* and the *use of that source for interpretive purposes*.[48] An author might refer to the textual source of Jesus's saying and still cite that saying in a non-contextualised manner. I would submit, then, that we need to distinguish between an early Christian author's "textual consciousness", or awareness of a source, and his/her actual employment of it. Most scholars have failed to move beyond Justin and Irenaeus's *statements* about the sources of Jesus's sayings to examine their *methods and practices* when using those words of Jesus. As a consequence, they have stopped short of probing the hermeneutical methods of early Christian authors who were citing Jesus's words. While Irenaeus—as well as Justin and Clement—all state at various points that Jesus's sayings are to be found in the text of a particular gospel (whether that be Matthew, Luke, John, or the Gospel according to the Egyptians), their actual re-use of Jesus's words suggests, as I will now discuss, a preference for Jesus's sayings divorced from their literary contexts.

Justin arguably represents the least developed case of the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words. The significance of Justin's non-contextualised use of Jesus's words is further reinforced when one recalls that he seems to know of at least two gospels, Matthew and Luke.[49] Justin's use of the "memoirs of the apostles" (ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων) at a key juncture in his *1 Apology* demonstrates his knowledge of written gospel texts. In his discussion of the eucharist, he makes reference to words of Jesus at the institution of the meal, which he says come from these memoirs, "which are called gospels" (ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια).[50] While some have argued that this gloss is a later addition to the text, Graham Stanton provides good evidence for the originality of the phrase.[51] If genuine, then this would offer further clear evidence for Justin's awareness of some form of gospel text.

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[47] See Cosaert, *Text of the Gospels*; *idem*., "Clement of Alexandria's Gospel Citations" in Hill and Kruger (eds.), *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 393-413.

[48] On the rise of textual consciousness, see B. Aland, "Die Rezeption des neutestamentlichen Textes in den ersten Jahrhunderten," in I.—M. Sevrin (ed.), *The New Testament in Early Christianity* (BETL 86; Louvain: Peeters, 1989) 1-36 (5-21).

[49] Verheyden, "Justin's Text of the Gospels", 314: "Justin knew at least two (Matthew and Luke), probably three (Mark) and maybe even all four of our canonical gospels". See Hill, *Corpus*, 337.

[50] Justin, 1 *Apol*. 66.3; 67.3; see also *Dial*. 100-117 where he refers to the "apostles of the memoirs" a further 13 times. See Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 99.

[51] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 99. L. Abramowski, "Die 'Erinnerungen der Apostel' bei Justin", in P. Stuhlmacher (ed)., *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien: Vortrage vom* Tübinger *Symposium 1982* (WUNT II 28; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983) 341-353 (323) argues cogently that these explanatory glosses provide needed clarification for outsider audiences unfamiliar with such terminology.

With this in mind, the evidence of Justin's lack of attention to the co-text of Jesus's sayings emerges with even greater significance. The highest concentration of the words of Jesus in Justin's works appear in his *1 Apology* 15–17, which Justin prefaces with the following remark: "And his sayings are brief and concise (βραχέα λόγια), for he was not a sophist, but his speech was the Power of God".[52] By contrasting Jesus's teaching ability with that of the sophists—οὐ γὰρ σοφιστὴς ὑπῆρχεν—Justin alludes to the divergence between the supposed brevity of Jesus's speech and the long-winded dialogues of the sophists.[53] Following this remark, Justin then presents twenty-six of Jesus's sayings organised according to ten different topics (see table 1).[54] The majority of the sayings Justin provides come from material that parallels the Sermon on the Mount/Sermon on the Plain and so already appears in the form of short, pithy remarks.[55] Yet on three occasions, Justin also employs words of Jesus that round off a larger story: he supplies Jesus's saying about the eunuchs which concludes Matthew's account of the divorce anecdote (*1 Apol.* 15.4; cf. Mt 19.12; 19.11), the saying about calling sinners which concludes the Meal with Tax Collectors anecdote (*1 Apol.* 15.8 Mt 9.13; Mk 2.17; Lk 5.32) and the saying about the love commandment which rounds off a dispute about the greatest commandment (*1 Apol.* 16.6; cf Mt 22.38). Justin's decision not to draw on or refer to the larger story in these cases demonstrates his view that the significance of Jesus's sayings derives from the words themselves, and not their immediate literary context.

On other occasions, however, Justin reproduces the larger anecdote with the climactic saying at the end. It might reasonably be thought that this strategy of re-telling a story is itself a kind of contextualisation of Jesus's words. Walter Wilson takes this view when he notes that, "the saying in a chreia is given in response to some definitive set of circumstances and so has a fixed context that focuses or restricts its

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[52] Justin, 1 *Apol.* 14.5: βραχεῖς δὲ καὶ σύντομοι παρ'αὐτοῦ λόγοι γεγόνασιν· οὐ γὰρ σοφιστὴς ὑπῆρχεν, ἀλλὰ δύναμις θεοῦ ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ ἦν. For text and translation, see D. Minns and P. M. Parvis, *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies* (OECT; Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) 112-113.

[53] Alternatively, it could also refer to Jesus's humble status. See Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 96 who notes that Justin also uses a similar phrase in his *Dialogue* with Trypho 18.1: "For since, as you admit, O Trypho, that you have read the teachings of our saviour, I do not consider it out of place to have added a few short sayings (βραχέα λόγια) of his to the prophets". For Greek text, see M. Marcovitch, *Iustini Martyris Dialogus Cum Tryphone* (Patristische Texte und Studien XLVII; Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1997) 99.

[54] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 95–96; see further, Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus*, 49–100.

[55] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 96 thinks that these sayings might have been linked together for catechetical purposes in Justin's sources.

interpretation".[56] By identifying the role that this narrative can play in circumscribing the interpretation and application of these climactic sayings, Wilson in some ways anticipates the conclusions of my discussion in chapter 1. Yet in the majority of cases in which early Christian authors reproduce an anecdote with the climactic saying, they do so not to interpret the final saying through contextualising it. The explicit focus of early Christian writers, in these cases, is not on clarifying or interpreting the saying of Jesus, but on providing traditional material to support their argument.

Such cases abound in early Christian literature. For instance, in his *1 Apology* Justin employs two longer passages in his treatment of Christian ethical teaching—the tribute anecdote (Mt 22.15-22 and parallels) and the beginning of the Rich Young Ruler anecdote ("And when someone approached him and said, 'Good teacher', he replied: 'No one is good except God alone, who made all things'"; cf. Mt 9.16-30; Mk 10.17-31; Lk 18.18-30).[57] Justin includes the anecdote about taxation to prove that Jesus commanded his followers to pay their taxes, while the beginning of the Rich Young Ruler anecdote demonstrates, for Justin, that Christians worship the one true God. In the case of the tribute passage, Justin provides the story as part of traditional material that proves the antiquity of Christian morality.[58] The fact that the story functions as a proof for argument and not as a means of contextualising Jesus's climactic saying becomes clearer when one considers the manner in which Justin introduces the saying. Justin writes, "everywhere we attempt to be first to bring taxes and levies to those appointed by you, as we were taught by him. For (γὰρ) at that time when some approached him, they asked him…".[59] Justin provides the tribute story as evidence for his argument, evidence which he introduces with the postpositive γὰρ. Justin's aim is to prove that Christians are loyal subjects of the empire, and one of the ways of doing this is to present the tribute story as one that shows their teacher's command to pay the tax to Caesar. In the same way, Justin's logic runs, Jesus's followers consistently carry out the principles of their philosophy. This argumentative

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[56] Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 15–16.
[57] 1 *Apol.* 17.1-3 for the tribute passage (Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 120-121), and 16.7 for the beginning of the Rich Young Ruler passage (Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 118-119).
[58] 1 *Apology* 14.4: "But in order that we might not appear to be tricking you we thought it worthwhile, before the demonstration. to make mention of some few of the teachings of Christ himself, and let it be for you, as powerful kings, to examine whether we have been taught and do ourselves teach these things truthfully" (Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 112-113). As the editors note (113n5), "he proposes to adduce sayings of Jesus in support of the claims just made about the moral lives of Christians".
[59] Minns and Parvis, *Apologies* 120-121. Φόρους καὶ εἰσφορὰς τοῖς ὑφ᾽ ὑμῶν τεταγμένοις πανταχοῦ πρὸ πάντων πειρώμεθα φέρειν, ὡς ἐδιδάχθημεν παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ…

use of pronouncement stories is not limited to Justin. In Irenaeus's later re-use of the Rich Young Ruler story, he employs it as proof that the law teaches that it is necessary to follow Christ. Both Justin and Irenaeus employ the Rich Young Ruler passage for the same reason—to prove their argument and not to contextualise Jesus's words for interpretive purposes.[60]

The point is worth stressing; in those cases where Tertullian and Origen's predecessors and contemporaries provide a dialogue or larger biographical narrative alongside Jesus's saying, the explicit purpose is *not* to contextualise Jesus's words so that their interpretive significance becomes clearer. Of course, *part* of Justin's purpose might have been to situate Jesus's saying within the narrative of the scriptural text.[61] What is important for our purposes is that Justin's *explicit* aim is not to contextualise the saying of Jesus through re-telling the anecdote. Rather, his aim in citing the full story lies in demonstrating that Christians followed the teaching of their master. Absent from his comments is any meta-reflection on how one might read and interpret Jesus's words in light of their literary context. So, while at first glance, Justin's citation of the larger passage suggests an awareness of the textual context of Jesus's climactic sayings, I would suggest that such *awareness* of the co-text is different from an explicit attempt to employ that literary context to shape the interpretation of the climactic saying. I therefore contend that both citations do not provide evidence of the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation under investigation. On the contrary, they demonstrate the lack of disciplined consideration of the rules and principles that Tertullian and Origen would later develop when re-using Jesus's words.

The predilection for Jesus's words as stand-alone sayings is also seen in the works of Irenaeus of Lyons. Irenaeus's lack of interpretive use of the literary context of Jesus's words is even more significant than Justin's, given the comparatively clearer

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[60] See *haer.* 4.12.5 (SC 100: 520-522). "The law taught mankind beforehand the necessity of following Christ, which he does make manifest (*ipse fecit manifestum*), when he replied as follows…". See also Irenaeus's use of the question of the Sadducees anecdote to prove the Creator God is the God of the Living (*haer* 4.5.2). Again, he does not explicitly seek to contextualise the final saying.

[61] This raises the question of the audience and purpose of Justin's *Apologies*. Some maintain that the *Apologies* were written for a pagan audience. The lack of familiarity with the narrative might explain Justin's choice to reproduce the entire anecdote. Even if the work was originally intended for a pagan audience, this does not exclude the very real possibility that the work was circulated by Christians for Christians. See Minns and Parvis, *Apologies* 44-46 who take the view that while the work may have originally been penned as a *libellous* for a non-Christian audience, it was eventually circulated by Christians for a Christian audience.

evidence for Irenaeus's awareness of a fourfold Gospel.[62] Irenaeus is, of course, famous for asserting that the number of gospels is four, no more and no less.[63] In spite of such an awareness of gospel texts, Irenaeus tends to draw on fragmented "sayings of the Lord" (*Domini sermones*) in pursuit of his overall goal of refuting "so called knowledge".[64] In fact, Irenaeus devotes the fourth book of his *Adversus Haereses* to the employment of these sayings. Irenaeus prefaces book four in the following way: "as we promised, we will establish by the words of the Lord what we have said before" (*quemadmodum promisimus per domini sermons ea quae pradiximus confirmabimus*).[65] He opens his argument with two citations of the saying which parallels Matthew 23.9.[66] A steady stream of citations of Jesus's sayings follow, taken from Matthew 11.25,[67] John 5.46-47,[68] Matthew 10.6,[69] John 11.25,[70] and John 8.56,[71] among others. None of these receive clarification or discussion in light of their immediate literary contexts.

That Irenaeus does not seek to contextualise Jesus's words is further seen in *haer.* 4.6.1, where he refers to the textual sources of one of his sayings.[72] Irenaeus draws attention to the fact that Matthew, Mark and Luke, but not John record the saying of Jesus correctly ("No man knows the Son, but the Father; and no one knows the Father, except the Son, and the one to whom the Son reveals him"), over and against the Marcionite version of the same saying.[73] Irenaeus also notes the sources of this text: "Thus has Matthew set it down, and Luke similarly, and also Mark; for John omits this passage".[74] Stanton considers this important evidence of Irenaeus's

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[62] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 169-170; G. Stanton, "Fourfold Gospel", *NTS* 43 (1997): 317-346 argues that Irenaeus's reference to and knowledge of a fourfold gospel is not an innovation but stretches back to an earlier period. See also Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 105-108; D. J. Bingham and B. R. Todd Jr, "Irenaeus's Text of the Gospels in *Adversus haereses*", in Hill and Kruger (eds.), *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 370-392.

[63] Irenaeus, *haer.* 3.2.8 (SC 211:160-161): *Neque autem plura numero quam haec sunt neque rursus pauciora capit esse Evangelia.*

[64] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4. praef. 1 (SC 100: 382-383)

[65] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4 praef. 1 (SC 100: 382-383).

[66] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.1.1, 4.1.2 (SC 100: 392-395). See Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 172-173.

[67] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.2.2 (SC 100: 398-399).

[68] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.2.3 (SC 100: 400-401).

[69] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.2.7 (SC 100: 410-411).

[70] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.5.2 (SC 100: 430-431).

[71] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.5.3 (SC 100: 432-433).

[72] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.6.1 (SC 100: 438-439).

[73] The saying comes from Mt 11.27; Lk 10.22.

[74] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.6.1 (SC 100: 438-439): *Sic et Matthaeus posuit, et Lucas similiter, et Marcus idem ipsum: Johannes enim praeterit locum hunc.* As Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108 notes, Irenaeus is probably mistaken about John's Gospel.

awareness of gospel sources. Yet this appeal to the text of the gospels *is not identical with retaining the narrative context to interpret Jesus's words*. Irenaeus instead wishes to establish the text of Jesus's saying by rooting it in the written sources of the Synoptic Gospels. For Irenaeus, the Marcionite version of the saying, which apparently inverts the meaning of the text in Matthew, Mark and Luke, is dubious precisely because it does not come from the correct textual source. Despite his reference to the *text of the gospels,* then, Irenaeus maintains that the *locus* of interpretation for Jesus's words remains the words of Jesus isolated from their literary context. For Irenaeus, the text of Jesus's saying is sufficient for its interpretation. In other words, Irenaeus's appeal to the *text* of the Gospels is not equivalent with his employment of the co-text to contextualise and interpret Jesus's words. Textual appeal, and textual contextualisation for interpretive purposes need to be considered as two distinct categories of textual reference.

Even more significantly, this focus on the teachings of Jesus, which Irenaeus usually cites apart from their immediate literary contexts, is also seen in his use of Jesus's *climactic* sayings. Thus, when interpreting the "render" command in book 3, Irenaeus notes that his opponents, the Marcosians, read the saying in such a way that it represents a distinction between two divine powers—the true "God" and "Caesar", a lesser divinity.[75] Intriguingly, Irenaeus seeks to undermine this interpretation not by referring to the tribute passage, but by providing a supposedly plain sense reading of the command. When referring to "God" and "Caesar", Irenaeus argues, Jesus does not confess (*confitans*) any one other than the "one true God" when referring to God, and does not refer to any one other than Caesar, when naming (*nominans*) Caesar.[76] The reading of Irenaeus and his opponents involves a similar lack of contextualisation via the co-text or anecdote. Instead, the attention of both parties remains firmly fixed on the syntax of the isolated phrase.[77]

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[75] Irenaeus, *haer.* 3.8.1 (SC 211: 88-89). The Marcosians, as Irenaeus presents them, link the "render" command with other passages that compare God and Lord with other titles ("Caesar", "Mammon", "Sin", "Strong Man"). These passages seem to bolster their view that there were multiple inferior deities. For original text, see SC 211: 88-91. I draw on the discussion of M. C. Steenberg, *St. Irenaeus of Lyons: Against the Heresies Book 3* (ACW 64; New York, N.Y.: Newman Press, 2012) 42-43.
[76] Steenberg, *Against the Heresies Book 3*, 43.
[77] By non-contextualisation I simply refer to the larger passage. There is, of course, a case for arguing that Irenaeus and his opponents both draw on textual contexts—Irenaeus on the textual context of the rule of faith and his opponents the other intertexts that appear alongside the "render" command. See chapter 3.1 for further discussion.

When turning to Clement's use of Jesus's words, it is notable that no single study exists in the same way that one finds for Justin or Irenaeus.[78] Nevertheless, the extent to which Clement cites Jesus's words provides one with an initial sense of their importance to his life and thought.[79] As R. B. Tollinton put it over a century ago, "the Lord's teaching was for Clement the most authoritative and important element in the whole collection of the Scriptures".[80] James A. Brookes puts the explicit number of quotations from the Gospels at 1579.[81] This number does not include Clement's liberal use of sayings of Jesus which come from other unknown sources, or from texts which have now been lost (for instance, *the Gospel of the Egyptians*).[82] Clement's awareness of a fourfold gospel finds further substantiation in a famous passage from his now-lost work, the *Hypotyposes*, which is recorded in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Historia Ecclesiastica*. According to Eusebius, Clement discusses the fact that the first gospels to be written included genealogies (Matthew and Luke). The gospel of Mark then followed, and last of all, the spiritual gospel, John.[83] Clement's frequent omission of the literary context of Jesus's words is no accident, then, given his apparent awareness of the fourfold gospel.[84]

In turning to Clement's actual use of Jesus's words, the pattern of employing them as fragmented sayings persists. Unsurprisingly, this trend is clearest in Clement's *Stromateis*, which takes its name from the patchwork of thematically arranged

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[78] Note more generally, the useful reference works of P. M. Barnard, *The Biblical Text of Clement of Alexandria* (TS 6; Cambridge, 1899); M. Mees, *Die Zitate aus dem Neuen Testament bei Clemons von Alexandrien* (Quaderni di "Vetera Christianorum", 2; Bari: Istituto di Letteratura Cristiana Antica, 1970); Cosaert, *Text of the Gospels*. A. W. van den Hoek, "Divergent Gospel Traditions in Clement of Alexandria and other Authors of the Second Century", *Apocrypha* 7 (1996), pp. 43-62 (45) observes that Clement is "a latecomer in the history of the usage of the gospels".

[79] A. W. van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria: A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods" *VC* 50 (1996) 223-243 (227), drawing on O. Stählin's indices of Clement's works, provides the following number of citations from the gospels in Clement's works: Matthew 11 columns, Luke 7.5 columns, Mark 3 columns and John 5 columns.

[80] *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Liberalism* (2 vols.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1914) 2:183-184.

[81] A. Brooks, "Clement of Alexandria as a Witness to the Development of the New Testament Canon", *SecCent* 9 (1992): 41-55 (47).

[82] See A. van den Hoek, "Divergent"; *idem.* "Clement and Origen as Sources on 'Noncanonical' Scriptural Traditions During the Late Second and Earlier Third Centuries" in G. Dorival and A. Le Boulluec (eds.), *Origeniana Sexta. Origène et la bible / Origen and the Bible* (Peeters, Leuven, 1995) 93-113; B. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) 132 notes that Clement seems to have a fairly "open" canon when it came to the gospels.

[83] Eusebius, *HE* 6.14.5-6 (LCL 265: 48-49).

[84] Cosaert, *Text of the Gospels*, 31: "While his knowledge of Jesus's words obviously originates with a written text, he has come to know them so well that he feels little need to refer to a given text when referring to them". Cosaert explains the fact that Clement prizes Jesus's words and yet cites them loosely from memory with recourse to the theory that Clement prioritises the *living* voice of Jesus.

classical and biblical texts Clement cites and discusses.[85] As David Dawson notes, "Clement does not put scriptural quotations on display as specific lemmata that will be commented on".[86] Judith Kovacs is right to note that there are exceptions to this rule, though she does agree that this pattern largely holds true.[87] A significant example of non-contextualisation is Clement's use of the "asunder" saying (Mt 19.6; Mk 10.9) which he uses in dispute with those who claim that marriage is adultery.[88] While Clement appears to follow the logic of the saying by applying it to discussions concerning marriage, it is significant that Jesus's words appear on their own, without the larger, narrative context. This pattern is repeated throughout the *Stromateis* (see table 1). In his discussion of martyrdom, for instance, Clement "brings together" (συντάσσειν) sayings of the Lord from disparate places: Luke 12.8; Matthew 10.31 and Luke 12.11-12.[89] It is significant that Clement then proceeds to note, with favour, the interpretations of these sayings offered by Heracleon, none of which treat the context of these statements but instead deal with their significance as isolated units.[90]

Clement also favours Jesus's sayings in the anthology-like section found in Book 3 of his *Paedogogus*. Here, Clement signals his preference for short sections of scripture—and, in particular, "bare injunctions"—with the following preface to the section:

> And the things he [the Paedagogus] wants to say to his children along the way, while he leads them to the Master, these he has suggested and proposed through a general summary in the scriptures; he gives bare injunctions, adapting them to the time of guidance, but entrusting the interpretation of them to the teacher.[91]

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[85] Clement, *Strom.* 4.2.4 (GCS 52: 249): "let these notes of ours be varied, as we have often said, for those consulting them carelessly and unskilfully, and as the name itself indicates, patched together—going constantly from one thing to another, and in the series of discussions hinting at one thing and showing another".

[86] D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press, 1992) 218.

[87] J. L. Kovacs, "Introduction: Overview and History of Research" in J. L. Kovacs and J. Plátová (eds.), *Clement's Biblical Exegesis: Proceedings of the Second Colloquium on Clement* (VCSuppl 139; Leiden: Brill, 2016) 1-37 (13): "This is correct to a large extent but there are notable exceptions". Kovacs provides the following examples: *Strom.* 1.11.50-54 and 1.18.88-90 on 1 Cor 3:19-20; *Strom.* 1.17.81-90 on John 10.8; *Strom.* 3.12.79-84 on 1 Cor 7 and *Strom.* 5.10.60-66 on various Pauline texts. Only one of these treats a Gospel passage. See also Clement's treatment of the Rich Young Ruler passage in *Qui Dives Salvetur*, which I discuss at 1.1.

[88] Clement, *Strom.* 3.6.49; cf. 3.6.46 (GCS 52: 217): τί δε ἐστιν ὅπερ ὁ κύριος εἶπεν…

[89] Clement, *Strom.* 4.9.70.1-4.73.1 (GCS 52: 279-281).

[90] Clement, *Strom.* 4.9.71.1-4.9.73.1 (GCS 52: 280-281).

[91] Clement, *Paed.* 3.12.87 (GCS 12: 283-284)

This statement aligns with the schema Clement provides elsewhere of preliminary instruction through moral commandments which precedes the reading and interpretation of longer, more difficult passages.[92] Following this rationale, Clement then provides a variety of longer citations and short verses from both the Old and New Testaments. Clement introduces most citations with a gloss to aid the reader seeking to apply the saying. So, for instance, Clement cites Luke 17.3-4 ("if your brother or sister sins against you…") with the gloss "concerning patience".[93] In addition to these sayings more generally, Clement of Alexandria cites Jesus's "render" command—the climactic saying in the tribute passage—as a stand-alone pronouncement. Following his custom, he provides a gloss—"concerning socio-political conduct: 'render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's'" (καὶ περὶ πολιτείας· Ἀπόδοτε τὰ Καίσαρος Καίσαρι καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ).[94] Despite the fact that the "render" command was transmitted within the larger tribute passage, Clement employs the words of Jesus as an isolated saying for his rhetorical purposes.[95]

In arguing that early Christian writers tend to interpret Jesus's words without the mediation of the literary context, it is necessary to account for those cases in which authors use *scriptural texts*—or "intertexts"—more broadly to interpret Jesus's sayings. There are a very many such extant cases in the works of Justin, Irenaeus, Clement and other early Christian authors, the most significant of which I discuss at

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[92] Of significance for Clement's use of Jesus's sayings is his programme of the Christian life which he sets out in Instructor: "first he exhorts us [to convert], then he trains us, and, finally, he teaches us" (*Paed*. 1.1.3.3; GCS 12: 91). This well-known programmatic statement seems to match what is considered to be a "trilogy" of Clement's works. According to this schema, the *Protrepticus* provides an exhortation to Greeks to abandon idolatry and the *Paedagogus* supplies moral exhortation through commandments. The third and final part of this trilogy is less clear, with some arguing that it resembles a work called the *Didaskalos* which Clement later abandoned before penning the *Stromateis*. Others think that Clement intended the now-lost *Hypotyposes* or *Sketches* to provide this programme of teaching. The significance of this trilogy for Clement's use of Jesus's sayings is the emphasis on moral exhortation in the second stage. See the discussion of the various options in E. Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 5-10.

[93] Clement, *Paed*. 3.12.91 (GCS 12: 286). It is noteworthy that Clement attributes all of these passages to "the instructor". Thus, Clement introduces a quotation from 1 Pt 4.8 with "he says".

[94] Clement, *Paed*. 3.12.92 (GCS 12: 286).

[95] In the other occasion in which Clement cites the command (*Paed* 2:1:14:1; GCS 12:163), he does not seem to be aware of the tribute anecdote but instead conflates the command with the incident of the temple tax (Mt 17.24-27): "That fish then which, at the command of the Lord, Peter caught, points to digestible and God-given and moderate food. And by those who rise from the water to the bait of righteousness, he admonishes us to take away luxury and avarice, as the coin from the fish; in order that he might displace vanity and by giving the stater to the tax-gatherers, and 'rendering to Cæsar the things which are Caesar's,' might preserve 'to God the things which are God's' (τὰ Καίσαρος ἀποδοὺς τῷ Καίσαρι, φυλάξῃ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ). The stater is capable of other explanations not unknown to us, but the present moment is not a suitable occasion for their treatment. Let this suffice for our present purpose suffice…".

the beginning of chapter 3. To pre-empt my later discussion, I argue that these examples further uphold the case made, since each of these authors tended to connect the words of Jesus with other scriptural texts *on the basis of the wording of Jesus's sayings.* In other words, when employing intertextual practices, Justin, Irenaeus and Clement rarely drew on the co-text, or immediate literary context, of Jesus's saying. Rather, the focus of each of these authors tended to lie on their various arguments which the words of Jesus helped to advance. Tertullian and Origen, by contrast, begin to move towards employing Jesus's words for their own sake, and not merely to support polemical or pastoral arguments. In doing so, they link their scriptural intertexts not to Jesus's words, but *to the co-text of Jesus's pronouncements*. I suggest that this difference in citation practice mirrors a divergence in how Jesus's sayings are viewed and used. On the one hand, Tertullian and Origen's predecessors continue to locate the significance of Jesus's words within those words themselves. Even if part of the meaning of Jesus's words derives from other scriptural texts, that meaning emerges from the isolated sayings of Jesus. By contrast, Tertullian and Origen begin to interpret Jesus's words as lines of text that require clarification in light of their immediate context. The intertextual networks therefore arise from the co-text of Jesus's words. On this basis, I argue that Tertullian and Origen are among the first early Christian authors to perceive Jesus's sayings as texts that require interpretation in light of their immediate literary contexts. With intertextual references, therefore, a similar pattern of non-contextualisation obtains among early Christian authors before Tertullian and Origen.

One could say much more in support of this paradigm of non-contextualisation, but by way of illustration, see the table below.

Table 1: List of citations of Jesus's words as non-contextualised sayings in early Christian writers before Tertullian and Origen, with textual source and introductory formula (**bold** indicates that the saying is part of a larger pronouncement story)

Author and/or text and approximate date	Possible Source	Introductory Formula
1 Clem. 13.1-2	Mt 5.7; 6.14; 7.1-2, 12; Lk 6.31, 36-38	οὕτως γὰρ εἶπεν…
1 Clem. 46.8	Mt 26.24; Lk 17.1-2 and parallels	γὰρ εἶπεν
***2 Clem*. 2.4**	**Mk 2.17; Mt 9.13**	**καί ἑτέρα γραφή λέγει**
2 Clem. 3.2	Mt 10.32; Lk 12.8	λέγει δὲ καὶ αὐτός
2 Clem. 4.2	Mt 7.21	λέγει γάρ
2 Clem. 4.5	Source Unknown	εἶπεν ὁ κύριος

2 Clem. 5.2	Source Unknown (Luke 10.3, 12.4-5 Matthew 10.16, 28)	λέγει γὰρ ὁ κύριος… εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς
2 Clem 6.1	Mt 6.24; Lk 16.13	λέγει δὲ ὁ κύριος
2 Clem. 8.5	source unknown (cf. Lk 16.10-12)	λέγει γὰρ ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ
2 Clem. 9.11	**Mt 12.50; Mk 3.35; Lk 8.21**	**καί γάρ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος**
2 Clem. 12.2	Source Unknown although see Clement, *Strom.* 3.13.92 and *Thomas* 22	γάρ αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος…εἶπεν
2 Clem. 13.4	Lk 6.32, 35	λέγει ὁ θεός
Did. 1.2	**Mt 22.37-39 and parallels (The Great Commandment Anecdote)**	**Ἡ μὲν οὖν ὁδὸς τῆς ζωῆς ἐστιν αὕτη**
Did. 1.3	Lk 6.28	Τούτων δὲ τῶν λόγων ἡ διδαχή ἐστιν αὕτη
Did. 8.2	Mt 6.9-13; Lk 11.2-4	ὡς ἐκέλευσεν ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίω αὐτοῦ
Justin, *1 Apol.* 15.1	Mt 5.28	εἶπεν
1 Apol. 15.2	Mt 5.29; 18:9; Mk 9.47.	καί
1 Apol. 15.3	Mt 5.32; Lk 16.8	καί
1 Apol. 15.4	**Mt 19.12; 19.11 (Divorce Anecdote)**	**καί**
1 Apol. 15.8	**Mt 9.13; Mk 2.17; Lk 5.32 (Tax Collectors Anecdote)**	**εἶπε δὲ οὕτως…**
1 Apol. 15.9	Mt 5.46; Lk 6.32 and Mt 5.44; Lk 6.27-28	ταῦτα ἐδίδαξεν
1 Apol. 15.10	Mt 5.42, 46; Lk 6.34, 32	ταῦτα ἔφη
1 Apol. 15.11	Mt 6.19-20	No introduction
1 Apol. 15.12	Mt 16.26; Lk 9.25.4; cf. Mt. 6: 20.	No introduction
1 Apol. 15.13	Lk 6.36; Mt 5.45	καί
1 Apol. 15.14	Mt 6.25-26; Lk 12.22-24.	No introduction
1 Apol. 15.15	Mt 6.31-32; Lk 12.30	No introduction
1 Apol. 15.16	Mt 6.33; Lk 12.31; Mt 6.21; Lk 12.34	No introduction
1 Apol. 15.17	Mt 6.1	καί
1 Apol. 16.1	Lk 6.29; Mt 5.39-40.	ἃ ἔφη ταῦτά ἐστι
1 Apol. 16.2	Mt 5.22, 42, 16	No introduction
1 Apol. 16.5	Mt 5.34, 37 (cf. Jas 5.12).	οὕτως παρεκελεύσατο

1 Apol. 16.6 (cf. Dial 125:4; 103:6 which mirror Mt 4.10/Lk 4.8 and Dial 83.2)	**Mt 22.38 (Anecdote about Greatest Command)[96]**	οὕτως ἔπεισεν εἰπών
1 Apol. 16.7	**Mk 10.18; Lk 18.19; Mt 19.17 (The Rich Young Ruler Passage)**	καί
1 Apol. 16.9	Mt 7.21	εἶπε γὰρ οὕτως
1 Apol. 16.10	Lk 10.16; Mt 7.24	No introduction
1 Apol. 16.11	Mt 7.23 and Lk 13.27.	No introduction
1 Apol. 16.12	Mt 13.42, 50; 8.12; 22.13; 24. 51; 25.30; Lk 13.28; cf. Mt 13. 43.	No introduction
1 Apol. 16.13	Mt 7.15-16; 7.19; 3.10; Lk 3.9.	No introduction
Justin, *Dial.* 35.3	Mt 24.5; 7.15; Mt 24.11, 24; cf. 1 Cor 11.18	εἶπε γὰρ
Dial. 47.5	Unknown[97]	ὁ ἡμέτερος κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἶπεν
Dial. 76.4-6	Mt 8.11-12; 7.22-23; 25.30, 41; Lk 10.19	ἐδίδαξεν, εἰπών·… καί… καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις λόγοις ἔφη ἐρεῖν… καὶ πάλιν ἐν ἑτέροις λόγοις ἔφη
Irenaeus *haer.* 3.8.1	**Mt 22.21 and parallels (Tribute Passage)**	*…ipse dominus…iubet…*
***haer.* 3.5.2**	**Luke 5.31-32 (Meal with Tax Collectors Anecdote)**	*…ipse testificatur dicens…*
haer. 4.2.2	Mt 11.25	*dicit*
haer. 4.2.3	Jn 5.46-47	*…ait ad Iudaeos, quemadmodum Iohannes in evangelio commemoratus est*
haer 4.2.7	Mt 10.6	*…inquit discipulis*
haer 4.5.2	Jn 11.25	*…quemadmodum ipse ait*
haer. 4.5.3	Jn 8.56	*Et hoc ipsum docens dicebat Iudaeis*
***haer.* 4.20.5; 5.5.2**	**Luke 18:27 (Rich Young Ruler Anecdote)**	No introduction (4.20.5); *quapropter et Dominus ait* (5.5.2)
Clement, *Strom* 3.6.49.4	**Mt 19.6; Mk 10.9 (Divorce Anecdote)**	**αὐτὸς δὲ οὗτος ὁ κύριος λέγει·**
Strom., 4.4.15.4	Mt 19.29	ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ φησίν·
Strom. 4.9.70.1-4.73.1	Lk 12.8; Mt 10.31 and Lk 12.11-12.	ὁ κύριος εἴρηκεν

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[96] For discussion, see Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus*, 38.

[97] For discussion of this saying, see A. Bellinzoni, "The Source of the Agraphon in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* 47,5", *VC* 17 (1963): 65-70.

| *Strom*. 4.22.137.3 | Mt 5.48 and parallels | ὁ κύριος λέγει |
| *Paed*. 3.12.92 | **Mt 22.21 and parallels** | **καὶ περὶ πολιτείας** |

While I have focussed on the non-contextualisation of Jesus's sayings before Tertullian and Origen, it should be noted that there is a small body of examples in which Justin, Irenaeus and Clement *do*, in fact, attend to the literary context of Jesus's sayings. These instances point to a *developing* practice of literary contextualisation in these three authors. I therefore begin each of the three chapters below with a discussion of the "beginnings" of each reading strategy. These represent a set of inchoate, incipient, and at times, *ad hoc* practices, rather than a developed hermeneutic. Even more crucially, these practices are left undescribed and untheorized by earlier authors. The slowly emerging techniques employed by Justin, Irenaeus and Clement receive significant and systematic re-working by Tertullian and Origen.

2. *The Non-contextualisation of Moral Sayings More Generally: Tertullian and Origen's Non-Christian Contemporaries and Predecessors*

Having demonstrated the early Christian non-contextualisation of Jesus's sayings, I now want to suggest that these patterns reflect the broader use of the sayings of the wise among contemporaneous reading cultures. Such concurrent non-contextualisation demonstrates that early Christian practices before Tertullian and Origen were not an isolated phenemonon but instead significantly mirror Roman-era reading practices. In her important study of the early imperial use of moral sayings, or "maxims", Teresa Morgan has already provided ample evidence for the assumptions underlying the employment of wise and proverbial pronouncements.[98] It would therefore be redundant and unnecessary to repeat her findings here, in full. Nevertheless, to enhance the portrait of Roman maxim re-use, and to show that early Christian use of Jesus's sayings resonate with this broader background, I examine several cases from non-Christian authors. Moreover, Morgan makes a significant observation that has important implications for this study. She concludes that the textual context of the wise saying itself plays an important role in how authors apply that saying. Roman-era authors will therefore apply a saying about royal conduct to

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[98] T. Morgan, *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 84-121.

kings and those in authority. In other words, the textual context that Roman authors draw on when using a wise figure's saying is the saying itself.

From an examination of extant Greek and Roman sources in the first three centuries, a similar trend to the one found among early Christian authors emerges: authors tend to re-use climactic sayings that exist within larger stories *without* explicit attention to the larger anecdote. That is, writers in the first three centuries of the common era employ the climactic saying of a wise figure on its own, as a stand-alone pronouncement. In many cases, the author fragments this saying from the larger narrative context in which it at one point resided. This phenomenon of literary non-contextualisation is seen across a variety of reading communities and socio-religious groups. In one important example, the emperor Marcus Aurelius (121-180 CE) cites the saying, "it is a royal privilege to do good and be ill spoken of", as an independent maxim, without drawing any attention to the larger narrative frame of the anecdote.[99] The extant sources attest that this climactic saying about royal behaviour travelled within three separate anecdotes from the Roman period.[100] Marcus Aurelius was not necessarily aware that the saying resided within a larger textual milieu. Regardless of his cognizance of the literary context, it is significant for my purposes that he prioritises the proverbial pronouncement which requires no mediation via its co-text.

A second example from Diogenes Laertius (*fl.* 225-250 CE) again demonstrates the absence of literary contextualisation in the re-use of a sage's climactic moral saying. In his *Life of Diogenes*, Laertius cites as a non-contextualised saying the famous utterance attributed to Alexander: "Had I not been Alexander, I should have liked to be Diogenes".[101] Importantly, this saying exists as the climactic pronouncement in at least six anecdotes attested in literary sources from the Roman period.[102] In Diogenes Laertius' re-use, the saying appears at the end of a section of anecdotes ostensibly connected by the theme of Diogenes the Cynic's pursuit of the simple, ascetic life. Without any context from the larger anecdote, the reader has to read the saying in light of the stories and sayings that precede it. While this

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[99] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 7.36. LCL 58: 180-181.
[100] The three examples are discussed below (Diogenes Laertius, *Antisthenes* 6.3; Epictetus, *Discourses* 4.6.20 and Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 41).
[101] Diogenes Laertius, *Diogenes* 6.2.32. See LCL 185: 34–35
[102] These six are (1) Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 14, 671de (2) Plutarch, *On Exile* 15, 605de (3) Plutarch, *On the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander the Great* 1.10.331-2 (4) Plutarch, *To the Uneducated Prince* 5.782A-B (5) Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 5.32.92 (6) Valerius Maximus, *FM* 4.3.14. See P. R. Bosman, "King Meets Dog: The Origin of the Meeting Between Alexander and Diogenes", *Acta Classica: Proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa* 50 (2007): 51–63 for discussion.

demonstrates that there is a *kind* of literary context at play, it is significant for my argument that the immediate context surrounding the saying remains absent.[103] One can explain Laertius' decision to cite the words of the wise figure on their own in terms of his literary aims at this point—his goal is to present the way of life of his subject rather than contextualise the sayings that concern Diogenes the Cynic. Alexander's comment therefore functions to reinforce Laertius' portrayal of Diogenes as a self-sufficient philosopher.[104] In this case, he does not require the entire narrative of Diogenes' interaction with Alexander, since the saying on its own supports his portrayal of Diogenes in a pointed and pithy fashion. It is also possible, of course, that the saying appears as an independent moral saying simply because Diogenes Laertius was not aware of the full anecdote. Even if this was the case, and Diogenes Laertius does not actively untether the saying from its context, he still attests to a tradition wherein the saying does not call to mind its literary context.

In the previous section, I dealt with the potential objection that contextualisation might appear in cases where an author re-tells a pronouncement story in which a wise figure's words are embedded. I addressed this issue by noting that Christian authors prior to Tertullian and Origen do not re-tell a narrative surrounding Jesus's saying as a means to explicitly clarify the final saying. My answer there receives further validification from contemporaneous examples of the reproduction of stories that end with the pronouncements of wise figures. For instance, there are at least three anecdotes from the Roman period which provide a narrative that concludes with the same saying that Marcus Aurelius had cited on its own—"it is a royal privilege to do good and be ill spoken of".

1. 'Being told that Plato was abusing him, he remarked, "It is a royal privilege to do good and be ill spoken of." (Diogenes Laertius, *Antisthenes* 6.3).[105]
2. 'What, then, says Antisthenes? Have you never heard? "It is the lot of a king, O Cyrus, to do well, but to be ill spoken of."' (Epictetus, *Discourses* 4.6.20).[106]
3. 'Alexander, then, in exercising himself and at the same time inciting others to deeds of valour, was wont to court danger; but his friends, whose wealth and magnificence now gave them a desire to live in luxury and idleness, were impatient of his long wanderings and military expeditions, and gradually went so

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[103] On reading lists of stories and sayings, see R. Langlands, "Roman exemplarity: Mediating between General and Particular" in M. Lowrie and S. Lüdemann (eds.), *Exemplarity and Singularity: Thinking Through Particulars in Literature, Philosophy, and Law* (New York: Routledge, 2015) 68-80 (73–78).
[104] Bosman, "King Meets Dog", 54. Diogenes' self-reliant character receives Alexander's royal stamp of approval, all the more striking given the ostensible gulf in social standing between the two characters.
[105] LCL 185: 4-5.
[106] LCL 218: 352-353.

far as to abuse him and speak ill of him. He, however, was very mildly disposed at first toward this treatment of himself, and used to say that it was the lot of a king to confer favours and be ill-spoken of therefore'. (Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 41).[107]

In these three examples, taken from Diogenes Laertius (*fl.* 3rd century CE), Epictetus (*fl.* 1st century CE) and Plutarch (*fl.* 90-120 CE), the saying caps off a larger story which serves a biographical function.[108] The point of the story, in each case, is to present the character of an individual—Antisthenes in both Diogenes and Epictetus' retelling and Alexander in Plutarch's account.[109] While the story does provide the context for the saying, the author's explicit purpose in providing the larger narrative frame is not to shape the interpretation of that pronouncement.[110] In fact, closer examination reveals that the narrative frame is of relatively less significance than the all-important final saying. The comparative unimportance of the context is demonstrated by the fact that each author changes the speakers involved. The proto-Cynic Antisthenes responds to Plato in Laertius's account, while Cyrus is the addressee in Epictetus's. Plutarch lengthens the surrounding frame to provide dramatic weight to Alexander's words.[111] The malleability of the story demonstrates that the saying is the most enduring part of the tradition. This would suggest that none of the three authors explicitly draws on the larger story to shape the interpretation of the wise figure's final saying. The same is true of the re-use of the popular Alexander-Diogenes cycle which appears in at least six works and concludes with the climactic saying "if I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes".[112] In each of these six cases, the author supplies the anecdote as a proof for a variety of arguments rather than as a way of clarifying the meaning of the final pronouncement. There is, in other words, little interest in employing the literary context of the anecdote to shape the interpretation and application of the climactic saying.

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[107] LCL 99: 344–345.

[108] I am aware that each of these authors idealises their main protagonist. My own interests lie in the ways in which each author handles traditional material and the factors that impinge on their interpretation of it.

[109] The πρόσωπον or figure delivering the quip can change depending on the author; the same author can attribute a single saying to multiple sages. See R. F. Hock and E. N. O'Neil, (eds.), *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric: The Progymnasmata* (vol. 1; SBL Text and Translation Series 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) 5–6.

[110] See Hock and O'Neil, *Progymnasmata*, 5–6.

[111] Each of these accounts re-uses prior biographies and collections of sayings and stories. On Diogenes Laertius' use of sayings and stories, see J. F. Kindstrand, "Diogenes Laertius and the Chreia Tradition", *Elenchos* 7 (1986) 217-243.

[112] See n. 102 above for the sources and Bosman, "King Meets Dog" for discussion of this episode.

At the same time as minimising the *immediate* literary context of moral sayings, Roman-era authors also draw on broader textual contexts, or "intertexts" when using such pronouncements. I noted, for instance, that when Diogenes Laertius cites the saying of Alexander about Diogenes the Cynic, he connects this with other sayings of, and stories about, Diogenes. One might consider Laertius's use of other stories and sayings to constitute a form of literary contextualisation. After all, the reader discerns the character of Diogenes through the other stories and sayings which provides clarity on the significance of Alexander's saying. At the same time, Laertius links these other intertexts with Diogenes's words not on the basis of the immediate literary context of those words, which now vanish from view. Rather, Laertius associates other stories and sayings on the basis of Diogenes's fragmented saying. As far as the anecdote is concerned, Diogenes's words become thoroughly non-contextualised sayings, rather than a textually embedded statement.

<p style="text-align:center">****</p>

Thus far, I have argued that the major trend characterising the reading of Jesus's sayings in the period before Tertullian and Origen was non-contextualisation—the use of Jesus's climactic sayings as literary fragments without attention to their immediate literary context. Non-contextualisation constitutes the norm for the reading of Jesus's words, a trend that matches the broader re-use of the sayings of wise figures among Roman-era reading communities. The use of Jesus's words in the Apostolic Fathers, and to a large extent in Justin, Irenaeus and Clement show that these early Christian authors locate the significance of Jesus's words in the substance of those words themselves. While there was a growing "textual consciousness" (Textbewusstsein)—to use Barbara Aland's phrase—from the mid second century onwards, reflected in an awareness of gospel texts, such awareness very rarely appears to have resulted in the *employment of the literary context of Jesus's words for the purposes of clarifying and explicating the significance of those words*.[113] Such a trend strongly suggests that early Christian contemporaries and predecessors of Tertullian and Origen tended to value Jesus's words as sayings in service of other ends, rather than lines of texts requiring interpretation in light of their literary context. One can speculate about the reasons for non-contextualisation. In chapter 4, I attempt to provide an account for this reading

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[113] Aland, "Die Rezeption", 5.

strategy. For now, I wish to reiterate that my main point stands apart from these explanations.

The Rise of Literary Contextualisation with Tertullian and Origen: The Argument of this Study

In light of these earlier patterns, the point I make in the following pages can be put with maximal brevity: I argue that Tertullian and Origen are the first early Christian authors to raise the literary context of Jesus's words to the level of a normative, hermeneutical principle. In other words, Tertullian and Origen are the first to engage in explicit, hermeneutical meta-reflection on the rules and principles according to which one was to read and interpret the words of Jesus. With these two authors, the *perception* of Jesus's sayings, and the *methods* used to interpret them, change significantly. Each of these points—*perception* and *method*—requires discussion.

First, Tertullian and Origen understand Jesus's words not as non-contextualized, individual fragments of teaching but as lines of text that belong within larger literary units. Whereas there was little appreciation among Roman-era Christian authors for the immediate literary context of Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen prioritise the literary context in their re-use of Jesus's pronouncements. I argue that their engagement with the literary context of Jesus's words marks a turn towards interpreting Jesus's words, and not merely employing them for argumentative or ethical purposes. Both authors attest to this hermeneutical development in the battles over the reading of Jesus's words recorded in their works. Notably, both oppose the efforts of other Christians who held that Jesus's words constituted fragmentable sayings that could be interpreted in isolation from their immediate literary contexts. Against such attempts, Tertullian and Origen insist that Jesus's words sit within an immediate literary context and should be interpreted in light of this fact. Furthermore, they conceive of Jesus's words as scriptural texts that require interpretation in light of a larger scriptural corpus, which contains links with the immediate context of Jesus's saying.

Second, and in light of this fresh way of reconceiving Jesus's words, both authors transform the standard methods used to interpret them. I argue that Tertullian and Origen's "hermeneutic of literary contextualisation"—the practice of reading

Jesus's words in light of their literary contexts—consists of three reading strategies located within their writings. First, and most significantly, both authors reproduce the entire biographical narrative in which Jesus's words reside as a way of intentionally countering perceived "non-contextualisation" of Jesus's pronouncements. Above, I noted that when Christian and non-Christian authors repeat the entire passage surrounding a saying, they do so not with the explicit intention of contextualising and interpreting the climactic saying. Rather, the reproduced story often functions as a proof of argument, with the focus of the author resting on that argumentative context. By contrast, when Tertullian and Origen reproduce the anecdote, they explicitly and deliberately contextualise the climactic saying of Jesus *for interpretive purposes*. Both authors reflect on and explain the fact that the larger story clarifies the significance of Jesus's words and provides what they perceive to be the appropriate boundaries in which Jesus's sayings are best understood. Wilson's comment about the narrative setting offering "some definitive set of circumstances" which restrict the interpretation of the final saying, overlaps very well with Tertullian and Origen's practice of anecdote reproduction.[114] Second, and relatedly, Tertullian and Origen employ fine, textual details from the anecdote as a way of interpreting and clarifying the significance of Jesus's words. This practice differs from the first in both form and function. First, in terms of form, both authors employ shorter portion of the literary framing surrounding the climactic saying—on some occasions, no more than a word or phrase. Second, Tertullian and Origen's employment of co-textual reference extends beyond the strictly argumentative function that was witnessed in their citation of the entire anecdote. Tertullian and Origen's use of co-textual details demonstrates that they think of Jesus's words as indissoluble parts of their immediate literary contexts. Unlike their practice of anecdote reproduction, however, when citing individual details of the co-text, Tertullian and Origen do so for pastoral and speculative ends and not simply to defeat an opposing viewpoint in debate.

With the third practice—intertextual reference—our two authors transcend the immediate literary context of Jesus's words. By intertextual reference, I refer to Tertullian and Origen's use of biblical texts drawn from the Christian scriptures more broadly. Crucially, whereas their predecessors make these intertextual links on the basis of the words of Jesus, Tertullian and Origen create connections *through the co-*

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[114] Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 15–16.

text of Jesus's pronouncement. That is, they link scriptural texts with Jesus's words through catchwords or thematic links shared between the scriptural intertext and the co-text of Jesus's saying. While they certainly move beyond the literary context of Jesus's words, they do not leave the literary context behind when fashioining these inner-biblical networks of texts. Taken together, these reading practices reflect a significant shift away from reading Jesus's words as sayings to interpreting them as texts.

These methods also signal an important shift in exegetical results from what had come before. By using the literary context to read and interpret the words of Jesus, Tertullian and Origen produce a different type of *textual boundedness* to the interpretation of those pronouncements. I showed above that Tertullian and Origen's predecessors had assumed that the significance of Jesus's words was self-evident from those words themselves. One need not look anywhere for their significance. In fact, the disciplined interpretation and explication of Jesus's words was often not the chief focus of these earlier authors. Instead, they employed Jesus's sayings for other ends, most often moral exhortation and as proofs for their argument (usually introduced with the formula, "for Jesus says"). To the extent that they did draw on texts to clarify the significance of Jesus's sayings, those texts came not from the immediate literary context but from elsewhere in the scriptural corpus. Earlier authors linked these texts to Jesus's words through catchwords or thematic associations shared with Jesus's words. For Tertullian and Origen, the literary context framing Jesus's sayings suggested a new type of textual boundedness that shaped the interpretation of Jesus's words. In each chapter, I comment on the impact of these methods on the interpretive results or products that emerge from Tertullian and Origen's reading strategies.

These strategies will, for modern readers, most probably resemble the kind of straightforward "scriptural exegesis" that characterises much contemporary biblical scholarship. And the parallels are fairly striking, even if there are significant differences. The point I wish to stress, however, is that Tertullian and Origen's Christian contemporaries and predecessors were, for the large part, *not* applying these contextual reading practices to the words of Jesus, or at least were applying them in a haphazard or *ad hoc* manner. Even more significantly, absent from the works of these earlier authors is any explicitly reflection or contemplation on the principles according to which one might read and interpret Jesus's words. By discussing the ways in which the immediate literary context shapes the interpretation of Jesus's words, Tertullian

and Origen were the first to engage in disciplined, theoretical reflection on the process of exegeting and applying Jesus's sayings. In so doing, both authors were ushering in a new chapter in the history of early Christian hermeneutics, particularly related to the words of Jesus. The familiarity of these methods of literary contextualisation should not mask the significance of their emergence in the landscape of early Christian hermeneutics. I wish to note that in using the language of the "development of literary contextualisation", I do not mean to suggest that every author thereafter followed the principles Tertullian and Origen espouse. To argue that the literary turn Tertullian and Origen enact was everywhere accepted lies far beyond the scope of this study.[115]

Finally, this thesis also seeks to contribute to the understanding of the two authors who form the central case studies of the investigation, and particularly to the understanding of their hemeneutics.[116] To be sure, there is much that separates Tertullian and Origen as early and significant representatives of Western, Latin-speaking and eastern, Greek-speaking Christianity, respectively. Beyond the oft-noted differences, there are also divergences in the ends to which they put Jesus's words, and the tone in which they discuss them.[117] Tertullian most often assumes a combative

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[115] E. Murphy, *The Bishop and the Apostle: Cyprian's Pastoral Exegesis of Paul* (SBR 13; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018) shows that Cyprian, in many ways Tertullian's Carthaginian successor, engaged in a kind of de-contextualised exegesis of Paul. Murphy notes that contextual exegesis is the exception rather than the rule for Cyprian's exegesis of Paul (91n166). This is but one example showing that later authors did not always reflect upon the principles of interpreting scriptural texts (including Jesus's words) or perform contextual exegesis of those texts.

[116] For Tertullian, very few have done more than G. D. Dunn in this regard. See G. D. Dunn, "Rhetorical Structure in Tertullian's *ad Scapulam*", *VC* 55 (2002): 47–55; *Tertullian* (Early Church Fathers; London; New York: Routledge, 2004) 13-20; "Tertullian's Scriptural Exegesis in *de praescriptione haereticorum*", *JECS* 14 (2006): 141-155; "Rhetoric and Tertullian", *SP* 65 (2013): 349–356; "Tertullian and Military Service: The Scriptural Arguments in *De corona*", in D. V. Meconi SJ (ed.), *Sacred Scripture, Secular Struggles* (The Bible in Ancient Christianity 9; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015) 87-103. See also T. P. O'Malley, *Tertullian and the Bible: Language—Imagery—Exegesis* (Latinitas Christianorum Primavera 21; Nijmegen: Dekker, 1967) 117-172 on the vocabulary Tertullian employs in his exegesis. O. Kuss, "Zur Hermeneutik Tertullians", in J. Ernst (ed.), *Schriftauslegung. Beiträge zur Hermeneutik des Neuen Testamentes und im Neuen Testament.* (Munich: F. Schöningh, 1972) 55–87. On Origen's hermeneutics, see K. Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Structure in Origen's Exegesis* (Patristische Texte und Studien 28; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1985) 70-107 who developed the importance of the journey of the soul in Origen's exegesis. See also E. A. Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis* (Bible in Ancient Christianity 3; Boston: Brill Academic, 2005) on the number of senses present in Origen's exegesis.

[117] An oft-noted point of divergence is Tertullian's much-remarked upon aversion to philosophy, summed up in his maxim, "what has Jerusalem to do with Athens?" (Tertullian, *Praescr.* 7.9; CCSL 1: 193). More recent scholarship has shown, however, that this is less a firmly held position than a rhetorical question or trope. See H. Chadwick, *The Early Church* (rev. ed.; London: Penguin Books, 1993) 93. M. Ludlow, *The Early Church* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009) 73-95 (95) provides a much-needed nuanced account which stresses that while the two authors differed in style, they were animated by the same questions and held to some of the core convictions concerning, for instance, martyrdom. As R. Heine, "The Beginnings of Latin Christian Literature" in F. Young, L. Ayres and A. Louth (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

and heresiological tenor and uses Jesus's sayings, and their textual contexts, in argumentative debate.[118] His ability to draw on the forms of forensic rhetoric lends an intensely antagonistic strain to his tone, and gives the impression that he is much less interested in persuading a fellow-believer than he is in refuting an already condemned heretic.[119] By contrast, Origen's use of Jesus's sayings demonstrates his greater commitment to accommodating the interpretation of his opponents while seeking to convince them of an alternative viewpoint.[120] It is all the more striking, given the differences in style and motivations between these two authors, that they nevertheless share the view that Jesus's words remain textually embedded, and require interpreting as such.[121] It is my hope that this dissertation will encourage greater comparative study of Eastern and Western fathers, where differences in form and tone often belie a common set of goals and hermeneutical impulses.

Method

A brief note is required on the data set employed to advance this argument. To demonstrate the nature and extent of Tertullian and Origen's literary contextualistion requires selecting examples of Jesus's sayings that contain a bounded textual context. I therefore marshal a body of evidence from sayings that were attested to have travelled

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Press, 2004) 131-141 notes, "Despite his famous disclaimer, Tertullian knew how to use Athens' arguments to defend Jerusalem's truth". On his use of the philosophical schools, see J. C. Fredouille, *Tertullien et la conversion de la culture antique* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1972); E. F. Osborn, *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2003), 27–47.
[118] As J. Lieu, *Marcion and the Making of a Heretic: God and Scripture in the Second Century* (New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 51 rightly notes, Tertullian was unprecedented in his day for the breadth and range of "pastoral and polemical" concerns he engaged, and the "intensive and extensive" way in which he dealt with them. Of course, this distinction holds only in relative terms since Origen also seeks to draw boundaries around the belief and practices of the true faith. See Martens, *Origen and Scripture* who discusses Origen's polemics against gnostic interpretation (107-32) and various kinds of Christian and Jewish literalists (133-60). See *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (3.2 below; SC 442, 20–23) for an example of Origen using textual details for argumentative purposes.
[119] This is not to say that Tertullian was disinterested in genuine persuasion, although his attempts at swaying his audience were almost always directed at Christians whom he perceived to be orthodox (and even here, he could veer into the vitriolic). See, for instance, his *De Fuga in Persecutione* addressed to Fabius (*De Fuga* 1.1). See D. Rankin, *Tertullian and the Church* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 28.
[120] See chapters 1-3 and particularly the discussion in 1.6 (Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* 39), 2.1 on references to multiple words (*Hom. in Luc.* 39) and the use of co-textual phrases in *CommRom* 9.25.
[121] The decision to exclude Tertullian by T. Toom in his edited collection of essays on Latin biblical hermeneutics is understandable on pragmatic grounds. However, his reasoning for making this choice— "Tertullian did not provide any sustained discussions of theoretical issues of interpretation"—reflects a common problem in the study of early Christian hermeneutics, and ancient hermeneutics more generally: the privileging of explicit discussions over actual practice. See Toom, "Introduction" in T. Toom (ed.), *Patristic Theories of Biblical Interpretation: The Latin Fathers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 1-19 (10).

within a larger biographical narrative commonly known to ancient authors as the *chreia* (Gk. χρεία; Lat. *chria*), and which I will refer to in this study as the anecdote or co-text.[122] That is, I discuss climactic sayings that contain an easily identifiable literary context—the short biographical account that concluded with the pithy saying of the sage. Because this type of saying contains an easily discernable literary context, the extent to which an author appeals to the narrative surrounding Jesus's words can be measured with a good degree of precision. The tribute passage, to take just one famous example that will be part of the focus of this investigation, concludes with Jesus's pithy command to "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" (hereafter referred to as the "render" command). This climactic statement exists within a narrative that features several verbal exchanges between the protagonist and his interlocutors.[123] Yet subsequent authors also cite the saying on its own without reference to the larger anecdote. In this thesis, I am interested in the relationship between the larger anecdote (the "co-text") and the climactic saying. While Tannehill has provided a list of some ninety-nine pronouncement stories in the Synoptic Gospels, the present study treats examples that arise from Tertullian and Origen's re-use.[124] Using Biblia Patristica in the updated online version BiblIndex, I selected the following five climactic sayings to form the data set for this study.[125]

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[122] Scholars of the Gospels often refer to these short anecdotes as "pronouncement stories". See for a good introduction to the anecdote, Hock and O'Neil, eds., *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric*, 10–16. See also Robbins, "The Chreia". Morgan, *Popular Morality*, 122–59 treats the anecdote in her chapter on the roughly equivalent *exempla*. On the pronouncement story in the Synoptic Gospels, see Tannehill, "Introduction", 1–13; *idem*., "Varieties", 101–19; Robbins, "Pronouncement Story in Synoptic Studies", 1–29.

[123] The story also contains a notable "active" or "actional" exchanges as well—Jesus's interlocutors "show Jesus the coin", for instance. The story appears in at least four early Christian Gospels: Matthew 22.15-22; Mark 12.13-17; Luke 20:19-26; Thomas 100. For a comprehensive study of this pericope, see N. Förster, *Jesus und die Steuerfrage: Die Zinsgroschenperikope auf dem religiösen und politischen Hintergrund ihrer Zeit: mit einer Edition von Pseudo-Hieronymus, 'De haeresibus Judaeorum'* (WUNT 294; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012) and for a recent study of the rhetorical elements integral to this passage, see my discussion, S. R. Burke, "'Render to Caesar the Things of Caesar and to God the Things of God': Recent Perspectives on a Puzzling Command (1945–Present)", *CBR* 16 2 (2018): 157–90.

[124] Tannehill, "Varieties", 101–19.

[125] Centre D'Analyse et de Documentation Paristiques, eds. *Biblia Patristica: Index des citations et allusions bibliques dans la literature patristique*, 7 vol. (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherché scientifique, 1975–2000); *Biblindex*, Index of Biblical Quotations and Allusions in Early Christian Literature. *(Sources chretiennes)*, October 2, 2019, n.p. Online: http://www.biblindex.mom.fr/. I do not comment on versional differences here but insofar as they are important, I discuss them in each case of early Christian re-use.

1. Mt 12.46-50; Mk 3.31-35; Lk 8.19-21 (Jesus's True Family Anecdote): "For whoever does the will of God, they are my brother and sister and mother".

2. Mt 19.1-6; Mk 10.2-9; cf. Lk 16.18 (The Divorce Anecdote): "What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate".

3. Mt 9.10-13; Mk: 2:15-17; Lk 5.29-32 (The Meal with Tax Collectors Anecdote): "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners".

4. Mt 22.23-33; Mk 12.18-27; Lk 20.27-40 (The Questions of the Sadducees Anecdote): "He is not the God of the dead but of the Living".

5. Mt 22.15-22; Mk 12:13-17; Lk 20.19-26 (The Tribute Anecdote): "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's".[126]

These cases provide the ideal arena in which to explore the phenomenon of literary contextualisation at work.

Lest it be thought that Tertullian and Origen consider those words of Jesus that do not belong to pronouncement stories as non-contextualised sayings, I also present cases where both authors apply the strategies of literary contextualisation to Jesus's words more broadly (see chapter 2, excursus). By discussing such cases, I show that the hermeneutic in question is one that Tertullian and Origen apply with a fair degree of frequency and consistency, and not simply to Jesus's "climactic sayings".

Outline of the Chapters

Following this chapter, the study divides into two parts: the next three chapters form a group in which I present the data for the hermeneutic of textual contextualisation in Tertullian and Origen's use of Jesus's sayings. In the fourth chapter, I attempt to explain the rise of this phenemenon. I start each of the three data chapters with a short discussion of the "beginnings" of the technique among Christian authors before Tertullian and Origen, highlighting prior uses of the reading strategy which Tertullian and Origen re-develop.

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[126] In chapter 1 (see 1.1), I consider Clement's re-use of the Rich Young Ruler anecdote (Mark 10:23-27 par. Matt, Luke) in *Qui Dives Salvetur*. Here, Clement responds to Christians who had fragmented the saying "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven".

In chapter 1, I focus on the contextualisation of Jesus's sayings through anecdote reproduction, a reading technique in which both authors provide a running account of the story that concludes with the final pronouncement of Jesus. In these cases, Tertullian and Origen respond to other Christians' apparently non-contextualised re-use of Jesus's climactic sayings. In reacting to this phenomenon, Tertullian and Origen draw attention to the status of Jesus's words as climactic sayings. Both authors maintain that it is only when one reads the larger pronouncement stories that one ascertains the significance of Jesus's concluding words. Through re-telling the full narrative in which Jesus's climactic saying appeared, each author seeks to circumscribe the significance of Jesus's words and refute perceived non-contextualisations of Jesus's pronouncements. In chapter 2, I present cases in which Tertullian and Origen draw on subtle details from the co-text to interpret Jesus's words. By drawing on the immediate literary context of these pronouncements, Tertullian and Origen reflect the view that Jesus's words do not interpret themselves but require clarification through their co-text. In chapter 3, I discuss Tertullian and Origen's practice of intertextual reference, or the employment of scriptural texts in connection with the words of Jesus. In the case of Tertullian and Origen's predecessors, textual associations emerge from Jesus's sayings themselves. With Tertullian and Origen, however, a different phenomenon seems to be at work. Both authors do not exclusively fashion these intertextual networks on the basis of Jesus's words themselves. Rather, they take greater pains to connect Jesus's words with scriptural intertexts through the immediate literary context. An important showcase here is their use of Genesis 1.26 ("let us make the human person in our *image*") which both authors use to interpret Jesus's command to "render to Caesar and to God". They draw on this scriptural text not through the words of Jesus but through the "image of Caesar" which appears in the immediate literary context of Jesus's saying. I argue that this practice provides further evidence of the shift towards viewing Jesus's words not as sayings but as texts.

Finally, in chapter 4, I take a step back from the data and attempt to account for Tertullian and Origen's use of the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation. Explaining this phenomenon requires accounting for a complex set of historical, ideological and literary factors. I argue that the most crucial factor of all, is the shifting basis for early Christian debate. Whereas Clement, Justin and Irenaeus were naturally more focussed on debating the *authority* of Jesus's sayings, and the textual *sources* in

which they resided, such issues no longer remain as pertinent for Tertullian and Origen. Instead, they take up the issue of the *interpretation* of Jesus's words. Through establishing the sources and authority of Jesus's sayings, Justin, Clement and Irenaeus naturally set the scene for more intense disputes about their interpretation that take place in Tertullian and Origen's writings.

In the concluding reflections, finally, I summarise the main contours of the argument, demonstrate its contribution to the study of early Christian hermeneutics, and suggest further areas of future research.

Chapter 1—Jesus's Words as Climactic Pronouncements: Literary Contextualisation Through Anecdote Reproduction

Up to this point, I have highlighted that early Christian authors valued Jesus's words as isolated and fragmented sayings and predominantly used them apart from their immediate literary contexts. I observed that this phenomenon was particularly striking in cases where those sayings contain a larger surrounding narrative. In the following three chapters, I locate the initial turn towards the immediate literary context of Jesus's words in the writings of Tertullian and Origen. In these chapters, I argue that Tertullian and Origen's strategies of attending to the literary contexts of Jesus's climactic sayings effected a significant development in the hermeneutical principles associated with the re-use of Jesus's words. Unlike earlier authors, Tertullian and Origen begin to reflect on the principles according to which one interpreted Jesus's sayings. Through initiating this literary turn, Tertullian and Origen re-conceive of Jesus's words as textually embedded lines, rather than as stand-alone sayings. Tertullian and Origen are therefore among the first early Christian authors to explicitly discuss and introduce a set of methods for reading and interpreting Jesus's words. The exegetical significance of this literary turn was momentous. Tertullian and Origen employ the immediate literary context to circumscribe and shape the reading of Jesus's words, thus producing a new type of *textual boundedness* for their interpretations. For Tertullian and Origen, the boundary for interpretation is not simply the text of the saying of Jesus, but the anecdote in which it resides.

In this chapter, I present evidence for the first, and most significant, practice that demonstrates the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation—"anecdote reproduction". By anecdote reproduction, I refer to Tertullian and Origen's practice of providing a running account of the biographical narrative (or anecdote) that concludes with the final pronouncement of Jesus. The main argument of this chapter can be stated simply: in response to perceived "non-contextualisations" of Jesus's words, Origen and Tertullian actively and explicitly seek to draw attention to the status of these pronouncements as "climactic sayings" through reproducing the full text of the story in which Jesus's sayings were recorded. By insisting that these sayings are didactic conclusions, and not stand-alone sayings, Tertullian and Origen maintain that the

reader is to interpret these pronouncements in light of the immediate context of the passage. Through implementing this hermeneutical strategy, Tertullian and Origen tie the interpretive significance of Jesus's climactic utterances to their immediate literary contexts—the anecdotes in which those sayings appear.

In addition to the practice of anecdote reproduction, I also draw attention to a variety of complementary reading strategies which these two authors employ as supporting evidence for their interpretations. These practices include punctuating and establishing the text of Jesus's words, noting the occasion that precipitated his concluding remark and discerning the proper hermeneutical lens through which to read the passage. Tertullian and Origen derive these supplementary strategies from, and root them in, the text of the anecdote. Or, to put it differently, these complementary strategies contributed to, and were an integral part of, the emerging hermeneutic of literary contextualisation.

The focus of this chapter is on instances in which these two authors re-tell the anecdote as a *deliberate* way of contextualising Jesus's climactic sayings. These examples stand in contrast to those discussed in the introduction. There, I presented several cases where early Christian authors retell a pronouncement story as a proof of argument or to demonstrate the character of a famous sage. In other words, the purpose of such anecdote reproduction is not to contextualise Jesus's words in such a way as to clarify their significance. In this chapter, I discuss six case-studies in which Tertullian and Origen actively and deliberately re-tell the story surrounding Jesus's final pronouncement in such a way as to argue that the story conditions and shapes the interpretation of Jesus's climactic saying. I treat the cases in chronological order, beginning with four examples from Tertullian before considering two instances of anecdote reproduction in Origen's works. The cases examined in this chapter form a representative, although by no means exhaustive, record for the two authors under investigation.

I begin this chapter by discussing an early case of anecdote reproduction which appears in Clement of Alexandria's *Qui Dives Salvetur* (*Who is the Rich Man that will be Saved?*) which represents an important case of anecdote reproduction that sheds further light on the origins and initial impetus for this reading strategy. Tertullian and Origen build on, systematise and explicitly reflect on what is implicit in Clement's practice. Their consistent use of the anecdote for interpretive purposes, alongside the

other strategies that will be examined, point to a larger set of practices that together comprise a developing contextual hermeneutic for reading Jesus's sayings.

As a final introductory note, it is worth noting that the cases discussed appear in distinctly polemical contexts. Indeed, Tertullian and Origen's practice of anecdote reproduction is a polemical strategy of countering perceived non-contextualisation of Jesus's words. This raises complications, however. In each case, the historical sources provide access to important polemical debates *in which only one side of the conversation is now available*—namely, the views of Tertullian and Origen. The exegetical reasoning and reading strategies of their opponents constitute representations constructed, in large part, by Tertullian and Origen. The question naturally arises, to what extent do the reading strategies attributed to these opponents reflect historical reality? Ultimately, this issue does not impinge on my central argument, though I will judge the extent to which the readings of these opponents reflect reality on a case-by-case basis. The issue of historical reality will be of greater importance when it comes to determining the origins of these reading practices, an issue to which I give my full attention in chapter 4. What is important for the purposes of my argument are the hermeneutical principles that Tertullian and Origen display in these polemical disputes. For them, to interpret and apply Jesus's words aright requires serious wrestling with their immediate literary context.

1.1. The Beginnings: Anecdote Reproduction in Early Christian Authors

To what extent does Tertullian and Origen's practice of anecdote reproduction appear in early Christian writers that predate both Origen and Tertullian? A promising early case of anecdote reproduction for the purposes of contextualising Jesus's saying appears in Clement of Alexandria's *Quis Dives Salvetur* (*Who is the Rich Man that is being saved?* hereafter *QDS*).[1] In *QDS*, Clement addresses members of his community concerned by Jesus's statement 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". Clement writes to assure wealthy members of his community that they can be saved, provided they continue to

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[1] The title might also read "Which Rich Man Will be Saved?" See A. van den Hoek, 'Widening the Eye of the Needle: Reflections on Wealth and Poverty in the Works of Clement of Alexandria', in S. Holman (ed.), *Wealth in the Early Church and Society* (Holy Cross Studies in Patristic Theology and History; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008) 69n3. For text, see SC 537.

perform "works of salvation".[2] Since it represents what is possibly the earliest example of anecdote reproduction as a way of contextualising Jesus's sayings, this case merits extended discussion.

As the first known "commentary" of sorts on the Rich Young Ruler anecdote (Mt 19.16-30; Mk 10.17-31; Lk 18.18-30), *QDS* is one of the most fascinating examples of the debates surrounding the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words in the pre-Constantinian period.[3] Yet this point has been mostly overlooked in the literature. Instead, previous scholarship on this work has emphasised a different component of Clement's hermeneutical strategy—namely, his plea that the passage be read in a spiritual manner. So, for instance, Elizabeth Clark presents Clement's exegesis as a prominent example of a "spiritualized" reading encouraging a "weakening of the ascetic rigor demanded by a more 'literal' exegesis".[4] That is, Clement resolves the central problem of the text—Jesus's remark that "a camel shall more easily creep through a needle's eye than a rich man into the kingdom of heaven"—by allegorizing this, and other key aspects of the passage. In a similar vein, Annewies van den Hoek has noted that the cornerstone of Clement's exegetical intervention is his distinction between a "carnal" reading of the text (applying the saying in a literal fashion), and the divine and mystical wisdom that lies beyond the surface of the words.[5] And there is much to commend this view, rooted as it is in a number of Clement's statements in the work. Clark and van den Hoek's observations clearly resonate with Clement's statement that since "the Saviour teaches nothing in a merely human way, but teaches everything by a divine and mystical wisdom, we must not listen to His utterances carnally" but seek out the "meaning hidden in them".[6] The significance of Clement's spiritual hermeneutical can also be discerned when he

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[2] *QDS* 2.3: ἄλλοι δὲ τοῦτο μὲν συνῆκαν ὀρθῶς καὶ προσηκόντως, τῶν δὲ ἔργων τῶν εἰς τὴν σωτηρίαν (SC 537: 104–5).

[3] The Rich Young Ruler anecdote appears in all three Synoptic Gospels (Mk 10:17–31, Mt 19:16–30 and Lk 18:18–30). The "camel" saying is not a climactic saying in all three (Mk 10.24; Mt 19.25; Lk 18.25). This raises questions about the boundaries of the anecdote in antiquity. Even if it wasn't a climactic saying it is significant that members of Clement's community had isolated this saying and that in response, Clement draws attention to the larger anecdote.

[4] E. A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) 94; *eadem*, "Jews, Camels, and 'Literal Exegesis': The Pelagian Treatise *De Divitiis*", in H.-U. Weidemann (ed.), *Asceticism and Exegesis in Early Christianity: The Reception of New Testament Texts in Ancient. Ascetic Discourses* (Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus, Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments 101; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 428–44.

[5] Van den Hoek, "Widening", 71.

[6] SC 537: 114–15 (*QDS* 5.2).

suggests that proper application of the command requires grappling with exactly who it is "that the Lord and Master calls rich".[7] Clement defines the wealthy not as those who seek material wealth but the wealth of virtue. Moreover, the renunciation of wealth does not prevent one from *desiring* wealth; in fact, the adversity introduced by renunciation might lead to an increase in regret, conceit, grief and desire.[8] The command to sell one's belongings does not entail, as some hasty readers take it to mean, that one is to "fling away the substance that belongs to him and to part with riches".[9] Rather, the text is to be read at a deeper level such that renunciation is not a "visible act" but rather "something more divine and perfect, namely to strip the soul of itself and the will of its lurking passions…".[10] Above all, material wealth is neutral; what matters is what one does with it. Although there is the danger that one might easily become engrossed in wealth, material riches can serve more positive functions by allowing one to help others in difficulty, thereby affording opportunities which poverty could never offer.[11]

While Clark, van den Hoek and others have been right to note the particular hermeneutical moves Clement makes to rescue the meaning of the passage, this overlooks an additional strategy employed by Clement—anecdote reproduction. In response to supposedly rival reading strategies associated with de-contextualising

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[7] SC 537: 104–5 (*QDS* 2.2-3): certain members of the congregation "take no more trouble to ask who are the rich men that the Master and Teacher is addressing nor how that which is impossible with men becomes possible" (μηκέτι πολυπραγμονήσαντες μήτε τίνας τοὺς πλουσίους ὁ δεσπότης καὶ διδάσκαλος προσαγορεύει μήτε ὅπως τὸ δύνατον ἐν ανθρώποις δυνατὸν γίνεται).

[8] SC 537: 132–33 (*QDS* 12.4): "For although such is the case, one, after ridding himself of the burden of wealth, may none the less have still the lust and desire for money innate and living; and may have abandoned the use of it, but being at once destitute of and desiring what he spent, may doubly grieve both on account of the absence of attendance, and the presence of regret" (δύναταί τις ποφορτισάμενος τὴν κτῆσιν οὐδὲν ἧττον ἔτι τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ τὴν ὄρεξιν τῶν χρημάτων).

[9] In *QDS* 11.1-2 (SC 537: 127–29), Clement writes that some felt compelled to flee to the desert on the basis of the words of Jesus's command "sell what you possess". Clement asks, "what does this mean? It is not what some hastily take it to be, a command to fling away the substance that belongs to him and to part with his riches, but to banish from the soul its opinions about riches, its attachment to them… " (τί δὲ τοῦτό ἐστιν; οὐχ ὃ προχείρως δέχονταί τινες, τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν οὐσίαν πορρῖψαι προστάσσει καὶ ποστῆναι τῶν χρημάτων, λὰ τὰ δόγματα τὰ περὶ χρημάτων ἐξορίσαι τῆς ψυχῆς, τὴν πρὸς αὐτὰ συμπάθειαν τὴν ὑπεράγαν ἐπιθυμίαν).

[10] *QDS* 12.1 (SC 537: 130–31): "…his command does not refer to the visible act, the very thing that others have done, but to something else greater, more divine and more perfect… " (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, μηνύει καὶ διδάσκει, οὐ τὸ φαινόμενον, ὅπερ ἄλλοι πεποιήκασι, παρεγγυᾷ, ἀλλ᾽ ἕτερόν τι διὰ τούτου σημαινόμενον μεῖζον καὶ θειότερον καὶ τελεώτερον).

[11] *QDS* 12.2-3 (SC 537: 132–33). Clement's spiritualized hermeneutic dovetails well here with the Stoic notion about wealth being an item of indifference (*adiaphoron*) on which see Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 95. Since it is *adiaphoron*, wealth should be approached with dispassion. It is not wrong to use wealth for good since wealth in itself is neither good nor bad (in *QDS* 13, Clement notes that in the case of Matthew and Zacchaeus, Jesus does not "bid them part with their property", but "applies the just and removes the unjust judgment". It is desire of wealth, then, that is the problem for Clement.

Jesus's sayings, Clement provides a reading of the pronouncement in its literary context.[12] That scholars have overlooked this point is particularly surprising, especially given that Clement begins this work by noting his concern with improperly decontextualised readings of Jesus's famous logion about the "camel and the eye of the needle".[13]

> For some, merely hearing, and that in an off-hand way, the saying of the Saviour (ἀκούσαντες τῆς τοῦ κυρίου φωνῆς), "that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven", despair of themselves as not destined to live, surrender all to the world, cling to the present life as if it alone was left to them, and so diverge more from the way to the life to come, no longer inquiring (πολυπραγμονήσαντες) either whom the Master and Teacher calls rich, or how that "which is impossible to man becomes possible".[14]

Clement's startling opening to the document reveals a community divided not only by hermeneutical differences associated with "literal" and "spiritual" readings. Equally divisive is the dispute surrounding reading practices associated with the literary context of Jesus's words. The source of the conflict becomes clearer when one notes that Clement identifies the fault line of the debate to be one that is defined by alternative modes of engaging with Jesus's sayings. On the one hand, there are those who have "merely heard the saying of the Lord" (προχείρως ἀκούσαντες τῆς τοῦ κυρίου φωνῆς) and, on the other, those who, as Clement goes on to comment, "inquire of" (πολυπραγμονεῖν), "address" (καταμανθάνειν) and "examine" (ζητεῖν) the passage with scholarly rigour.[15] Scattered throughout Clement's running commentary on the

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[12] van den Hoek, "Widening", comes closest although, in my view, still does not adequately comment on the appeal to context (71: "Clement uses the biblical text fully, proceeding verse by verse, but his technique is to underscore his premises", 72: "While the biblical text provides Clement's starting point, the question remains: what does the text convey about wealth and poverty to him, and how does he interpret the passage?". As Kovacs, "Introduction", 12-13 rightly notes, Clement's exegesis focusses "especially on the saying in verse 25".

[13] Thus, L. W. Countryman, *The Rich Christian in the Church of the Early Empire: Contradictions and Accommodations* (Texts and Studies in Religion 7; New York: E. Mellen Press, 1980) 49, is right to note, even if he does not make reference to an appeal to context: "Does this saying [go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven] not command all future Christians of wealth to follow the same path of abandonment? The whole of the treatise…is devoted to refuting that proposition, to vindicating the possibility that the rich can be saved even as rich".

[14] *QDS* 2.2-2.3 (SC 537, 104–105): οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτόθεν καὶ προχείρως κούσαντες τῆς τοῦ κυρίου φωνῆς, ὅτι ῥᾷον κάμηλος διὰ τρήματος ῥαφίδος διεκ δύσεται ἢ πλούσιος εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, πογνόντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς οὐ βιωσόμενοι, τῷ κόσμῳ πάντα χαριζόμενοι καὶ τῆς ἐνταῦθα ζωῆς ὡς μόνης ἑαυτοῖς ὑπολειπομένης ἐκκρεμασθέντες πέστησαν πλέον τῆς ἐκεῖ ὁδοῦ, μηκέτι πολυπραγμονήσαντες μήτε τίνας τοὺς πλουσίους ὁ δεσπότης καὶ διδάσκαλος προσαγορεύει μήτε ὅπως τὸ δύνατον ἐν ἀνθρώποις δυνατὸν γίνεται.

[15] Clement, *QDS* 2.2 (SC 537, 104–105): Clement here uses πολυπραγμονεῖν (to inquiry closely about), at 5.2 he describes the exegetical task in terms of close examination (καταμανθάνειν) and inquiry done with "due inquiry and intelligence" (μετὰ τῆς ἀξίας ζητήσεως καὶ συνέσεως).

passage are no less than four negative references to "hearing" or "merely hearing" the words of Jesus, which, in each case, Clement couples and contrasts with four benefits of "inquiring about" and "examining" the same utterances.[16] The distinction Clement draws between "merely hearing", on the one hand, and "inquiring", "examining", and applying oneself to the text on the other, is not simply a rhetorical trope; it also speaks to his perceptions about proper and improper modes of engaging with, and interpreting Jesus's injunctions. It is a distinction, I would argue, between hearing a *saying* of Jesus in an isolated fashion and rigorously studying the literary context of Jesus's words. I should hasten to add that the process of examining the literary context includes, for Clement, the use of an appropriately allegorical hermeneutic. For Clement, allegory forms an inherent part of philological and grammatical work.[17]

Indeed, it is entirely reasonable to surmise that Clement is drawing a contrast between, on the one hand, the limitations of orality and aurality—both necessarily fragmentary modes of recall that might bring to mind Jesus's isolated sayings—and, on the other, the benefits of sustained examination of the larger passage, a practice only achieved through literacy and reading. This is not to say that Clement is distinguishing between literate and illiterate members of his audience here, since his wealthy addressees would have probably attained to some form of literacy.[18] Rather, it appears that Clement is discouraging the wealthy in his community from merely hearing the isolated saying of Jesus without properly examining the texts of the Gospels, a point that will later be echoed in Origen's treatment of the "render" command in his *Commentary on Matthew* and *Homily* on the tribute passage.[19] While Clement does not explicitly distinguish between a reading that solely prioritises "the saying" and one that accounts for "the passage", the contrast is strongly implied in his

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[16] On hearing: *QDS* 2 ("for some, merely *hearing*, and that in an off-hand way, the utterance of the Saviour"), *QDS* 4 ("For there is nothing like *listening again* to the very same statements, which till now in the Gospels were distressing you, hearing them as you did uncritically and mistakenly through childishness"), *QDS* 5 ("we must not *listen* to His utterances carnally") and *QDS* 5 ("we must not receive superficially *with our ears*"); on examining the passage, which can also include a proper type of hearing: *QDS* 2 ("no longer *inquiring* either whom the Lord and Master calls rich, or how that which is impossible to man becomes possible to God"), *QDS* 5 ("but with *application* of the mind to the very spirit of the Saviour, and the unuttered meaning of the declaration") and again ("but with due investigation and intelligence must search out and learn the meaning hidden in them").

[17] See for a similar point with regards to Origen, Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 42, 63-66.

[18] van den Hoek, "Widening", 69. On the mixed audience of Clement's works, see H. F. Hägg, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism* (OECS; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) 66-70.

[19] See the examples discussed in 1.2, sections 5 and 6 below (Origen, *CommMt* 17.25-6; *Hom. in Luc.* 39).

introductory comments about the "off-handed hearing of the utterance of the saviour". It is also witnessed in his allusion to another part of the immediate co-text—Jesus's comment that that "which is impossible to humans becomes possible" with God.[20] Finally, the contrast becomes even clearer and more explicit as Clement proceeds to both cite, and comment on, the anecdote as a whole.

Against this background, Clement's first move in countering the supposedly "off-handed" citation of Jesus's words is to reproduce the anecdote about the Rich Young Ruler. Clement's citation of the entire passage is, as Annewies van den Hoek notes, "his most extensive biblical quotation ever (fifteen verses long)".[21] Clement's account follows the central movements of the episode "in the gospel according to Mark", although his retelling appears to contain one or two notable divergences from extant versions of this gospel.[22] While Clement comments that the passages "generally agree" he also exploits what appear to be important textual differences to support his own reading of the passage. In Clement's re-telling, a young man approaches Jesus, asks him how he might inherit eternal life only to be told that he lacks one thing—"if you will be perfect" (Clement here probably follows the Matthean version), "sell what you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me".[23] Once the rich man leaves the scene, Jesus and the disciples discourse on the difficulty, although not the impossibility of the rich entering the kingdom of heaven. "What is impossible with men is possible with God. For with God all things are possible" (ὅ τι παρὰ ἀνθρώποις δύνατον, παρὰ θεῷ δυνατόν).[24] Clement's recitation concludes with Peter's remark that the disciples have left everything to which Jesus responds with the offer of eschatological rewards for those who abandon possessions and family for his sake "and the Gospel's".[25] It is significant that sustained biblical exegesis of the entire anecdote, amounting to what can only be considered a commentary on the passage, follows this citation.[26] Clement's exegesis is a practical

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[20] Clement, *QDS* 2.2 (SC 537: 104-105): ὅπως τὸ δύνατον ἐν ανθρώποις δυνατὸν γίνεται.
[21] van den Hoek, "Widening", 71.
[22] Clement, *QDS* 5.1 (SC 537: 114–115): "These things are written in the Gospel according to Mark; and in all the rest correspondingly; although perchance the expressions vary slightly in each, yet all show identical agreement in meaning".
[23] Clement, *QDS* 4.4-7 (SC 537, 112–13). It is possible, of course, that Clement's text of Mark has this phrase although it is ultimately impossible to know for certain.
[24] Clement, *QDS* 4.8 (SC 537, 112–113).
[25] Clement, *QDS* 4.9-10 (SC 537, 112–114).
[26] van den Hoek, "Widening, 69 notes that the work might have once functioned as a sermon, before being expanded.

outworking of his previously invoked theoretical principle of carefully examining texts.

Clement does not resolve the problem of his audience through merely appealing to a spiritual hermeneutic, as important as this. Rather, he also advocates and models the examination of the literary context of Jesus's words.[27] In fact, the relationship between the two—a spiritual hermeneutic and an appeal to the passage— is much closer than it first appears. After all, the starting point and arena for Clement's deeper reading is the *text* of the anecdote itself. This point echoes Peter Martens's observation concerning Origen's literary analysis of a text. For Origen, careful examination of the literary context provided the ideal opportunity to note disruptions in wording that he could meaningfully use for allegorical gain.[28] I would suggest that the same the principle is in operation here with Clement. That is, Clement maintains that it is only through a close reading of the text, including the larger context of the anecdote, that the apparent benefits of the spiritual significance of Jesus's words fully emerge. The text of the anecdote is not a barrier to overcome, then, but a platform and springboard to deeper readings of Jesus's sayings, especially when compared with interpreting those same utterances in both an isolated and literal fashion.

This example of anecdote reproduction in Clement's work demonstrates an early—if not the earliest, extant—case of employing the entire anecdote to counter perceived non-contextualisations of Jesus's sayings. The positive and pastoral ends to which Clement puts this strategy, as well as his use of allegory, bears great similarity to Origen's work and, as we shall see, marks a divergence from the sharply heresiological overtones of Tertullian's textual re-use.

1.2. The Evidence: Anecdote Reproduction in Tertullian and Origen's Re-use of Jesus's Words

Tertullian and Origen's practice of anecdote reproduction follows the incipient contextualizing impulses at work in Clement's case and gives it full expression. In this section, I treat six cases in chronological order, beginning with four examples from Tertullian's works before considering two instances of anecdote reproduction from Origen's *oeuvre*. Three of the examples—Tertullian, *De Idololatria* 15; Origen,

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[27] On the wider reception of this passage, see Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 94–98; van den Hoek, "Widening", 67–69; Clark, "*De Divitiis*".
[28] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 60.

Commentary on Matthew 17.26; *Homily on Luke* 39—treat the famous "render" command which dramatically concludes the tribute anecdote in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 22.15-22; Mk 12.13-17; Lk 20.16-25). Three supplementary instances strengthen the argument: Tertullian's account of the Question of the Sadducees (*Adversus Marcionem* 4.38.5; cf. Mt 22.23-32; Mk 12.18-27; Lk 20.27-38), his appeal to the background of Jesus's remarks about his "mother and brothers" (*De Carne Christi* 7.12; *Adversus Marcionem* 4.19.11; cf. Mt 12.46-50; Mk 3:31-35; Lk 8.19-21) and his use of the Matthean anecdote when disputing Marcion's use of the divorce saying (*Adversus Marcionem* 4.34.2; cf. Lk 16.18; cf. Mt 19.3-9; Mk 10:2-9).

1. *"What, then, are 'the things of Caesar'? They were, no doubt, those things which gave rise to the discussion" (Tertullian, De Idololatria 15)*

The first significant instance of the practice of anecdote reproduction in Tertullian's writings appears in his *De Idololatria* (*Concerning Idolatry*), a work composed at some point in the late second and early third centuries.[29] In this work, Tertullian seeks to identify the idolatrous aspects he considers latent within the occupations and social gatherings of Roman Carthage.[30]

Towards the mid-way point of the work, Tertullian counters the apparent attempts of some Christians to use the "render" command in defence of decorating their doors in honour of the emperor.[31] "'One has to render to Caesar what is Caesar's'".[32] It is difficult to determine whether Carthaginian Christians were exegeting this text in just the way that Tertullian proposes.[33] On balance, it would

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[29] The date of *De Idololatria,* as with all of Tertullian's works, has been the subject of much debate. I follow the conclusion of Waszink and van Winden who date the work to 198-208. See J. H. Waszink and J. C. M. van. Winden (eds.), *Tertullianus De idolatria* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1987) 10–13; T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Pr., 2005) 171 argues for a date of 198-208 having earlier contended that the work pre-dated the *Apologeticum*.

[30] See *De. Idol.* 2.1-5 (CCSL 2: 1102). All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. See also the text and apparatus in Waszink and van Winden, *Tertullianus De idolatria*, 9.

[31] *De Idol*. 15.1-2 (CCSL 2:1115). See for a discussion of this passage, *Tertullianus De idolatria*, 236-246.

[32] *De Idol*. 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115).

[33] I discuss the various options in chapter 4 and come to the conclusion that these figures are probably invented, although the reading strategy is something Tertullian may well have encountered before. Some have seen significance in Tertullian's reference to two groups of Christians for whom idolatry is an apparent danger—those who are ignorant (*ignorata*) and those who are aware of its power and yet turn a blind eye to it (*dissimulata*). See Waszink and van Winden (eds.), Tertullian, *Tertullianus De idolatria*, 9. The latter group could ostensibly be the opponent who forwards objections and who forms the target of Tertullian's responses throughout the work. While this group clearly appears to be the subject of Tertullian's concern, it is not necessarily the case that they are historical figures or that Tertullian is addressing them in this work.

appear that these opponents appear to be the products of Tertullian's rhetorical imagination. Their non-contextualised reading of the "render" command, however, appears to find broader appeal among other early Christians, even if the precise methods and motives that Tertullian attributes to those espousing such a reading should not be trusted.[34] Tertullian's attribution of the "render" command to an opponent aligns well with the practice of *occupatio*, a standard forensic rhetorical device in which one invents an opponent's objection (*objectio*) as a means of anticipating and refuting potential counter-arguments.[35] The *occupatio* plays an important role throughout *De Idololatria* as Tertullian records his opponent's reactions to his strict proscription of Christian participation in various occupations and social functions.[36]

Even if the non-contextualised interpretation of the "render" command is ultimately a commonplace of Tertullian's invention, or is at best only loosely based on reality, it remains significant that Tertullian singles out this form of reading as a point for discussion and correction. In other words, what is of greater relevance to my argument are the *ideals* and *principles* that Tertullian develops for reading Jesus's climactic sayings. Against this rhetorical background, Tertullian's appeal to context consists of two major principles: first, one is to read Jesus's utterance in its entirety, and second, one is to read the command in light of its literary context within the anecdote.

The first level of reading—establishing the text of Jesus's words—emerges from the opponent's partial citation of the command. To justify decorating their homes with imperial wreathes, Tertullian's opponents reference the first half of Jesus's pronouncement—"One has to 'render to Caesar what is Caesar's'"—while ignoring the final part of the saying, "fortunately he added (*bene quod*): 'and what is God's to

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[34] This judgement fits well with Tertullian's rhetorical skill on which see Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 85-100; Fredouille, *Tertullien* 142; Dunn, *Tertullian*, 25–30. This body of work made abundantly clear that Tertullian's training in rhetoric lends his writings a forensic quality such that Tertullian's works can be analysed in these terms.

[35] J. H. Waszink, "Tertullian's Principles and Methods of Exegesis", in W. R. Schoedel and R. L. Wilken (eds.), *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition: In Honorem Robert M Grant* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979) 23. Elsewhere, in his *De anima* 35.5*,* Tertullian comments on the possibility that Tertullian invented a transmigration argument from Matthew 17.12 (Elijah and John the Baptist) and, out of fear that it might appear in the future, rules it out *a priori*. See *idem*., (ed.), *Quinti septimi florentis tertulliani: de anima* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1947) 416.

[36] See for instance *De Idol.* 5 and the reference to the words of 1. Cor 7.20 ("everyone should remain in the condition he was when God called him") (CCSL 2.1104: *ut quisque fuerit inventus, ita perseveret*). See Waszink and van Winden, *Tertullianus De idololatria*, 121 for discussion.

God'".[37] By noting the failure of his opponent to correctly establish the text of Jesus's saying, Tertullian can rule out his adversary's interpretation and verify his own credentials as a reader and interpreter. Tertullian's inclusion of the second half of the sentence attests to the practice of establishing the text of a given writing. Since Latin works from the second century of the common era onwards were often produced in continuous script (*scriptio continua*), the reader had to establish the extent of words, phrases and sentences, and map out the boundaries of the text as a whole.[38] *Scriptio continua* required the reader to ask, "What constituted a complete phrase?" "Where did it start and where did it end?"[39] By fragmenting the saying and drawing the boundaries around the first half of the utterance, and ignoring the second part, Tertullian's opponents had, in his view, presented themselves as arbitrary and opportunistic exegetes.[40] As a result of failing to read the command in its entirety, their reading was deemed to be illegitimate.[41] The basic charge of accusing one's opponent of failing in "letters", R. A. Kaster notes, usually implied not that they were unable to read, but that they were deficient in advanced literary skills.[42] In a similar manner, by supplying the second half of Jesus's saying, Tertullian provides his readers with a lesson in basic grammar that shows up their inadequacies as readers and interpreters.

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[37] *De Idol*. 15.3 (CCSL 2.1115). Waszink and van Winden, *Tertullianus De idololatria*, 52-3.

[38] E. O. Wingo, *Latin Punctuation in the Classical Age* (Janua Linguarum. Series Practica; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972), 11-28; F. Desbordes, *Idées romaines sur l'écriture* (Histoire de la linguistique; Lille: Presses univ. de Lille, 1990) 228–29; T. Denecker, *Ideas on Language in Early Latin Christianity: From Tertullian to Isidore of Seville* (VCSuppl 142; Leiden: Brill, 2017) 274. Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 77 provides a useful discussion of Quintilian's comments on establishing unpunctuated text (*Inst.* 1.4-10). See on the technique of dividing words, basic to the art of grammar, C. M. Chin, *Grammar and Christianity in the Late Roman World* (Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008) 12–13. See on school exercises in Latin, R. Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (American Studies in Papyrology 36; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996) 48 who notes that interpunction, or spacing between words, was common in Latin texts up until the first century CE. Cribiore provides useful references to Latin texts with word separation (48n106).

[39] Young, *Biblical Exegesis* 77 notes that διόρθωσις and ἀνάγνωσις—or correct establishment and construal of the text—were primary tasks of the reader according to the Latin rhetorician, Quintilian. See Quintilian, *Inst. Orat*. I. I.1.30-37 where he discusses the division of syllables in reading and I.4.6-1.4.17, 1.7.7-1.7.9 where he covers the parts of speech when reading literature and orthography or spelling. LCL 124: 78-83, 106-115, 187-189.

[40] The contrast Tertullian constructs between, on the one hand, the vice of his opponent's arbitrariness and, on the other, the virtue of having scripture on one's side, is one that pervades Tertullian's writings. See Waszink, "Exegesis", 19.

[41] For Origen's attention to syntax and his use of inversion (ὑπερβατόν) to correct the reading of passages, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture* 56-57.

[42] R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Transformation of the Classical Heritage 11; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) 42. Kaster makes this point in relation to a dispute between Jerome and Rufinus but it applies equally well to our case.

Tertullian's attention to the text of the saying rehearses the point made by Morgan about the content of the moral saying forming part of the guidelines for its interpretation. Tertullian moves significantly *beyond* the text of Jesus's saying, however, and attends to the second layer of context—the larger narrative of the anecdote. Following his citation of the pronouncement, Tertullian queries the referents of "the things of Caesar". The answer, he goes on to note, can only be found upon reading the pronouncement story in its entirety. The passage merits full citation.

> What, then, are the things of Caesar? They were, namely, those things which gave rise to the discussion (*Scilicet de quibus tunc consultatio mouebatur*), whether the poll-tax should be paid to the emperor or not. It is for this reason that the Lord demanded to be shown a coin and asked about the image on it, namely whose it was. When he had heard that it was Caesar's he said: "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's (*reddite...quae sunt Caesaris Caesari et quae sunt dei deo*)…".[43]

While his opponents had apparently cited the climactic saying without considering its referents, Tertullian probes the precise meaning of the phrase in its literary context. The answer to Tertullian's question ("what are the things of Caesar?") lies in the larger dialogue between Jesus and his opponents found in the gospel text.[44] The implication Tertullian draws here is that the saying does not exist as a solitary, textual fragment so that one can simply define "the things of Caesar" as one wills.[45] Rather, because the remark is an answer to a query, the terms of the answer are set by the question posed. This point, in turn, requires appreciating the *kind* of dialogue in which the saying functions. As Tertullian sees it, the "render" command appears within a discussion or *consultatio*. More particularly, the *consultatio* contains an initial point that gives rise to (*moveo*) the final pronouncement.[46] To interpret Jesus's moral saying aright, then, requires the reader to consider the reasons for the pronouncement by tracing the points in the narrative that led up to it. Since it was about the poll-tax (*census*) that Jesus was questioned, Tertullian identifies "the things of Caesar" as the coin given as the tax,

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[43] *De Idol.* 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115).

[44] I discuss the issue of Tertullian's Gospel text more fully in the next chapter. For now, it is enough to say that Tertullian appears to have had some version of the full anecdote. As noted in 1.2, section 4 below, Tertullian discusses the text of Matthew's version of the divorce passage and is aware of its differences to the Marcionite Gospel.

[45] If the reading does reflect some degree of reality, then it would be easy to understand the rationale and methods of these opponents. Their thinking might have gone something like this: "should we place imperial wreathes on our doors? What does scripture say about the emperor? 'Render to Caesar what is Caesar's".

[46] *De Idol.* 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115): *Scilicet de quibus tunc consultatio mouebatur*.

and not the decorations on the doors of one's house, as Tertullian's opponents had apparently claimed.[47] That is, Tertullian implies that the reading of his opponents is incorrect precisely because it fails to read Jesus's saying contextually, and neglects to locate the referents of the pronouncement within the co-text.

From Tertullian's deconstruction of his opponents' reading strategy, it is possible to reconstruct what he considered to be the *proper* way of reading Jesus's climactic sayings. This task begins with establishing the full text of Jesus's words as they are found in the text of the anecdote, thereby ruling out fragmentary and partial citations of Jesus's saying. Although Tertullian does not say which gospel he is drawing on, it is clear that he has some larger literary context in mind. The next, and as I have suggested more innovative, step is to observe that the words of Jesus constitute the climactic saying in an anecdote. "The things of Caesar" have a specific referent in the larger narrative frame. Finally, one notes the type of discourse, a *consultatio* which begins with a question that precipitates the discussion—in this case, whether the poll-tax should be paid to the emperor or not. For Tertullian, the co-text ultimately affects the interpretation of the command and so continues to shape its significance by ruling out inappropriate applications of Jesus's words.

It is worth noting here, that Tertullian refrains from offering his own application of the saying. While he does note that "the things of God" refers to the human person (*homo*), the bulk of his energies are nevertheless spent on refutation rather than exposition.[48] His focus, as is often the case, is much narrower, centering on the task of ruling out his adversaries's perceivably erroneous ethical application.[49] In *De Idololatria*, the occasion that leads Tertullian to engage the application of the "render" command is not a pure interest in biblical exegesis, but the perception that

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[47] *De Idol.* 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115): Tertullian also notes that Jesus's request for the coin similarly proves that the poll-tax belonged to Caesar ("for this reason…"; *Ideo et monetam ostendi sibi dominus postulauit et de imagine*).

[48] "He meant that the image of the emperor, which is on the coin, should be rendered to the emperor and the image of God, which is in man, to God" (CCSL 2:1150). I discuss the doxological, as well as the martyrological overtones of this interpretation in a forthcoming piece, "Tertullian and the Martyrological Maxim: The Rhetorical Functions of the Command to 'Render to Caesar the Things of Caesar and to God the Things of God' in the Writings of Tertullian", *Studia Patristica* (forthcoming 2019).

[49] This instance of the negative use of scripture confirms the point made by Waszink, "Exegesis", 19: "Very quickly Tertullian's own explication of the relevant passages from the Two Testaments becomes less important to him than the refutation of the ever-increasing stream of surprising and horrifying interpretations given by the gnostics"—and here we might add, by any and all of Tertullian's opponents. See below for my discussion of the "conservative" pressure of the text of the anecdote on Tertullian's use of Jesus's sayings.

the command of Jesus might be used by rival Christians to defend the practice of honouring the emperor. And yet there is significant evidence to show that the saying's literary context also operated as a constraining force on Tertullian's interpretation of the command. Tertullian's attention to the literary context is in some ways all the more remarkable, given the fact that his work is an occasional treatise and not a full-blown commentary on the biblical text. This case therefore provides an early and significant example of an early Christian author coordinating their readerly agenda with the literary context of Jesus's words.

2. *"The reply must be pertinent to the purpose of the inquiry" (Tertullian, Adv. Marcionem 4.38.5)*

Tertullian's treatment of the Marcionite Gospel in his *Adversus Marcionem* (*Against Marcion*, ca. 207-212 CE) offers a significant glimpse into one of the most lengthy and extended instances of intra-Christian "reading wars" in the pre-Constantinian period.[50] In contrast to *De Idololatria* where Tertullian's opponents remain anonymous, in this second case Tertullian interacts with a well-known, if at times shadowy and misunderstood figure—Marcion of Sinope (ca. 85–ca. 160 CE).[51] A further contrast to *De Idololatria* is the fact that the sayings of Jesus were front and centre of *Adversus Marcionem* book 4, as Tertullian directly treats the text of Marcion's Gospel. Despite being on more solid ground with regard to Tertullian's opponents, scholars have rightly drawn attention to various difficulties associated with discussing this work.[52] The most obvious problem is determining the guiding exegetical principles and precise parameters of Marcion's text, since these are extant only in the translation and comments of Tertullian, a figure who both lived after Marcion's lifetime and who was largely unfavourable to his views.[53] It will shortly be seen that at various points Tertullian fails to portray accurately the reading strategies of the Marcionites. Even still, it is more significant for my purposes to note the

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[50] As Lieu, *Marcion*, 50 notes, this work also comprises around 20% of Tertullian's literary output. For an introduction, see E. E. Evans, *Adversus Marcionem. Books IV-V* (OECT; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). For the text, see SC 456. The dating of this work is a complex question since Tertullian seems to have produced multiple versions of the work. R. Braun provides as a date for book 4, 209-210 CE (SC 456: 17-19).
[51] The surest guide to Marcion's life and work is Lieu, *Marcion*.
[52] See especially, for an analysis of Marcion through Tertullian's eyes, Lieu, *Marcion*, 50–85.
[53] Lieu, *Marcion* 51: "At every point, Tertullian's Marcion cannot be understood independently of Tertullian himself." "Tertullian's Marcion can only be reached through the strategies of Tertullian's arguments and the principles of Christian faith he wishes to defend" (55).

concerns, ideals and priorities Tertullian offers in the reading of Jesus's sayings. In other words, there is still much to learn about *Tertullian's* practices of drawing on the literary context of Jesus's climactic sayings.

The passage of interest, the Question of the Sadducees, appears in each of the Synoptic Gospels where it concludes with the pronouncement, "He is not the God of the dead but of the Living" (Mt 22.23-33; Mk 12.18-27; Lk 20.27-40). In the Marcionite version, by contrast, this saying is unattested, as is the brief re-telling of the incident of Moses at the burning bush.[54] Instead, the fragmentary narrative frame concludes with an alternative version of the saying about the resurrection found in Luke's Gospel (see table 2).

Table 2: The Question of the Sadducees in the Synoptic Gospels and Marcion's Gospel

Matthew 22.23-33	Mark 12.18-27	Luke 20.27-40	Marcion's Gospel[55]
The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.' Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother. The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh. Last of	Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no child, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; and the second married the widow and died, leaving no children; and the	Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; then the second and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. Finally, the	Some of the Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection…Moses wrote….seven brothers…In the resurrection, whose wife will she be? …answering…The children of this age marry and are given in marriage. Yet those whom the God of that age (*deus illius aevi*) has accounted worthy of the inheritance, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage, because they cannot die any more, since they become like the angels, being made

[54] For Marcion's text of this episode, see D. T. Roth, *The Text of Marcion's Gospel* (New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents 49; Boston: Brill, 2015) 170-3, 252, 431.
[55] Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 170-3, 431.

all, the woman herself died. In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her." Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead, but of the living." And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

third likewise; none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her." Jesus said to them, "Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong."

woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her." Jesus said to them, "Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive." Then some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well." For they no

the sons of God and of the resurrection

| | longer dared to ask him another question. | |

The Marcionite version of the climactic saying distinguishes between the "children of this age" who marry, and the followers of the Marcionite "god of that age" who neither marry now nor in the resurrection from the dead. Tertullian's aim in this section is to argue against Marcion's distinction between the two deities, and the Marcionite prohibition of marriage in the present age. Yet, as I will show, he combines this agenda with a serious attempt to read Jesus's climactic response within its literary context. Tertullian's use of the anecdote again unfolds in two movements, moving from a request to read a response in light of its question, to concerns with the Marcionite punctuation of the climactic saying.

The first strategy Tertullian employs is an appeal to the "just and creditable rule" (*iusta et digne praescriptio*) whereby a response must only be read in the terms set by the question.[56] To discover the meaning of Jesus's final statement, one must recognise that the pronouncement was an answer to a question. As such, one must consider the purpose of the inquiry since the answer is only and ever pertinent to the question asked (*ad propositum interrogationis*).[57] Tertullian reiterates this principle of reading a response in light of the question at least seven times in this passage, and on a total of seventeen occasions refers to either the question of the Sadducees (*quaestio; consulo*) or Jesus's answer (*responsum; respondere*).[58] In a similar manner to the

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[56] Braun observes that Tertullian, as he so often does, begins his discussion of the text with a "preliminary" rule of reading (SC 456: 467). See further on this, Fredouille, *Tertullien*, 205. Although true to some extent, Waszink, "Exegesis", 26 is perhaps unduly harsh when he writes that "Tertullian has a gift for presenting a *locus communis* adapted *ad hoc* as one of his firm and lasting convictions".

[57] Tertullian maintains that only a "madman" would give an answer different or unrelated to the query proposed, and one cannot ascribe such a scurrilous label to Christ. *Adv. Marc.* 4.38.5: *ceterum aliud consulenti aliud respondere dementis est. Quo magis absit a Christo quod ne homini quidem convenit* (SC 456: 466. Tertullian later, and in a rather forced fashion, accuses the Marcionites of either crafting a Jesus that either did not dare answer the Sadducees' question, was trapped by their wisdom (*sapientia*) or indeed preferred to give secret teachings by means of an oblique response (*AM* 4.38.5).

[58] (1) *AM* 4.38.4: "It is a just and creditable rule that whenever a question is asked the meaning of the reply must be pertinent to the purpose of the inquiry (*propositum interrogationis*)". (2) *AM* 4.38.5: "This was the subject of the question, the object of their consultation" (*Haec fuit materia quaestionis, haec substantia consultationis*). "Christ's answer must have been on the same terms" (*Ad hoc respondisse Christum necesse est*). (3) *AM* 4.38.5: "His answer (*Respondit igitur…*) then was, that the children of this world marry. You see how pertinent to the case: because the question asked was about the world to come…". (4) *AM* 4.38.6: "Since then the meaning of the reply (*sensus responsionus*) must be turned in no other direction than the purpose of the inquiry (*ad propositum interrogationis*), if by this meaning of the reply (*responsionis*) the purpose of the inquiry (*interrogationis*) is satisfactorily met, then our Lord's reply (*responsio*) has no other meaning than that by which the question (*quaestio*) receives an answer". (5) *AM* 4.38.7: "If however you make Christ give an answer (*respondere*) to questions

previous case (*De Idololatria* 15.3), although in a more dogmatic and, we might say, "prescriptive" fashion, Tertullian points out that it is the co-text, and specifically the terms of the question posed, that dictate the meaning of the response given. Robert D. Sider notes in his *Art of Rhetoric* that in drawing attention to the context of a work, Tertullian picks up the mantle of Cicero.[59] I further discuss the influences of Cicero on Tertullian in chapter 4.[60]

To confirm the significance of this principle of contextual reading, Tertullian then proceeds to provide a brief re-telling that rehearses the main movements of the anecdote as found in the Gospels. The Sadducees question Jesus about the resurrection with a case derived from the law; if a woman marries seven brothers who die one after the other, which man's wife will she be at the resurrection?[61] Following a brief polemical interlude, Tertullian then provides Jesus's response —"the children of this world marry" while those "accounted worthy of the inheritance of that world neither marry nor are given in marriage".[62] The reproduction of the anecdote establishes Tertullian's principle of reading Jesus's sayings contextually (that is, in light of the original question asked of him). Whereas the Marcionites apparently claimed that the climactic saying concerned the "laws of different gods" on marriage, Tertullian emphatically holds to the view that Jesus's words are a response to a question about marriage *in the age to come*. Thus, Tertullian uses the initial question contained in the narrative frame to circumscribe the meaning of Jesus's climactic response.

Tertullian then provides a working example of this principle (reading the response in light of the question), when he discusses the apparent Marcionite subversion (*subverere*) of the reading "the children of this world marry and are given

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(*consultus*) that were not submitted to him, you are saying that he was incapable of answering (*respondere*) the questions (*interrogatus*) he was asked about…" (6) *AM* 4.38.8-9: "So again, on the subject of marriage, they misrepresent his answer (*responsum subvertunt*)…whereas it was the marriage of that world that he was asked about (*consulebatur*)" (7) *AM* 4.38.9: "So then those who had taken in the real force of his words and their expression and punctuation, understood no other meaning (*senserunt*) than that which was pertinent to the subject he was asked about" (*ad materiam consultationis pertinebat*).

[59] See Sider, *Art of Rhetoric*, 25-26, 85-100.

[60] See chapter 4.2, section 1.

[61] "The Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, having a question to ask about this, set before our Lord a case out of the law, touching a woman who according to legal requirement had married seven brothers who died one after the other, and asked which man's wife she would be reckoned to be at the resurrection" (*AM* 4.38.4; SC 456: 466–467).

[62] "His answer then was, that the children of this world marry. You see how pertinent to the case: because the question asked was about the world to come, in which he was going to define the rule that no one marries, he first stated the fact that marriage does take place here where there is also death" (*AM* 4.38.5; SC 456: 468–469).

in marriage".[63] To reiterate, the Marcionites appear to have used Jesus's response to make their famous distinction between the Creator God and the superior God revealed in Jesus Christ.[64] This reading suggests a distinction between the "Creator's men" who are allowed to marry in this life, and the Marcionites, who follow the "god of that age, that other god" and so "even here and now do not marry".[65] The Marcionite application of the verse, Tertullian implies, is celibacy.[66] In response, Tertullian asserts that Christ's response deals only with the marriage of "that world" since that was the subject of the discussion (*consultatio*). Thus, he cannot possibly have denied what he was not asked about.[67] While Marcion is right to assert that there is no marriage in "that world", it does not follow, in Tertullian's view, that Jesus denied that there is no marriage in "this world". As far as Tertullian is concerned, the distinction between the god of this world and that world is an arbitrary one that fails to reckon with the literary context at hand.

In addition to treating the literary context of Jesus's saying, Tertullian also contends that the text of the pronouncement shapes its interpretation. Marcionite punctuation, at least as Tertullian presents it, leads to an inappropriate interpretation of Jesus's saying.[68] The Marcionite text of Luke 20.35 reads "the god of that age" with the phrase *illius aevi* ("of that age") going with God (*deus*). Tertullian states that *illius aevi* should be punctuated after "God" so that it goes with what follows (namely "the inheritance") to read, "those whom God counts worthy to share in the inheritance of that world".[69] This grammatical move rests once again on the rule Tertullian has

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[63] Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 170-3, 431 reconstructs this as "for they become like angels of God, being sons of the resurrection". Lieu, *Marcion*, 227 reads the phrase as "the sons of the God of the resurrection". Braun, has "like angels of God, being made sons of the resurrection" ("puisqu'ils sont semblables aux anges de Dieu, ayant ete faits enfants de la resurrection"; SC 456: 468). Evans (*Adversus Marcionem. Books IV-V*, 478–79) has "sons of God and sons of the resurrection".

[64] As noted long ago by A. von Harnack, *Marcion, das Evangelium vom fremden Gott: eine Monographie zur Geschichte der Grundlegung der Katholischen Kirche* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 45; Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1924) 304.

[65] *AM* 4.38.8 (SC 456: 470–471).

[66] Lieu, *Marcion*, 91, 142 argues that the best sources reliably present Marcionites as rigorous proponents of celibacy. Later evidence from Epiphanius presents Marcion as sexually immoral, although even Epiphanius presents Marcion as favouring celibacy. Lieu, *Marcion*, 100-101, 388 considers these accusations against Marcion as spurious at worst, "at best bluster".

[67] *AM* 4.38.8 (SC 456: 470–471).

[68] Tertullian introduces these comments on "punctuation" as responses to Marcionite "arguments", that follow on from his central point about the *praescriptio* (*AM* 4.38.7; SC 456: 468–469).

[69] *AM* 4.38.7 (SC 456: 470–471): *Nacti enim scripturae textum ita in legendo decucurererunt: 'Quos autem dignatus est deus illius aevi', ut "illius aevi" deo adiungant, quo alium deum faciant illius aevi, cum sic legi oportet: 'Quos autem dignatus est deus', ut facta hic distinctione post 'deum' ad sequentia pertineat 'illius aevi' id est: 'Quos dignatus sit deus illius aevi possessione et resurrectione'.*

already laid out—since the question concerned not the "god of that age" but the conditions of "that world" (namely whose wife the woman would be in the age to come), the response must relate to the latter, and not the former.[70] Tertullian describes the Marcionite punctuation as arbitrary, indeed as "stumbling upon the text of scripture" (*nacti enim scripturae textum*) that best fits the theological presuppositions of its readers.[71] In actual fact, the Marcionite reading might have more warrant than Tertullian supposes since, as Judith Lieu suggests, there is the possibility that Paul's reference to "the god of this age" (2 Cor. 4.4) influenced the Marcionite reading.[72] If true, the Marcionite text would represent not a case of non-contextualisation but a different kind of "contextualisation" based on intertextual reference, drawing on a wider set of scriptural texts.[73] Unfortunately, Tertullian does not entertain any kind of explanation for his opponents' methods of reading.[74] Yet, what is significant is the appeal Tertullian makes to his own use of grammatical tools through which he seeks to establish his credentials as a reader. Indeed, the task of *distinctio* or punctuation—establishing the proper syntax and sentence construction—not only complements, but in part constitutes, the process of "literary contextualisation".[75] To interpret Jesus's saying correctly, Tertullian asserts, one must first properly establish the full text of the pronouncement and read it within its co-text. *If* Tertullian was aware of Marcion's use of the Pauline text to shape his reading, then it is significant that he rules it out in favour of reading the saying in light of its immediate co-text. The immediate literary context, in other words, would take precedence for Tertullian, over a scriptural

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[70] *AM* 4.38.7 (SC 456: 470–471): "For he was asked not about the god of that age, but the state of that world" (*Non enim de deo, sed de status illius aevi consulebatur*).

[71] *AM* 4.38.7 (SC 456: 470–471).

[72] Lieu, *Marcion*, 226 notes that this verse might give "credence" to the Marcionite reading, in addition to the fact that the Marcionite reading makes more sense in Latin than in the putative Greek original (226n125).

[73] Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 16 intriguingly suggests that Marcion's context for reading the gospel is just as contingent as, for instance Justin, or indeed Tertullian's to read the anecdote or indeed the Jewish scriptures: "So is it surprising that Marcion raises the question whether these books [Jewish scriptures] are after all indispensable, indeed whether the really are about the same God as revealed by the Apostle and Gospel?...Are Valentinus and Justin Martyr all that different in this regard, though one seems to have been intrigued by prophecy and the other by cosmology? The physical reception of these texts, first transformed by the hermeneutical attitude adopted towards them, then in turn affects their interpretation".

[74] As Lieu, *Marcion*, 2 notes, since Marcion pioneered the first "serious historical-critical of earlier Christian tradition" and represents a significant episode in the development and writing of gospel texts, there is good reason to be circumspect about Tertullian's representation of Marcionite reading practices here and elsewhere.

[75] Braun observes that "*distinctio* is a grammatical term indicating pauses between groups of words in reading which is properly called punctuation" (SC 465: 471n4).

intertext. I shall return to the disputes over which textual contexts take precedence when interpreting Jesus's words in chapters 2 and 3.

For now, it remains significant to note that Tertullian engages in shaping the terms of this debate by repeatedly presenting himself not only as the winner of the argument, but also as a superior reader of Jesus's sayings.[76] To further bolster this self-representation, Tertullian draws on the reaction of the scribes in the Synoptic Gospel to Jesus's pronouncement: "Master, you have spoken well" (*Magister…bene dixisti*; cf. Lk 20.49).[77] Tertullian's decision to read the passage to the end is significant for two reasons. First, it provides further evidence for the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation at work, as Tertullian draws on the full text of the anecdote. Second, this move also demonstrates that, for Tertullian, the gospel text re-enacts a controversy going on his own day. Tertullian creatively employs the literary context to exemplify his own principles of reading. An essential role is given to the scribes who attend to Jesus's "words, expression and punctuation" (*vocis et pronuntiationis et distinctionis*).[78] Each of these elements highlight significant grammatical and rhetorical practices, with *vox* (voice) denoting the tone of voice or intonation employed by the speaker, *pronuntiatio*, the way the delivery is pronounced and *distinctio*, as noted above, the practice of syntax, the division ("distinction") and punctuation of words so that that appropriate pauses might be noted or, conversely, word clusters identified.[79] Together, these constituted the tools of the ideal scribe (*scriba*) in Jesus's day, and, as Tertullian implies, the ideal reader in his own.[80]

In sum, Tertullian's interaction with the text of the Question of the Sadducees highlights a deep concern with apparent Marcionite efforts to decontextualize Jesus's climactic response to the Sadducees. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that Tertullian addresses this text because he thinks that the Marcionite version incorrectly punctuates

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[76] Compare the strategies of self-representation by the Latin grammarian Priscian (*fl.* 500 CE) in his *Partitiones* (on which see Chin, *Grammar and Christianity*, 14–15).

[77] *AM* 4.38.9 (SC 456: 472).

[78] *AM* 4.38.9 (SC 456: 472).

[79] In his *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian discusses how training in reading includes "when the boy should take breath, at what point he should introduce a pause into a line, where the sense ends or begins, when the voice should be raised or lowered, what modulation should be given to each phrase, and when he should increase or slacken speed, or speak with greater or less energy" (*Inst*. 1.8.1; LCL 124: 146-147. See also the example he provides in *Inst*. 1.5.27: "Personally I think that in such phrases as these the circumstances are almost entirely altered by the fact that we join two words together. For when I say *circum litora* I pronounce the phrase as one word, concealing the fact that it is composed of two, consequently it contains but one acute accent, as though it were a single word" (LCL 124: 90-1).

[80] Compare Kaster, *Guardians*, 17 who notes the sentiment of Seneca, that grammarians were guardians of language (*custos Latini sermonis*).

Jesus's climactic response and decontextualizes it from the anecdote at large. Tertullian perceives the erroneous reading strategy of his opponents' as a failure, at root, to appreciate the context, and thus the content, of Jesus's answer. Since the question concerned the conditions of that world, and not the god of that age, it is completely arbitrary, Tertullian contends, for the Marcionites to maintain a distinction between the Creator and "that other god", such that marriage is proscribed. Moreover, this reading relies on improper punctuation that further subverts the meaning of the saying by reinforcing the seemingly false division between the Creator god and the Marcionite deity.

At this point, one might appropriately interject—is it not unfair to describe the reading of Marcion and his followers as non-contextualised, since Tertullian patently relies on Marcion's text of scripture which appears to contain the full anecdote?[81] In Roth's reconstruction, the Marcionites do have some version of the full text of the anecdote, although this is difficult to reconstruct.[82] It remains significant for our purposes that Tertullian presents the Marcionites as having failed to *read the climactic saying within the context of the anecdote*, despite apparently possessing the full anecdote in their gospel. Thus, this example demonstrates Tertullian's developing conviction that the literary context formed a central component in the interpretation of Jesus's climactic sayings.

3. *"...arising from the requirements of the situation" (Tertullian, Adv. Marc 4.19.11; De Carne Christi 7.12)*

On the two occasions he discusses the Mother and Brethren anecdote (Lk 8.19-21; Mk 3.31-35; Mt 12.46-50), Tertullian observes that certain Christians read Jesus's

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[81] Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 431; SC 456: 468n3.

[82] The state of the text of Marcion's Gospel, and its relationship to the Synoptic Gospels, is a hotly debated question in the scholarship. For my purposes, what is important is that Tertullian *thinks* the Marcionites were aware of a full version of the story and wilfully ignored it. On this debate about the status of the Gospel text in the second century, see Lieu, *Marcion* who thinks that the text of Luke was not yet fixed and that the Marcionites edited one of the numerous versions of the Lukan in existence. This position is impossible to prove or disprove since it would require proving a negative. The view that Marcion wrote the first gospel on which the Synoptic Gospels are based is defended by M. Klinghardt, "The Marcionite Gospel and the Synoptic Problem: A New Suggestion" *NovT* 50.1 (2008): 1-27 and more fully, by M. Vinzent, *Marcion and the Dating of the Gospels* (Studia Patristica Supplements 2; Leuven: Peeters, 2014). This view has been challenged on different grounds by D. Roth, "Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels. By Markus Vinzent" *JTS* 66.2 (2015): 800–803 and L. Ayres, "Book Review: Judith M. Lieu. Marcion and the Making of a Heretic. God and Scripture in the Second Century Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015" *JECS* 25:3 (2017): 480-483 (481).

words, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" as confirmation that he had no earthly birth.[83] According to Tertullian, this saying was one of the most commonly used arguments in controversies surrounding Jesus's nativity.[84] Tertullian comments on this climactic saying and its larger co-text in two works which have a definite, if highly complex literary relationship—*De Carne Christi* (*On the Incarnation*) and *Adversus Marcionem*.[85] Since it is in his *Adversus Marcionem* that Tertullian reproduces the full anecdote, I will deal with this passage in detail while commenting on the parallel passage in *De Carne* when relevant to the argument. I maintain the same approach to this portion of *Adversus Marcionem* as in the previous section—Tertullian does not invent the strategies of the Marcionites although he often creatively embellishes them or fails to reckon with the motives for their decisions.[86] Marcion's text of the Gospel seems to have contained the text of the anecdote, although as Roth has noted, this is difficult to reconstruct.[87] Just as with the Question of the Sadducees example above, Tertullian seems to be of the view that the Marcionites were aware of the full text of the anecdote and the final part of Jesus's response, and yet failed to draw on the literary

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[83] For the text of *De Carne* 7.1, see SC 217: 240–241. For an English introduction and translation, see E. Evans, (ed.), *Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation* (London: S.P.C.K., 1956) 27-33. For the text of *AM* 4.19.6 see SC 456: 242–43.

[84] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.6 (SC 456: 242–43): "we come to the most abiding arguments" (*venimus ad constantissimum argumentum*). *De Carne* 7.1 (SC 217: 240-41): "but as often as the nativity is discussed" (*sed quotiens de nativitate contenditur*). There are, by my count, at least four additional references to this passage in pre-Constantinian Christian sources: Gospel of Thomas 99, Hippolytus, *Ben. Isaac* 2, Origen, *CC* 1.32-7 and the lengthy discussion in Origen's *CommMt* 10.17. In the fourth century, Epiphanius provides a highly tendentious discussion of the Ebionites' re-use of the passage in which the question is used to deny Christ's divinity. For the text of Epiphanius, see B. Ehrman and Z. Pleše, *The Apocryphal Gospels: Texts and Translations.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 214–15.

[85] *De Carne Christi* 7.12 and *Adversus Marcionem* 4.19.11. See also *AM* 3.11; 4.26 where Tertullian recounts the remark of the woman in the multitude ("blessed was the womb that bore you") and Jesus's response, ("blessed rather are those that hear the word of God and do it"). From the reference Tertullian makes in his *De Carne* to *AM* ("I have already given to Marcion in that work in which I have made appeal to the Gospel which he accepts"), it would appear that *De Carne* follows *AM*. This position has appeared untenable to Mahé and Braun, however, since Tertullian comments that books IV and V of *AM* were part of a later edition of the work, such that when Tertullian in *De Carne* refers to giving Marcion an answer in his *AM*, this most likely refers to an earlier version of *AM* than the one finally published. Mahé (SC 217: 15–26) instead proposes that *De Carne* is prior to *AM* and represents a less developed view of the Marcionite system. For a brief summary of *De Carne* see SC 217: 181–196. Tertullian intended this work to be the first part of a two-part work on Christ's flesh, the second of which considered the bodily resurrection of Christ.

[86] Lieu, *Marcion*, 53–54 remarks that Tertullian is able to adapt arguments made against one heretic and fit them for purpose in argumentation against another (e.g. the Jews and Marcion). It appears that Tertullian does not distinguish between the different textual decisions made by his opponent in *De Carne*—Apelles—and the Marcionites in *AM*. The extent to which Tertullian differentiates between opponents and their arguments depends on the work (thus Heine, "Beginnings of Latin Christian Literature", 135 who notes that Tertullian does differentiate in *De Carne* but less so in *De Resurrectione Mortuorum*).

[87] Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 118-9, 417.

context in their interpretation of Jesus's pronouncement. Tertullian therefore reproduces the anecdote to rule out his opponents' reading of Jesus's climactic saying.

Just as with the previous two cases, Tertullian begins his response by establishing the text of Jesus's moral saying, reconstructed below (see table 3).

Table 3: Marcion's account of the Mother and Brother Anecdote as reconstructed by D.T. Roth in unaccented Greek and in my own English translation.[88]

The Text of Marcion's Account Reconstructed in Greek	English Translation
{ἀπηγγέλω…αυτω} η μήτηρ σου και οι αδελφοι σου *{εξω εστηκασιν ιδειν θελοντες σε}* τις μοι **μήτηρ** και τινες μοι **αδελφοι**, ει μη **οι τους λογους μου ακουοντες και ποιουντες** αυτους	"It was reported to him, 'your mother and your brothers are standing outside wanting to see you'. 'Who is my mother and who are my brothers but those who hear and do my words?'"

According to Tertullian, Jesus's question ("Who is my mother…?") gives Marcionites and others "the impression" that Jesus denied "both relationship and nativity".[89] A more reasonable explanation, Tertullian contends, emerges from reading Jesus's saying in its entirety.[90]

> This [the question, "who are my mother and my brothers"] was not so much a denial as a disavowal (*Non tam abnegavit quam abdicavit*). And so (*Atque adeo*) after the first part, "who is my mother and my brothers", by adding, "only those who listen to my words and do them", he transferred the titles of blood to others whom he judged, as a result of their faith, closer to him.[91]

Tertullian suggests that it is only when one reads Jesus's response in its entirety that one understands the distinction between the biological family of Jesus and those "he judged, as a result of their faith, more close to him".[92] There are obvious parallels here to Tertullian's attempts to establish the full text of the "render" saying in *De*

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[88] Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 417. I have left the text unaccented. I have followed Roth's markers for the text (*Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 410-411): Text that is **bold** = very secure; text in ***bold italics*** = very likely; text in regular type = probable reading; text in *italics* = possible reading; text in italics set in (*parantheses*) = where reading is not attested; text in {curly brackets} = text where the word order is uncertain. Ellipses = unattested elements.
[89] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.11 (SC 456: 246–247).
[90] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.10 (SC 456: 246–247).
[91] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.11 (SC 456: 246–247).
[92] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.11 (SC 456: 246–247).

Idololatria and the response to the Sadduccees in *Adversus Marcionem* 4.38.5.[93] In the case at hand, Tertullian's appeal to the full saying, which Tertullian introduces with the clause "he added", constitutes a key part of his counterargument. The second part of the statement, Tertullian claims, proves that Jesus is not *denying* (*abnegare*) that he has family; rather, it shows that he *disavows* (*abdicare*) them for failing to support his ministry. In other words, the latter half of Jesus's saying introduces a crucial distinction between those who are relatives by ties of blood, and those who are close to Jesus because of their faith (*pro fide*).[94] The saying is therefore not a denial of Jesus's biological family, but a rejection based on his relatives' refusal to do his work and, more negatively, their misguided attempts to disrupt his ministry. Tertullian implies that his opponents' interpretation falters because it fails to take stock of Jesus's entire answer.

Having established the text of the saying, Tertullian then appeals to the wider literary context in which it is mentioned that a report is brought to Jesus about his relatives. Tertullian reasons that "there could have been no report brought to him that his mother and his brothers stood outside desiring to see him, if he had had no mother or brothers".[95] That is, the report that Jesus's mother and brothers are standing outside proves that his question is not a negation of their identity as his kinfolk, but in fact presupposes this very fact. Moreover, in the parallel text of *Carne Christi* 7, Tertullian provides clear evidence that the context of the preceding statement is essential when he states that "the background of that remark must be taken into consideration" (*considerandam scilicet materiam pronuntiationis istius*).[96] Through drawing on the immediate literary context surrounding the climactic saying, Tertullian shows that the report about Jesus's mothers and brothers proves that those mentioned are in fact his family. Tertullian therefore seeks to establish the textual boundaries of the co-text as the appropriate context in which to interpret the climactic saying.

Further evidence of Tertullian's appeal to the literary context of the anecdote is found in his description of the methods of his opponents. Tertullian accuses them of either complicating "plain and simple expressions" (*simplicitatis*) or "giving a general

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[93] In *De Idol,* 15.3, Tertullian uses *apponere* (to add) while in *Adv. Marc.* 4.19.11 he uses *subjungere* (to affix).
[94] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.12 (SC 456: 246–247).
[95] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.7 (SC 456: 244–245).
[96] Tertullian, *De Carne* 7.1 (SC 217: 240–241). Tertullian stops short of providing a run-through of the anecdote in this text.

meaning to expressions based on special condition and particular reasons" (*condicionalis et rationalis*).[97] It is the latter strategy that Tertullian here ascribes to his opponents, since they take at face value sayings made "with conditions" (*condicionalis*) and "reasons" (*rationalis*).[98] Reading a statement *condicionalis et rationalis* is a rather more precise way of phrasing the same principle Tertullian employs in *De Idololatria*. There, as I noted, Tertullian draws attention to the query that gave rise to the discussion. When considered "from the requirements of the situation", Jesus's question does not negate the existence of his family but actually confirms it.[99] The simplistic reading of Tertullian's opponents, in his view, completely overlooks the reasons that led Jesus to make the final pronouncement.

In addition to both considering the remark as a whole, and in light of the conditions of the wider situation of the anecdote, Tertullian draws on a range of complementary and supplementary strategies that exhibit his use of a hermeneutic of literary contextualisation. So, for instance, Tertullian employs the language of "transference" (*transfere*) and "substitution" (*substituere*) as a way of elucidating Jesus's relationship to his biological family. An appeal to the transference of titles entails that those whose status is transferred still possess that status.[100] That is, Jesus does not negate his earthly origins by reassigning the status of his family to his followers. His earthly family continue to be his family, even if that title is also used to describe another group of individuals ("those with faith"). Similarly, the substitution of the family of faith for blood ties does not mean that those who listen to his word become his family in a genuine sense (*veriores*), only that they are worthier (*digniores*) of being called his relatives than those who are his family by blood.[101] Crucially, in Tertullian's view, Jesus's family retain their status as such.

Tertullian also introduces an objection (*objectio*) from his opponents which states that "the report [that Jesus's relatives were outside] was brought with the purpose of tempting him".[102] The substance of this objection is that those who came

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[97] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.6 (SC 456: 242–243).
[98] Tertullian, AM 4.19.6 (SC 456: 242–243, 243n5). See for the parallel in *De Carne,* Evans, *Incarnation*, 118.
[99] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.11 (SC 456: 246–247).
[100] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.12, (SC 456 246–247).
[101] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.12 (SC 456: 248–249).
[102] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.7 (SC 456: 244–245): "our adversaries's usual answer is, 'What then if the message was brought with the purpose of tempting him?'" See also *De Carne* 7: "'But', they say, 'it was for the sake of tempting him that they announced to him the mother and the brethren whom actually did not have'" (Evans, *Incarnation*, 28-9). It is difficult to tell whether or not this objection was

to inform Jesus that his family were outside had invented this rumour as a way of finding out whether Jesus had been born or not. Tertullian appeals to the fact that this "temptation" is nowhere stated in scripture—*sed hoc scriptura non dicit*.[103] If a temptation was intended, Tertullian contends, then the authors of the gospels would have adhered to their convention of mentioning that Jesus was being tested in some manner. Tertullian proves his point by drawing on examples from the gospels where Jesus's opponents do seek to test him: the doctor of the law who tests Jesus (Lk 10.25) and the testing of Jesus by the Pharisees in the question about divorce passage (Mt 19.3).[104] In both cases, Tertullian asserts, the text explicitly states that Jesus is the subject of a test. Yet in the case of the passage about Jesus's mother and brothers, no test is mentioned, and so no temptation is intended. The text of the anecdote is so severe a constraint on the reading of the concluding statement that Tertullian goes as far as asserting the principle, "I refuse to accept an inference of your own, which is not in Scripture".[105] There is a strong sense that the literary context functions for Tertullian as a legal witness (*testimonium*) to his argument. With the co-text as his proof, Tertullian perceives that he is able to refute his opponent's mode of reading, precisely by unmasking its supposedly arbitrary qualities.[106] In sum, then, Tertullian appeals to the wording of Jesus's saying, the context of the anecdote, and indeed the very text of scripture itself, to establish the interpretation and application of the moral pronouncement and to rule out the seemingly inappropriate attempts of his opponents.

4. *"He answers a particular question concerning it" (Tertullian, Adversus Marcionem 4.34.2)*

The debate between the Marcionites and Tertullian over the divorce saying provides an additional, significant case in which Tertullian attempts to formulate rules for the reading of Jesus's words. This example demonstrates that the process of reading the moral sayings of Jesus not only involved the agenda and ideology of the two sets

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invented. If it was not invented, then it would show attention to this passage on the part of Tertullian's opponents.

[103] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.7 (SC 456: 244–245).

[104] Tertullian, *AM* 4.19.7 (SC 456: 244–245).

[105] This slightly more forceful statement comes from *De Carne*. See SC 217: 242: *non recipio quod extra scripturam de tuo infers.*

[106] On the refutation of arbitrariness as a major principle of Tertullian's exegesis, see Waszink, "Exegesis", 19. On the use of scriptural texts as witnesses see Dunn, "Rhetoric and Tertullian", 355: "As with many of his other works, Tertullian uses Scripture as a witness, and he needs to convince his readers that the evidence that comes from this witness supports his case, and not his opponents".

of readers; it was also a highly textual debate that involved appeals on both sides to a variety of rivalling literary contexts for Jesus's pronouncements. The Marcionites, for their part, used the divorce saying of Jesus to establish their famous opposition between the God of Christ who prohibits divorce and the God of the Hebrew Bible who, through Moses, permits divorce in Deuteronomy 24.1. Tertullian's aim in this section of his work against Marcion is to show that the teaching of Jesus and of Moses on divorce are not in opposition.[107] I will argue that to attempt to achieve this goal, Tertullian draws on the Matthean parallel of the divorce saying and reproduces the anecdote that surrounds this utterance to contextualise the words of Jesus.

The debate between Marcion and Tertullian over Luke's version of the divorce saying is at once complicated by the number of sayings attributed to Jesus in which he addresses the subject of divorce.[108] The Lukan version of the saying stands on its own without any immediate larger context: "whoever sends his wife away and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries a woman sent away by her husband has also committed adultery" (Lk 16.18). The Matthean and Markan parallels to this prohibition of divorce both sit within larger anecdotes. To make matters even more complicated, there is also the parallel in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5.32; see table 4).[109]

Table 4: Variations of the divorce saying in the Synoptic Gospels and Marcion's Gospel

Matthew 19:1-9	Matthew 5:32	Mark 10:1-12	Luke 16.18	Marcion 16.18[110]
When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. Large crowds followed him, and he cured them there. Some Pharisees		He left that place and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan. And crowds again gathered around him; and, as was his custom, he again taught them. Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked,		

[107] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.5 (SC 456: 425): *Et iam non contrarium Moysi docet…*
[108] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.1-5 (SC 456: 410-415).
[109] See discussion in D. W. Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field: Early Christian Reception of the Gospel of Matthew* (SBR 6; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016) 209.
[110] Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 426.

came to him, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." They said to him, "Why then did Moses command us to give a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her?"		"Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter.		
He said to them, "It was because you were so hard-hearted that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for	But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced	He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another,	Whoever sends his wife away and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries a woman sent away by her husband has also committed adultery.	Whoever sends his wife away and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries a woman sent away by her husband has also committed adultery

unchastity, and marries another commits adultery".	woman commits adultery.	she commits adultery."		

Tertullian begins his discussion by observing that Marcionites exploit the apparent contradiction between Jesus who forbids divorce and Moses who permits it. This contradiction allows the Marcionites to distinguish between the God of Christ and the Creator of the Old Testament. Tertullian permits this contradiction but notes that it arises only because Marcion has not accepted (*recipio*) "that other gospel" (*illud quoque evangelium*), an oblique reference to the divorce anecdote in Matthew's Gospel (Mt. 19.3-9).[111] In response, Tertullian reproduces the Matthean version of the anecdote, as follows.[112]

> You notice the contrast between law and gospel, between Moses and Christ? Plainly. For you have not accepted that other gospel, of equal truth, and of the same Christ, in which, while forbidding divorce he answers a particular question concerning it: *Moses because of the hardness of your heart commanded to give a bill of divorcement, but from the beginning it was not so—because in fact he who made them male and female had said, The two of them shall become one flesh. What God has joined then, shall a human being presume to put asunder?* So, by this answer he did two things: he safeguarded Moses's regulation as his own, and defined the institution of the Creator, being the Creator's Christ.[113]

As Tertullian notes, Matthew embeds Jesus's prohibition of divorce within a larger narrative in which his response answers a "particular question" (*propriam quaestionem*).[114] The question to which Tertullian refers is the Pharisees' query— "why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and send her away?"[115] By noting that Jesus's answer is a response to a particular question on the

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[111] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.2 (SC 456: 412). It is possible that Marcion simply did not know this version. See Lieu on the versions available to Marcion and note 82 above. The boundaries of the anecdote are Mt 19.3-9 with the final saying paralleling Lk. 16.18 without the last part ("and whoever marries one that is sent away by her husband commits adultery"); Mk. 9.2-9 ends with the "asunder" saying although the discourse continues "in the house" with Mark 10.11-12 paralleling Luke 16.18 with some minor alterations.

[112] It is noteworthy that Tertullian ends this version at the "asunder" saying of Matthew 19.6 rather than Matthew 19.9 (which closely parallels the divorce saying found in Luke 16.18). This can be explained by the fact that Tertullian reproduces the anecdote to contextualise the more general "prohibition of divorce" that comes from Matthew 19.9.

[113] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.2 (SC 456: 412), italics added to indicate anecdote reproduction (Mt. 19.4-6).

[114] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.2 (SC 456: 412).

[115] This co-textual detail comes from Mt 19.7. The divorce anecdote also opens with the Pharisees' question—"is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on any grounds?" (Mt 19.3) although this is not the question in view.

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Mosaic divorce certificate, Tertullian seeks to achieve two purposes. First, Tertullian attempts to show that Jesus's response, when set in its proper literary context, does not contradict Moses's arrangement for divorce. Rather, Jesus declares Moses's arrangement valid for that time, since it accommodated for the people's "hardness of heart".[116] That is, Jesus's teaching to some extent retains Moses's regulation for divorce, even if it does not confirm it outright.[117] Second, Tertullian argues that Jesus's answer confirms the law of marriage established by the Creator. That is, Jesus establishes the primacy of the original commandment to marry.[118] When set within the context of the larger Matthean anecdote, Tertullian argues, Jesus's prohibition of divorce in Luke 16.18 is not so different from Moses's permission of divorce.

In addition to reproducing the anecdote, Tertullian seeks to contextualise Jesus's saying in Luke by more closely establishing the text of the pronouncement. Knowing that his opponents will not accept the Matthean anecdote, Tertullian seeks to meet the Marcionites on their own terms, by treating their version of the stand-alone saying. Yet even this text, Tertullian claims, does not demonstrate a complete contradiction between Moses and Jesus.[119] Tertullian argues that the full text of Jesus's saying in the Marcionite gospel issues certain *conditions* (*condicionaliter*) for the prohibition of divorce.[120] Divorce is prohibited on those occasions in which one seeks to remarry, since those who divorce for the purposes of remarriage commit adultery.[121] The presupposition here is that if one divorces while intending to re-marry, the original marriage is not in fact annulled but continues, thus leading to adultery. As Tertullian notes, this immediately introduces conditions for divorce so that Jesus's prohibition of divorce is no longer total or absolute. And since it was a conditional, and not an absolute prohibition, then where these conditions are absent, one may reasonably divorce. Thus, Jesus's teaching does not technicaly contradict that of Moses since both, strictly speaking, permit divorce. While this will strike modern readers as a rather strained exegesis of the text, it is more important for our purposes to note the *manner* in which Tertullian attempts to establish his interpretation. Tertullian argues that

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[116] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.2 (SC 456: 412).
[117] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.5 (SC 456: 414): *cuius praeceptum alicubi conservat, nondum dico confirmat.*
[118] See the discussion of the exegesis of Tertullian and other early Christian authors in Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field*, 224.
[119] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.3-5 (SC 456: 414).
[120] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.4 (SC 456: 414).
[121] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.4 (SC 456: 414).

taking stock of the full text of Jesus's saying rules out the Marcionite interpretation since the text clearly provides situations in which one might reasonably divorce.

Moreover, Tertullian goes on to assert that there is further similarity between Moses and Jesus since both provide *similar grounds* for divorce.[122] Here, Tertullian draws once more on the Matthean parallels which contain clearer conditions for allowing divorce. Drawing on Matthew 19.9 and 5.32 which mention "divorce on the grounds of unchastity" and the reference to "immodest behaviour" (*negotium impudicum*) in Deuteronomy 24.1, Tertullian notes that both Moses and Jesus allow divorce only in the case of adultery. Thus, both Moses and Jesus maintain similar conditions for divorce.[123]

In summary, then, Tertullian attempts to contextualise the Marcionite version of Jesus's saying in two ways. First, through reproducing the larger anecdote in which a parallel version of Jesus's words existed (Matthew 19.3-9), Tertullian shows that Moses and Jesus's stances on divorce are not as dissimilar as the Marcionites make them out to be. Second, he argues that the text of the Marcionite version of the saying (which parallels Mt 19.9 and Mt 5.32) provides conditions for the prohibition of divorce so that Christ does not forbid divorce absolutely. In fact, Christ allows divorce so long as the intention is not to remarry. Once again, then, Moses and Jesus's views do not represent opposite poles on the spectrum according to Tertullian. Crucially, for our purposes, the text of the anecdote, and not only the text of Jesus's saying itself, form the basis for Tertullian's attempts to explicate Jesus's words. This case therefore further demonstrates for Tertullian the importance of the literary context in the task of interpreting the words of Jesus.

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These four cases from Tertullian's works demonstrate a fairly consistent strategy of anecdote reproduction for the purposes of deliberately contextualising Jesus's climactic sayings. In each case, the textual boundaries of the anecdote, and the pronouncement itself, suggest limits to the interpretation of Jesus's climactic sayings and help to rule out the seemingly inappropriate readings of Tertullian's opponents. Importantly, Tertullian defines Jesus's words not as stand-alone sayings, but as

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[122] P. L. Reynolds, "The Matthean Exception in the Fathers", in *Marriage in the Western Church: The Christianization of Marriage During the Patristic and Early Medieval Periods* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 24; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 173–212 (191).
[123] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.6-7 (SC 456: 416-418).

textually embedded pronouncements interpreted in light of their immediate literary context. The discussion now turns to consider Origen's practice of anecdote reproduction. In so doing, I will show that despite the many differences in style between Origen and Tertullian, Origen also seeks to clarify the meaning of Jesus's words through their co-text. Furthermore, I argue that as with Tertullian, so also does Origen seek to theorise and reflect on the relationship between Jesus's climactic sayings and the narrative frame surrounding them.

5. *"For give attention to the fact that…it was being investigated if one must pay tax to Caesar or not" (Origen, Commentary on Matthew 17.25-6, on Matthew 22.15-22)*

The first significant case of contextualisation through anecdote reproduction that appears in Origen's writings can be found in his commentary on the tribute passage in his *Commentary on Matthew* (*Commentarium in Matthaeum*).[124] Origen's attention to the context of Jesus's "render" command in this work is perhaps unsurprising, since the genre of the commentary provided the ideal opportunity for the learned pedagogue to establish the extent of the text, and provide a series of extended readings on its significance and appropriate use.[125] Yet the contextualisation of a verse

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[124] The critical edition of the Greek original and Latin translation can be found in GCS 40: 653. Books 13-17 have now been translated. For English translation, I follow and adapt that of R. E. Heine, (ed.), *The Commentary of Origen on the Gospel of St Matthew* (2 vols.; Oxford Early Christian Texts; Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[125] See the useful comments on commentary and context in C. Whitton, "*Alius aliud*: Context, Commentary and Pliny (*Epistles* 9,3)" in U. Tischer, A. Forst and U. Gärtner (eds.), *Text, Kontext, Kontextualisierung: Moderne Kontextkonzepte und antike Literatur* (Spudasmata 179; Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2018) 137-160. The traits of disputation and free debate that characterise Origen's Commentaries place him in a long line of learned commentators and schools in which difficult passages were contested, often with the help of a master. On antique and late antique commentaries in general, see J. W. H. Atkins, *Literary Criticism in Antiquity: A Sketch of its Development* (Gloucester, Mass.: Smith, 1961); R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968); J. Mansfeld, *Prolegomena : Questions to be Settled Before the Study of an Author, or a Text* (Philosophia Antiqua 61; Leiden: Brill, 1994); W. Geerlings and C. Schulze, *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter* (vol. 2; Clavis Commentariorum Antiquitatis et Medii Aevi 3; Leiden: Brill, 2002); F. Montana, "Hellenistic Scholarship" in F. Montanari and S. Matthaios (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship* (Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship vol. 1; Leiden: Brill, 2015) 99–143. On Origen's commentaries, see M. Wiles, "Origen as Biblical Scholar", in P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (eds.), *Cambridge History of the Bible Vol. 1: Beginnings to Jerome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) 454–489; R. E. Heine, "Reading the Bible with Origen", in P. Blowers (ed.) *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997) 135–139; H. J. Vogt, *Origenes als Exeget* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1999); J. A. McGuckin, "Origen as Literary Critic in the Alexandrian Tradition", in L. Perrone (ed.), *Origeniana Octava* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 121–135; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 17–18; A. Fürst, "Origen: Exegesis and Philosophy in Early Christian Alexandria", in J. Lössl and J. W. Watt (eds.), *Interpreting the Bible and Aristotle in Late Antiquity: The Alexandrian Commentary Tradition Between Rome and Baghdad* (London: Routledge, 2016) 13–32.

or line in a commentary is no less significant for the larger case being made in this thesis. Origen's keen awareness of the ways in which Jesus's words could be read by other Christians demonstrates the same impulse that is at work in Tertullian's writings. In other words, similarly to Tertullian, Origen employs a a variety of contextual reading practices to correct the supposed non-contextualisation of Jesus's climactic sayings. To this end, Origen devotes four sections of his commentary to the famous tribute anecdote (*CommMt* 17.25-28. Matt. 22.15-22; Mk 12.13-17; Lk. 20.19-26), two of which establish the literal meaning (Gk: κατὰ τὸ ῥητὸν; Lat. *secundum textum*) of the passage (Gk. λέξις; Lat. *locus*).[126] These four sections exist in an original Greek version, as well as a later Latin translation.[127] It soon becomes clear that in his discussion of the "literal" significance of the tribute passage, Origen takes up the polemical task of refuting other possible readings.

> And at the same time, we are also taught by our Saviour not to pay attention to things the multitudes say and which, therefore, appear wonderful in their pretext of piety towards God, but to pay attention to things proven by careful examination and the sequence of argument. For, give attention to the fact that *when it was being investigated if one must pay tax to Caesar or not, Jesus did not respond simply with his own opinion, but said, 'Show me the coin for the tax,' and asked, 'Whose image and superscription is it?' They said that it was Caesar's, and he replied that one must give to Caesar his own things when he asks and not defraud him of his own things in the fantasy of piety. And one must not, I presume, give the things of Caesar to Caesar and not give the things of God to God, and someone who gives the things of Caesar to Caesar is not prevented from giving the things of God to God.*[128]

By internalising the duel of words between Jesus and the "multitudes" in the tribute anecdote, Origen recasts this battle as an exegetical struggle in his own day. Origen's initial comments on the "literal" meaning appear to be driven by certain factions that, under the "pretext of piety towards God" (προφάσει τῆς εἰς θεὸν εὐσεβείας), refrained from paying the tax and so "defrauded Caesar" (ἀποστερεῖν καισαρος) of his coin.[129] It is very unlikely that Origen addresses a *genuine* situation in which Christians in his

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[126] In the following sections of his commentary, Origen explores the ascetic application of the command (*CommMt* 17.27-8). Here, as will be seen in chapter 2, Origen's ethical reading is grounded in citing incidental details of the anecdote rather than resulting from the reproduction of the entire anecdote.

[127] The first volume of Heine's edition contains the Greek text while the second contains the later Latin translation called the *Vetus Interpretatio* (on Mt 16.13-22.33), as well as the *Series Commentariorum* (on Matthew 22.34-27.66). On these versions, see Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew I*, 28-31. I follow the Greek original while discussing any notable diversions in the Latin.

[128] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 658) (italics added to show the anecdote reproduction). See Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew I*, 302. The Latin translation reproduces the full passage on two occasions in *CommMt* 17.26. See Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew II*, 527-528 for both re-tellings.

[129] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 658).

own day were employing the "render" command to defend the refusal to pay the imperial tax. If such a revolutionary reading existed, Origen would surely have been more explicit in his critique. It is more likely that Origen is merely imagining Christians in his own day performing the kind of errors that he considers those in the Gospel text to be carrying out. Even if Origen is not dealing with a real and present danger, then, he is still apparently able to imagine Christians in his time refusing to pay the tax on the basis of popular opinion. And so, picking up on a common trope within his writings, Origen imagines a selectively "pious" (εὐσεβείας) reading of the command that unquestioningly follows the thinking of the masses.[130]

Significantly, the antidote that Origen offers is found in the basic principles of literary criticism and grammar (γραμματική).[131] To begin with, one is to follow the "sequence of the argument", a clear reference to reading the saying in light of the context of the passage.[132] As Roland Heine observes, "what Origen means by sequence resembles today what is called context".[133] Origen showcases the basic grammatical skill of establishing the text by retracing the central movements of the anecdote, beginning with the initial cause of the dialogue. Central to Origen's reading of the "render" command is the remark that provoked the discussion: "For give attention to the fact that when it was being investigated if one must pay tax to Caesar or not…".[134] Origen implicitly captures the rhetorical classification of the tribute story as a "responsive" anecdote. That is, Jesus's climactic saying is not a fragmented saying but a response to an initial inquiry.[135] A question ("if one must pay tax to Caesar or not") is followed by an answer containing a question ("show me a coin…whose image and inscription is it?"), provoking a further answer ("and they said to him"), which then

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[130] More frequently, Origen's polemic against the *simpliciores* often took the form of a critique against literalism (*PA* 2.7.2, 2.11.2; 4.2.2; 4.3.2; *Hom. in Gen.* 13.3). At other points, Origen could just as easily criticise the multitudes for failed attempts at allegory (cf. *Philocalia* 27.1). See on Origen's dealings with the *simpliciores*, G. Hällström, *Fides Simpliciorum: According to Origen of Alexandria* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica: The Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters, 1984) 43–57; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 27–28.

[131] See on literary criticism and Origen, Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 54–62; Neuschäfer, *Origines als Philologe*, 139-246. See chapter 4.2, section 2 for further discussion on grammar.

[132] Origen, CommMt 17.26 (GCS 40: 658): ὑπο τῆς ἐξεστάσεως καὶ τῆς ἀκολουθίας τοῦ λόγου παρισταμένοις (Gk.); *secundum ordinem rationis dicuntur* (Lat.).

[133] Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew I*, 16-17. Heine provides the example of the entry into Jerusalem (Mt 21.20-11) where Origen seeks to read the passage in light of what precedes and follows it.

[134] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 658): Gk: πρόσχες γὰρ ὅτι, ζητουμένου τοῦ εἰ δεῖ διδόναι Καίσαρι κῆνσον ἢ μή…; The Latin translation does not have this element but simply, *nam cum quareretur ab eo, utrum licet Caesari dare tributum aut non.*

[135] See for the responsive anecdote/chreia, Theon's *progymnasmata* in G. A. Kennedy, ed., *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Writings from the Graeco-Roman World; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 16–17.

precipitates the concluding statement ("and he replied"). The "render" command is but one component of a larger dramatic episode, and, Origen argues, should be read and applied as such.[136] Through reproducing the entire anecdote, Origen seeks to support his point that while one should give Caesar his dues, one must not neglect rendering divine honours to God.[137] The climactic saying, on this view, advocates the payment of taxation while also affirming that one should not neglect one's obligations to God.

Complementing Origen's reproduction of the anecdote is a detailed discussion of the historical setting of the passage.[138] This historical work matches the task of ἱστορικόν in the ancient grammatical treatises (see chapter 4.2). In Origen's treatment, it includes discussion of previous tax revolts, the customs of the Jews towards the Romans, and the identity of the Herodians and Pharisees.[139] Drawing heavily on the work of the Jewish historian Josephus, Origen recounts details of the protests against Pilate's installation of statues in the temple,[140] makes an oblique reference to "similar things" happening under Gaius Caesar and discusses the revolt of Judas the Galilean, "mentioned by Luke in his Acts of the Apostles".[141] Origen notes that the significance of the historical context "is, indeed, not obvious" (Gk.: οὐ σαφῶς; Lat.: *non quidem manifeste*).[142] Yet, for the one who "is able to see with intense scrutiny" (Gk. τῷ δὲ δυναμέμῳ βεβασανισμένος ὁρᾶν; Lat. *qui…diligenter considerat*) it becomes clear that these events demonstrate the importance of the issue of Jewish tax uprisings,

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[136] It is significant that the entire episode has already been copied out, in full in the later Latin translation and in the conventional abbreviated form in the Greek. The Latin translation (GCS 40: 652–53) reads: "Then the Pharisees departed and took counsel that they might catch him in his speech. And they sent their disciples with the Herodians saying: 'Master, we know that you are true and that you teach the way of God in truth, and you have no concern for anyone, for you have no regard for a human person. Tell us, therefore, what do you think: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?'" (Mt 22:15-17). The Greek reads: "Then the Pharisees took counsel against him…and what follows down to the words, 'and they left him and departed'". See Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew II*, 526 for translation of the Latin text.

[137] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 658).

[138] For a full discussion of Origen's relationship to the historical referent of the scriptural text, see P. W. Martens, "Origen Against History? Reconsidering the Critique of Allegory", *Modern Theology* 28:4 (2012) 635-656.

[139] On ἐξηγητικον, which also frequently included discussion of cosmology and philosophical discourse, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 49-54 (52-54). Young, *Biblical Exegesis* 87 notes that "*historia* is the enquiry that produces as much information as possible with respect to the elements, actions, character or background of the text. She goes on to observe that historical work (*to historikon*) should not be taken as some kind of obsession with historical referent of the text but "in the first place has to do with enquiry, the knowledge acquired by investigation…"

[140] Origen, *CommMt* 17.25 (GCS 40: 653): "And we find written in the histories at the time of Tiberius Caesar how there and then the people took up arms in the time of Pontius Pilate".

[141] Origen, *CommMt* 17.25 (GCS 40: 655).

[142] Origen, *CommMt* 17.25 (GCS 40: 655).

which, Origen remarks, Jesus deals with directly in his concluding pronouncement.[143] Origen's appeal to a rigorous exploration of the historical context is an essential component of his attempts to expose the inadequacies of the revolutionary reading. Indeed, Origen contends that such intense scrutiny is a *condicio sine qua non* for reading Jesus's pronouncements aright.

In addition to the historical context of the pronouncement, one is also to attend to the literary context in which the saying is found. By identifying the motives of Jesus's interlocutors, for example, Origen questions the validity of the anti-taxation reading. Origen reasons that if Jesus had made it clear that he was *against* the payment of the tax, then "'the Pharisees', who wished to ensnare him 'in his speech', would have had no occasion when they sent their 'disciples with the Herodians' to ask Jesus whether 'it was right to pay tax to Caesar or not'".[144] Origen questions the notion that Jesus favoured the Pharisees' position by pointing to the fact that the Pharisees sent their own disciples to question Jesus. If the Pharisees had been sure that Jesus was opposed to the tax, Origen asks, then why would they have sent their disciples to ask him about the issue?[145] Origen is of the view that Jesus's stance on the issue of taxation was unclear to his opponents. Each side of the consul sent to Jesus therefore represents a diametrically opposed position on the issue of taxation. The question posed presents a trap since if Jesus decides in favour of the tax, he would be accused by the Pharisees and if he answered in favour of the Pharisees, he would be handed over to the authorities by the Herodians.[146] In Origen's eyes, an awareness of the wider literary context of the passage, and the two sets of interlocutors posing the question, undermines the logic of the anti-taxation reading. In addition to attending to the narrative of Matthew, Origen encourages a Synoptic view of the passage so that the main point at the literal level might be seen to remain consistent.[147] "The words of

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[143] Origen, CommMt 17.25 (GCS 40: 655): "Now such things are not obvious in the text of the Gospel that is before us, but the saying to be expounded proves that these things are so to the person who can see with intense scrutiny" (*CommMt* 17.25).

[144] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 656); Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew I*, 301.

[145] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 656).

[146] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 656): "For what sort of snare was there in Jesus answering whether he was willing to pay tax to Caesar or not, unless (as we have explained it) if he prevents paying tax to Caesar, the Herodians will hand him over to the Romans as teaching revolution, but if he permits it, the Pharisees will accuse him of looking for human approval rather than teaching the way of God in its truth?"

[147] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 657–658) and Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew I*, 302: "The words of Mark and Luke agree with them on the same subjects, as you can see by placing the Gospels side by side and comparing them with one another".

Mark and Luke agree", Origen insists, so that there is not another meaning that one finds in Mark if one is to read it alongside Matthew.[148] Length of reading (that is, reading the entire anecdote) is to be accompanied by width of reading (or, reading the various versions of the anecdote) so that the reader rigorously considers the significance of the saying in all of its sources.[149]

Taken together, Origen's attention to the literary and historical contexts of the saying functions as a practical outworking of his grammatical motivations. As throughout his writings, so also here, Origen draws heavily on the trope of the elite grammarian whose task involves a rigorous philological training which, in turn, challenges the perceivably casual, pious and hastily drawn conclusions of the multitudes.[150]

What emerges from Origen's grammatical strategy is the significance of viewing the command within a variety of historical and literary contexts, the most important of which is the anecdote. Origen employs this hermeneutical principle of literary contextualisation to bolster a particular religio-political reading of the statement over and against rival readings. By situating Jesus's statement in its literary context, Origen polemically responds to the supposedly erroneous interpretation that was based solely on reading the command in isolation. In combatting this mode of reading, Origen returns to the basic principles of grammar (γραμματική) through reproducing the literary context in which the saying appears. Within its context, the climactic statement plays a significant role, but one that is now conditioned by the understanding that it is the final movement in a larger dramatic episode. Origen's appeal to the larger anecdote attests to a significantly developed method of textual contextualisation.

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[148] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 657–658). It is worth highlighting that when versions do diverge, Origen often uses these contradictions as the basis for searching for a deeper reading. See M. Ludlow, "Theology and Allegory: Origen and Gregory of Nyssa on the Unity and Diversity of Scripture", *IJST* 4.1 (2002): 45-66 (47).

[149] See other examples of this practice in *CommMt* 16.8 concerning Mt 20.25-28 and Mk 10.32-11.3, where Origen notes "should you place the gospels beside one another at these passages you will find what is said" (σὺ δὲ παραθεὶς τὰ εὐαγγέλια ἀλλήλοις κατὰ τοὺς τόπους τούτους καὶ συγκρίνων αὐτοὺς εὑρήσεις τὸ λεγόμενον; GCS 40: 490). Origen does the same for the healing of the blind man (16.12-13) and the Triumphant entry (16.14, in which Origen also discusses the Johannine version).

[150] See Origen's discussion of the scriptural study in the life of faith in his *CommJohn* 1.8. Here, he establishes that the firstfruits of the Christians are those who "devote themselves to the divine Word" and, later, "the careful examination of the Gospel" (GCS 10/1: 13-14). For discussion of this passage, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 92–94; Hällström, *Fides Simpliciorum* 43-44. On the theme of the elite grammarian more broadly, see Kaster, *Guardians*, 13–14.

6. *"So, the passage has a mystical and secret meaning" (Origen, Hom. In Lucam 39)*

To the learned and well-resourced exegete, the commentary afforded the opportunity for sustained treatment of a text. Origen refers to this task on many occasions as a laborious undertaking requiring much mental exertion, and years of grammatical training.[151] Yet far from ending with the writing of commentaries, the strenuous effort of the exegete continued unabated in weekly preaching to the congregation.[152] Origen's exegetical task in the Homilies often took the form of an even more intense and more personal engagement with the reading strategies of his audience. The homily was naturally and more readily the setting for directly shaping the congregation's reading of scripture and dealing with perceived errors in their understanding—errors which Origen often reports in tones of exasperation. Peter Martens stresses the role of Origen's congregation not as "an audience, but as participants in the project of scriptural exegesis".[153] In his preaching, Origen sought to draw his sudience "into his own exposition of Scripture by asking them questions, addressing them in the second-person singular", chastising them for their laziness and offering principles of reading that addressed their faults.[154] The agonistic setting inherent to his homilies makes these texts an ideal arena in which to examine his reflection on the hermeneutical principles used to interpret Jesus's words.

In his 39th Homily on Luke (ca. 233-244 CE)[155], Origen comments on the tribute passage as well as the Sadducees' question about the resurrection (Luke 20.21–40).[156] The work exists in the later Latin translation of Jerome, which most scholars agree

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[151] Thus Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 17–18, 174–75.

[152] On Origen's homilies and his work as a preacher, see P. Nautin, "Origène prédicateur", in *Homelies Sur Jeremie* (SC 232; Paris: Cerf, 1976), 100–191; J. W. Trigg, *Origen* (Early Church Fathers; London; New York: Routledge, 1998) 39. Throughout his homilies, Origen draws on the language of the Psalmist to describe the labour of the exegete as one who "meditates on the law day and night" (Ps 1.2). See Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 174-5n56: references include *Hom. in Luc* 39.2; see also *Hom. in Gen.* 11.3; *Hom. in Josh.* 17.3.

[153] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 188.

[154] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 188.

[155] Different dates have been provided between this range for the Homilies on Luke: Crouzel, Fournier, and Périchon provide a date of 233–234 CE (SC 87: 81). P. Nautin, *Origène: Sa Vie et Son Œuvre* (Christianisme Antique 1; Paris: Beauchesne, 1977) dates the homilies to 238–243 CE, and more precisely to 239–242 CE on the basis of there seeming to exist three cycles for Origen's preaching in Caesarea. The work would seem to follow the Commentary on Matthew since it mentions the Homilies in various places (*CommMt* 13.29 mentions *Homily on Luke* 15.4-7 and *CommMt* 16.9 mentions *Hom* 34).

[156] In modern translations of Luke, the Sadducee passage immediately follows the tribute pericope, although Origen treats the Sadducees' question first in his comments.

offers a fairly reliable translation of the Greek original.[157] In contrast to the previous passage in the *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen's comments on the "render" command can be more securely taken as a reaction to a genuine concern in his congregation. Origen writes,

> Some people think (*Putant quidam*) that the Saviour spoke on a single level when he said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar"—that is, "pay the tax that you owe". But who among us disagrees about paying taxes to Caesar? So, the passage has a mystical and secret meaning…[158]

Unlike the discussion in the Commentary, it is not the seemingly incorrect nature of the exegesis of his audience that provokes Origen's criticism. The congregation's understanding of the command, as Origen presents it, aligns perfectly with his own found in the Commentary—"pay the tax that you owe".[159] Such an interpretation, Origen notes, is utterly uncontroversial—"Who among us disagrees about paying taxes to Caesar?"[160] Rather, the point of difference lies at the level of *hermeneutical assumptions*. Some of Origen's audience, at least as far as he presents them, appear to claim that this religio-political interpretation completely exhausts the meaning and significance of Jesus's words. Crucially, this singular reading does not consider the entire passage; rather it stops at the isolated command to "render to Caesar" and goes no further. Jesus's words stand in isolation, and their significance emerges from the words themselves. The hermeneutical disagreement between Origen and his audience therefore arises from the decision of members of his congregation to read the command as a non-contextualised saying, fragmented from the larger passage.

Origen's solution is to offer an alternative way of reading Jesus's words. He encourages his listeners to transcend the "literal" meaning of the command and plumb the depths of its "mystical and secret" (*mystici atque secreti*) significance. Crucially, the shift from literal to mystical reading does not entail inattentiveness to the text, as

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[157] Jerome addresses his Latin translation (which dates to ca. 390-392 CE) to Paula and her daughter Eustochium. See for text and discussion of the prologue, H. Crouzel, F. Fournier, and P. Périchon (SC 87 94-97, 65-89). While certainly embellished at a few points, Jerome's translation of Homily 39 has not aroused much suspicion of later tampering. For a brief discussion and positive appraisal, see J. T. Lienhard (ed.), *Homilies on Luke: Fragments on Luke* (Fathers of the Church 94; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2009) xxxii–xxxvi. The judgment of Crouzel, Fournier, and Périchon seems apposite: "it is necessary to admit that the text of Jerome very well expresses the ideas of the master of Alexandria" (SC 87:87).
[158] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454).
[159] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454).
[160] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454).

a number of scholars have assumed.[161] Instead, Origen's suggestion relies on, and is immediately followed by, his decision to reproduce the text of the anecdote, since it is the "passage" (*locus*) that bears this deeper layer of meaning (*habet igitur locus quiddam mystici atque secreti*). Thus, Origen rehearses the dramatic moments described in the tribute passage.

> So, the passage has a mystical and secret meaning...Jesus commanded that that image should be handed over and cast away from our face. He wills us to take on that image according to which we were made from the beginning, according to God's likeness. And thus it happens that we give "to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what is God's". *Jesus said, "Show me the coin". For "coin", Matthew wrote "denarius".[162] "When Jesus had taken it, he said, 'Whose inscription does it have?' They answered and said, 'Caesar's'. And he said to them in turn, 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's'".* Paul also uttered this conclusion and said, "As we bear the image of the earthly man, we should also bear the image of the heavenly man". When Christ says, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's," he means this: "Put off the person of the earthly man, cast off the earthly image, so that you can put on yourselves the person of the heavenly man" and "give to God what is God's"...[163]

The mystical and secret meaning of the passage emerges from attention to the "image of Caesar" which conjures up its parallel in the "image of God" from Genesis 1.27. The tribute passage thus concerns "double creation", wherein the human person received God's image at creation only to have it removed as a consequence of the fall.[164] The purpose of the ascetic life, Origen claims, is to commit to regaining the image of God through casting off the "image of the earthly man", or "rendering to Caesar" so that one might "render to God".[165] Origen's use of intertextual references from Genesis and elsewhere is not the result of his inventively conjuring up texts from

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[161] R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (London: SCM Press, 1959). As Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 9 rightly notes, "The 'and' in the title Allegory and Event meant something like 'marginalizes' or 'destroys'". U. Luz, "The Significance of the Church Fathers for Biblical Interpretation in Western Protestant Perspective", in *Studies on Matthew* (Translated by R. Selle; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) 290–312 observes how Origen has to overcome the obstacle of the literal meaning to embrace the spiritual significance of a word, verse or passage. Yet see Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 63-66 for the view that allegory forms a component of philological inquiry. Schironi, "Greek Commentaries", 435 similarly notes, "It is also worth noticing that an allegorical approach to a text does not exclude more philological concerns in a commentary or in a commentator".
[162] Lienhard, *Homilies on Luke,* 161 notes that Origen has probably misremembered this detail. Alternatively, it might be that Origen had this detail in his exemplar. Ultimately, we do not know.
[163] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39, SC 87:456. See Lienhard, *Homilies on Luke,* 161 (italics added for the anecdote).
[164] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87:456). For a discussion of this passage, and the theme of the image in Origen's writings, see H. Crouzel, *Théologie de l'image de Dieu chez Origène* (Paris: Aubier, 1956) 54; 148-153.
[165] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87:456).

thin air; rather, it relies on catchword associations rooted in the text of the anecdote or passage. This ascetic interpretation, and the overwhelming variety of inter-texts on which it is based, will be discussed in chapter 3. For now, what remains significant is that Origen senses the need to provide a re-telling of the episode to establish this ascetic interpretation. The text of the *passage* becomes the basis for interpreting Jesus's climactic saying. In contrast to Tertullian, Origen does not use the boundaries of the text to rule out a rival interpretation. Rather, Origen assumes that his opponents' interpretation is correct and, at the same time, inadequate—reflecting what Rowan Williams recently referred to as Origen's frequently manifested frustrations with "inept orthodoxy".[166] The entire literary context provides a fuller, richer interpretation of the pronouncement than if the saying were to be read on its own. Origen's motives differ markedly from those of Tertullian, and even from Origen's own aims in his commentary. I have demonstrated that Tertullian, and Origen in his commentary, use the textual boundaries of the anecdote in a conservative fashion, to rule out the interpretations of other Christians. By contrast, in his *Homily* on the tribute passage, Origen uses the full co-text to encourage a broader set of applications than was originally considered by his congregation. In short, this example demonstrates the pastoral motives that drove Origen's literary contextualisation of Jesus's words.

Further comparison of Origen's exegetical work in both the Commentary and Homily, reveals that the point at which he starts to read the anecdote directly affects his interpretation of Jesus's concluding statement. In the *Commentary*, Origen considers the starting point of the anecdote to be the question about the lawfulness of taxation. This is the point at which he begins his reproduction of the passage. As a result, the "render" command has a distinctly religio-political flavour—to "render to Caesar" means to pay one's taxes. Reading the passage as a whole in this context is an antidote to employing the command in harmful ways as a non-contextualised fragment (i.e. to support or justify rebellion). By contrast, in the context of the *Homily*, what Origen perceives to be a "correct" religio-political reading emerges from the congregation's re-use of the isolated saying which Origen claims is being used in a "singular" way. To improve and enhance his audience's understanding, Origen draws

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[166] This quote is taken from an unpublished conference presentation given by R. Williams, "Reading and Misreading Origen in the 4th Century", Unpublished Conference Paper Delivered at Re-Thinking Origen Conference, 25th April 2018, Divinity Faculty, Cambridge which will later be published in *Modern Theology*.

attention to the mystical and secret meaning contained within the passage at large. The coin with the "image of Caesar" becomes especially important in this context. Thus, Origen opens his comments by naming the anecdote, "the one concerning the image of Caesar" (*de imagine Caesaris*).[167] Moreover, while Origen provides a re-telling of the episode in the Homily, it is a strikingly abbreviated one. His account of the anecdote begins with "the coin and its inscription", and Jesus's request that his interlocutors show him the coin. The question about taxation that sparked the episode is conspicuously absent.[168] Additional intertexts appear from this mention of the image of Caesar, and with them, anthropological and ascetical implications arise. There is, then, a creativity and adaptability to Origen's use of the immediate literary context surrounding Jesus's words.

Here, it is important to note that one does not find the same depth of textual commentary in Origen's homilies as is found in the commentaries, nor is the exegetical work necessarily driven by the same aim in both genres.[169] As Morwenna Ludlow has noted in her comparison of Origen's *Homilies* and *Commentaries* on both Genesis 1 and *the Song of Songs*, whereas Origen frequently focusses in his *Commentaries* on the historical and factual meaning of a word or phrase, he more often seeks in his homilies to personally apply the text to his audience.[170] The difference, to take the example of Genesis 1.1 ("God created the heavens and the earth"), was between asking "what are the heavens?" and "what are the heavens *in me*?"[171] Even if there is a

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[167] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39: "And further, the passage about the image of Caesar has been read (*adjectum est…de imagine Caesaris*). So, we should also touch upon this" (SC 87: 455).

[168] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87:456): *Ostendite mihi nummum*. Compare Clement's *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 86, a collection of Valentinian exegetical remarks interspersed with Clement's own comments which contains a similarly abbreviated version of the anecdote without Jesus's "render" command and which also draws on the significance of the coin (GCS 17: 133).

[169] A. Tzvetkova-Glaser, "Origenes. *De principiis*" in O. Wischmeyer (ed), *Handbuch der Bibelhermeneutiken: Von Origenes bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2016) 13-22 (21), notes the different approaches Origen takes in his homilies and his commentaries: "Homilies aimed at a wider audience contain much more moral allegories, while in the commentaries on the same biblical verse the interest in etymology and textual criticism is much greater".

[170] M. Ludlow, "Origen as Preacher and Teacher: A Comparison of Exegetical Method in His Homilies and Commentaries", in W. J. Lyons and I. Sandwell (eds.), *Delivering the Word: Preaching and Exegesis in the Western Christian Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2014) 45-61 (53). Ludlow is careful to note that this is a difference in emphasis or "focus" since we also find spiritual readings in the commentaries and a depth of factual discussion in the homilies, as well. Origen's Commentary on Genesis is lost but he summarises it elsewhere (in *CC* 6.49; *PA* 2.3.6).

[171] Ludlow, "Origen as Preacher and Teacher", 50. Or, with the Song of Songs, it is the difference between reflecting on the Bride and Groom as Christ and the Church (*CommCant*) while, in the homily, pointedly asking the audience to identify themselves with Christ in the poem. The comparison between the Genesis homily and commentary probably offer a closer parallel to Origen's treatment of the "render" command in his homily and commentary on it.

difference in the aim and degree of exegetical work in Origen's homilies and commentaries, it is incontestable that one finds a hermeneutic of literary contextualisation in both genres. It is only that the *goal* of this hermeneutic differs as Origen moves between the two contexts.

By placing Origen's exegesis of the tribute passage in the *Homily* and *Commentary* side-by-side, one also observes the complex dynamics between the text and the reader in the process of reading and applying Jesus's words. In a very real sense, the different circumstances Origen faces in the *Homily* and *Commentary* result in different applications of the command. Yet the importance of Origen's situation as a reader does not diminish his appeal to the literary context of Jesus's climactic saying in each work. In the *Commentary*, Origen opposes the error of the multitudes through drawing attention to the *cause* of the statement in the passage and its parallels. Here, Origen advocates both width and breadth of reading as well as attention to historical context. In the *Homily*, by contrast, some of Origen's audience consider that the command *only* has a religio-political meaning—"pay your taxes". In response to this supposedly "uncontroversial", even insipid reading, Origen invites his audience to pause at the moment where Jesus asks for the coin and to reflect on the implications for the ascetic life. Although different concerns lead to Origen applying the command in different ways, the crucial point is that the literary context remains the stated focus of Origen's reading strategy. Origen's use of the immediate co-text of Jesus's words suggests that he envisages a new type of literary context than his predecessors—not simply the line of text that comprises Jesus's saying, but the anecdote in which it resides textually.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have argued that Tertullian and Origen appeal to, and provide a running account of, the larger story such that the moments building up to the climactic saying shape its interpretation. The six cases of anecdote reproduction discussed constitute crucial evidence for the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation attested in Tertullian and Origen's works, as both authors maintain that Jesus's words are not self-sufficient sayings, but textually embedded pronouncements. It remains to discuss the threefold impact of their practice of anecdote reproduction on early Christian hermeneutics. These three points relate to early Christian *perceptions* of Jesus's

sayings, the *principles* according to which they were interpreted and the exegetical products that emerge from these developing interpretive rules.

First, their practice of anecdote reproduction marks a shift in the way in which early Christian authors conceive of the words of Jesus. Tertullian and Origen employ Jesus's climactic sayings, not as maxims, but as climactic pronouncements to larger stories. At one level, this might seem to be purely a function of the genres they are working with. In five of the six cases discussed, both authors treat the saying of Jesus with the full text of scripture before them, and in writings that treat the text of scripture (homilies and commentaries or commentary-like works). Yet this should take nothing away from the significance of the principles Tertullian and Origen lay out. Such contextual reading was neither a formality nor an inevitability. Tertullian and Origen's opponents, as well as earlier Christian writers, clearly demonstrate the dominance and pervasiveness of non-contextualised forms of reading Jesus's sayings. Both reading practices were perceived to be viable alternatives.

Second, by recognising Jesus's climactic sayings as textually embedded pronouncements, Tertullian and Origen introduce an important set of methods to the task of reading and interpreting those pronouncements. Each author holds that one is to read these sayings in light of their immediate literary context. The appeal to the context of the anecdote, I have argued, constitutes a deliberate reading strategy used to address and suppress supposedly erroneous, non-contextualised applications of Jesus's words. This very fact would suggest that there existed, whether as a trope invented in the imaginations of early Christian writers, or in reality, individuals who read Jesus's sayings as isolated maxims. This non-contextualisation, as presented by Origen and Tertullian, could appear in different guises:

1. citing the words of Jesus on their own: Origen on the "render" command (both in *CommMt* 17.26 and *Hom. In Luc.* 39), Tertullian on the Sadducees' Question (*Adversus Marcionem* 4.38.4-9), the "render" command (*De Idol.* 15.3) and the Mother and Brothers anecdote (*Adversus Marcionem* 4.19.6-11; *De Carne Christi* 7.1-13)
2. reading only half of the climactic statement: for instance, Tertullian presents his opponent reading only the first half of the command, "render to Caesar" (*De Idol.* 15.3) and the question of Jesus ("who is my mother and who are my

brothers?") without the answer ("those who hear and do my words", *AM* 4.19.6-11).

3. failing to reckon with the cause of the statement: Tertullian ascribes this error to his opponent in *De Idol.* 15 and, with reference to the rule of "reading a response in light of the question asked" in his treatment of the Question of the Sadducees (*AM* 4.38.4-9)

4. failing to read the passage as a source for deeper, spiritual significance: Origen agrees with his congregation that the "render" saying commands payment of taxes but argues that this emerges from reading the passage at a singular level (*Homily*). Clement makes a similar hermeneutical move in *QDS*, where he argues that the full passage should be read in a spiritual manner.

Tertullian and Origen responded to such seemingly fragmentary modes of reading by appealing to, and providing a running account of, the narrative frame of the anecdote. In addition, there were other weapons in the arsenal, including a full stock of grammatical practices common to Roman readers.

1. Historical contextualisation: for Origen in his *Commentary on Matthew*, an awareness of the context of the historical time period establishes that the Herodians and Pharisees represented opposing viewpoints on the taxation. As a result, one cannot conclude that Jesus denied the payment since it would have then made no sense for the Pharisees to have sent their disciples to query Jesus on his position.

2. Contextualisation through reading synoptically: in his *Commentary on Matthew*, Origen establishes his reading by noting that, when compared, all three Synoptic Gospels agree that Jesus does not deny the payment of taxation.[172] Here, the congruence of the Synoptic accounts acts as corroborating evidence for the author's interpretation of Jesus's words. Clement makes a similar point for the Rich Young Ruler passage (*QDS*). Tertullian also looks to the Matthean anecdote to contextualise the isolated divorce maxim used by the Marcionites (*AM* 4.34.1-7).

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[172] Origen also notes that Matthew has denarius rather than *nummum* (SC 87: 456–457). While Lienhard, *Homilies on Luke*, 142 notes that this is incorrect in terms of modern text-criticism, it is possible that Origen knew of a version of Matthew that had *denarius*.

3. Hermeneutical assumptions: in his *Homily*, Origen characteristically draws attention to the spiritual significance of the passage. As noted above, this strategy complements, and even partly constitutes, the contextualisation project, since once requires a text to spiritualise.[173] The passage, or *locus*, is to be read for its spiritual and mystical meaning. The example of Origen's attention to the context of Jesus's climactic pronouncements provides further support for Martens' claim that "allegorical interpretation was a legitimate dimension of philological inquiry".[174] Clement also repeatedly encourages his audience to read Jesus's dialogue about wealth not "carnally" but according to its deeper meaning (*QDS*). I have argued that this spiritual reading strategy *deals explicitly with the text* rather than consisting of a mere imaginative flight of fancy.

4. Text-criticism and punctuation: Tertullian's attention to correct punctuation (*distinctio*) in his discussion of the answer to the Sadducees (*AM* 4.38.5) rehearses well-known Graeco-Roman conventions associated with dividing and assembling words and phrases.

Finally, the significance of these methods issues from the fact that they produce a new type of textual boundedness to the interpretation of Jesus's words. Clearly, the practice of anecdote reproduction did not produce a single, monolithic application for each of Jesus's climactic sayings. Rather, both authors employ the sayings discussed to speak to diverse, significant and controversial issues of praxis and belief: Christ's flesh and nativity, anthropology, one's attitude towards the empire, marriage, divorce, theology, the resurrection, and asceticism. Even within a single author, multiple interpretations of a saying appear. Nevertheless, Tertullian and Origen are among the first early Christian authors to argue that the literary context of Jesus's words produce *textual* limits that shape the interpretation of the climactic saying. No longer was it appropriate to simply cite Jesus's words on their own and assume that their interpretive significance was self-evident. Rather, one had to reckon with the narrative frame in

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[173] Although on the subject of comparing alike texts, Young, *Biblical Exegesis* 85 makes a relevant point: "The process of comparison may assist in the spiritualising process, but it remains an exegetical move at the level of *to methodikon*".

[174] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 63.

which the saying was recorded and consider the context of the anecdote when interpreting that pronouncement.

The impact of anecdote reproduction on the interpretation of Jesus tradition can be seen afresh by more closely attending to the metaphor of textual boundaries alluded to in the discussion above. Through their use of anecdote reproduction, Origen and Tertullian suggest a link between the textual borders of the anecdote and the limits of appropriate interpretation of the final moral saying. That is, the textual unit that formed the anecdote became the arena in which to enact and enforce borders between appropriate and inappropriate readings of Jesus's climactic sayings. The appeal to the textual perimeters of an embedded saying helped to establish proper applications and deemed others unfit, and even heretical. This task of boundary-drawing could move in two directions. First, the borders of the anecdote could travel outwards, so that the reader's understanding of the saying was enhanced and magnified, and the areas of application increased. The textual boundaries of the co-text on this view appear generous and wide, acting as a positive stimulant to creative re-readings and ever-increasing applications. So, for instance, Origen in his *Homily* invites his audience to pause at the moment of the coin, with its image of Caesar, and reflect on the ascetic implications of "rendering to Caesar" so that one can "render to God". By drawing on the enlarged boundaries of the anecdote, Origen expands the perceived exegetical options—often through drawing in additional scriptural intertexts—and addresses the hermeneutical insufficiencies of his readers. Second, the textual borders of the anecdote could be invoked in a conservative and preservative fashion. It was observed that both Tertullian and Origen appeal to the narrative to rule out readings that seemed to do violence to the immediate literary context. Tertullian argues that the command to "render to Caesar" cannot justify placing imperial wreathes on one's door, since in the original pericope it was the poll-tax that Jesus commanded to be given to Caesar.[175] Similarly, Origen rules out an anti-taxation reading of the command on the basis of historical and literary considerations.[176] Especially with Tertullian, the impulse towards textual contextualisation is highly polemical in nature with little, if any, concern, given to the task of offering a positive application of Jesus's saying. Origen, by contrast, can allow multiple interpretations of the one saying to sit side-by-side, as

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[175] Tertullian, *De Idol.* 15.2-3. See 1.2, section 1 above.
[176] Origen, *CommMt* 17.25-26. See 1.2, section 5 above.

noted in his *Homily*.[177] Whether the borders of the co-text were envisaged as enlarged or constricted, the important point is that in both cases the boundaries of appropriate interpretation lay at the *textual* limits of the anecdote.

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[177] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39. See 1.2, section 6 above.

Chapter 2—Story and Saying: Literary Contextualisation Through Co-textual Reference

While anecdote reproduction might form the most obvious mode of literary contextualization, it was not the only way in which Tertullian or Origen drew on the textual context of Jesus's words. In this chapter, I treat the second of three reading practices that demonstrate Tertullian and Origen's use of the literary contexts of Jesus's climactic sayings: co-textual reference. By co-textual reference, I refer to Tertullian and Origen's frequent practice of drawing on smaller details from the co-text, or the biographical narrative immediately surrounding and preceding Jesus's climactic pronouncements. A key example that will be discussed is the famous "render" saying. While early Christian authors commonly employed this command apart from its literary context, I will show that Tertullian and Origen draw on details from the wider anecdote—a dispute about paying tribute to Caesar—which Jesus's pronouncement brings to a memorable conclusion. The particular textual details Tertullian and Origen employ from the anecdote vary considerably, ranging from a single word or a string of words, to characters from the story and even encompassing references to the genre of the passage.

The central contention of this chapter can be put succinctly: through the frequent and persistent use of textual details from the co-text, Tertullian and Origen display a profound awareness of the literary contexts that shape the interpretation of Jesus's sayings. Tertullian and Origen's practice of co-textual reference represents a threefold shift in hermeneutics in this period, again relating to *perceptions, principles* and exegetical *products*. First, these contextual practices signal a shift away from the standard ways in which authors viewed Jesus's words. Whereas their contemporaries largely used Jesus's words as isolated sayings, Tertullian and Origen demonstrate an understanding of his pronouncements as textually-embedded, such that their interpretation required consideration of the co-text. Second, this hermeneutical shift effects significant changes in the methods used to interpret Jesus tradition. Tertullian and Origen are among the first to tie the interpretation of Jesus's words to the verbals units, phrases and characters of the immediate literary context. Third, by employing the context of Jesus's climactic sayings, Tertullian and Origen create a new textual boundary that expanded their interpretations of Jesus's words even as it rooted them in the text of the anecdote.

The argument of this chapter unfolds in three parts. The first section briefly examines the use of co-textual references among other early Christian writers before Tertullian and Origen. Here, I note the gradual move towards employing details of the co-text to clarify and interpret Jesus's words. I then turn, in the second section, to demonstrating the ways in which these strategies blossom in the practices of Tertullian and Origen's co-textual re-use. Through a wide examination of the data from these two authors, I present a dynamic and coherent account of each author's co-textual re-use—dynamic, in the sense of appreciating the divergent aims of each author and coherent in the sense of highlighting that the same hermeneutic permeates the works of both authors. Finally, in the third section I consider the significance of co-textual reference for early Christian hermeneutics. Here, I argue that Tertullian and Origen continue to assume that the significance of Jesus's words is not merely found in those words themselves, but in details from their co-text.

2.1. The Beginnings: Co-textual Reference in Early Christian Writers

In discussing early examples of co-textual reference in the employment of Jesus's words, we should immediately distinguish between cases where the use of literary context is interpretively significant, and others where it is not. By this, I mean to signal my interest in cases where an author's reference to the co-text of Jesus's words helps to explicate the meaning of Jesus's saying. The nature of this kind of co-textual re-use—wherein the author seeks to interpret the meaning of Jesus's words through the co-text—becomes clearer when we examine a case in which this aim is absent. When re-using Jesus's words about the temple as a house of prayer in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin makes brief, passing reference to the larger context of the passage— "then he over turned the money-changers' tables in the temple" (καὶ τὰς τραπέζας τῶν ἐν τῷ ναῷ κολλυβιστῶν κατέστρεψε).[1] Justin's use of the larger narrative frame merely serves, for him, the purpose of heightening the dramatic quality of the episode and introduces a further portion of scriptural material that forms part of his argument. The story does not, in other words, explicate the meaning of Jesus's saying.

In clarifying the type of co-textual reference of interest, I wish now to turn to more promising parallels in which early Christian authors employ the co-text for

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[1] Justin, *Dial*. 17.3-4 (Marcovich, *Dialogis*, 98-99).

explicitly interpretive and contextualising purposes. One such case appears in Irenaeus's discussion of Jesus's fulfilment of the Law in the Sermon on the Mount.[2] As D. Jeffrey Bingham notes, Irenaeus devotes *haer.* book 4 to Jesus's sayings which, in his words, "form an unbroken chain" that bolster the author's central contention: the unity of God.[3] Bingham follows Philippe Bacq in arguing that Irenaeus announces his use of Jesus's words, provides commentary on them and connects them to other sayings of Jesus and other portions of scripture.[4] In an argument with the Marcionites over the relationship of Christ to the Law, Irenaeus makes a co-textual reference in his reading of Matthew 5.17—"do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets". Irenaeus defends Jesus's fulfilment of the Law on the basis of his earlier antitheses on inward desires within the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5.21-22; 27-28, 33-34, 37).

Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1, Critical edition[5]	Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1, English transl.
Et quia Dominus naturalia Legis...non dissolvit, sed extendit et implevit, ex sermonibus eius ostenditur. Dictum est enim, inquit, antiquis, Non moechaberis. Ego autem dico vobis, Quoniam omnis qui viderit mulierem ad concupiscendum eam, iam moechatus est eam in corde suo. Et iterum: Dictum est, Non occides. Ego autem dico vobis, Omnis qui irascitur fratri suo sine causa, reus erit iudicio. Et, Dictum est, Non periurabis. Ego autem dico vobis, Neque iurare in totum. Sit autem vobis sermo, etiam etiam, et Non non. Et quaecunque sunt talia. Omnia enim haec non contrarietatem et dissolutionem praeteritorum continent, sicut qui a Marcione sunt vociferantur; sed plenitudinem ex extensionem, sicut ipse ait: Nisi abundaverit iustitia vestra plus quam Scribarum et Pharisoeorum, non intrabitis in regnum coelorum.	And that the Lord did not abrogate the natural things of the law…but that he extended and fulfilled them, is shown from his words. 'For', he remarks, 'it has been said to them from of old, "Do not commit adultery". But I say unto you, that everyone who has looked upon a woman in order to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart'. And again: 'It has been said, "You shall not kill". But I say unto you, everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment'. And, 'It has been said, "you shall not make an oath". But I say unto you, do no swear not at all; but let your speech be, yes, yes, and no, no'. And other statements like this. For all these do not contain or imply an opposition to and an overturning of the things of the past, as Marcion's followers strenuously argue; but they show a fulfilling and an extension of them, as he himself declares: "Unless your righteousness

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[2] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1 (SC 100: 524-527).
[3] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 169.
[4] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 18; P. Bacq, *De l'ancienne á la nouvelle alliance selon S. Irénée* (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres des Facultés universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix 58; Paris: Lethielleux, 1978) 282-284.
[5] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1 (SC 100: 524-527).

shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven".

Bingham rightly provides this as an example of how "Irenaeus can interpret a Matthean passage within its immediate literary context".[6] The antitheses, and the declaration about one's righteousness exceeding the Pharisees, prove, for Irenaeus, that Jesus intended to extend and fulfil (*extendere*; *implere*) the Law and not destroy (*dissolvere*) it. While Irenaeus does not use the *narrative frame* to contextualise Jesus's saying in 5.17, this is hardly significant since *there is no broader narrative surrounding the pronouncement*. Rather, since the co-text consists of a large body of discourse (namely, the Sermon on the Mount), Irenaeus duly employs *other sayings* to interpret Jesus's pronouncement about the fulfilment of the Mosaic Law. That Jesus intends to fulfil the law is shown, Irenaeus argues, "*from his words*" (*ex sermonibus eius*).[7] While at one level it is significant that it is the category of sayings (Lat. *sermo*) that Irenaeus employs, this example demonstrates an increasing move towards employing the immediate co-text to interpret Jesus's words. This is a significant case, although it should be set within the context of Irenaeus's use of the narrative context, more broadly. A brief examination here reveals that Irenaeus's convention is to draw more broadly on the context of a larger gospel to interpret Jesus's sayings. That is, Irenaeus tends not to draw on the immediate passage but on other passages or sayings of Jesus from the gospel more broadly. This is seen, for interest in Irenaeus's use of Matthew 21.13 (the cleansing of the temple) to explain that when Jesus says "do not swear by the throne of God" (Mt 5.24) he is not speaking ironically, but in fact is interested in God's law and his temple.[8] Irenaeus's use of other parts of a gospel as a sort of "enlarged co-text" represents a significant stage towards literary contextualisation. Moreover, even if the immediate literary context is not in view, these examples demonstrate that Irenaeus is beginning to think of Jesus's words not simply as literary fragments but as textually embedded lines of content.

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[6] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 172, 303
[7] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1 (SC 100: 524).
[8] Irenaeus, *haer*. 4.2.6 (SC 100: 406-411). The logic of Irenaeus's opponents here is that by uttering these terms in an ironic fashion, Jesus distinguishes between the Creator and the true God revealed in Christ. In response, Irenaeus counters that Jesus's words were spoken truthfully and receive validation from his words and his deeds. Irenaeus furnishes the example of the cleansing of the temple (Mt 21.13 and parallels) and Jesus's words about the den of thieves as proof that Jesus "vindicates his [God's] house" and "his father's Law".

When turning to Clement's use of Jesus's sayings, there is a further movement towards literary contextualisation. Indeed, the employment of co-textual references for interpretive purposes is far more characteristic of Clement's re-use of Jesus's words than earlier writers. Judith Kovacs observes, following David Dawson, that while Clement often does not comment on scriptural lemmata, there are notable excptions.[9] A good number of these provide significance evidence of literary contextualisation.[10] One important example is Clement's dispute with "the followers of Basilides and Valentinus" in chapter 3 of his *Stromateis*, a dispute that begins with a *locus classicus* of early Christian debate surrounding marriage: Matthew 19.1-12.[11] As Kovacs notes, this third book "is a valuable source for early patristic use of scripture" partly because it "deals with interpretation of a large number of scriptural verses".[12] In other words, we are not just dealing with the use of Jesus's words as proofs, so that those words are accessories to other ends; rather, in cases such as this one we encounter Clement treating Jesus's sayings for their own sake. To be sure, we should qualify this by noting that the sayings form part of a broader argument. And yet, Clement's focus is on Jesus's words, and on exegeting their meaning. According to Clement, the followers of Basilides cite the answer of "the Lord" to the question about refraining from marriage—"It is not everyone who can accept this saying: some are eunuchs from birth, others from necessity" (Mt 19.12).[13] Clement responds that these interpreters do not recognise that the answer about the eunuchs *came after* Jesus's words about divorce. In other words, if one read the the question in context, one would notice that it was motivated by the desire to learn whether there was any advantage in remarrying after divorce.[14] For Clement, his opponents's erroneous interpretation arises, in part, from removing this verse about the eunuch from the context of the dispute about divorce.

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[9] D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 218; Kovacs, "Introduction", 13.

[10] Kovacs, "Introduction", 13. Kovacs provides the following examples: *Strom.* 1.11.50-54 and 1.18.88-90 on 1 Cor 3:19-20; *Strom.* 1.17.81-90 on John 10.8; *Strom.* 3.12.79-84 on 1 Cor 7 and *Strom* 5.10.60-66 on various Pauline texts.

[11] Clement, *Strom.* 3.1.1. (GCS 52: 195).

[12] See J. L. Kovacs "Was Paul an Antinomian, a Radical Ascetic, or a Sober Married Man? Exegetical Debates in Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis* 3" in H. -U. Weidemann (ed.), *Asceticism and Exegesis in Early Christianity: The Reception of New Asceticism and Exegesis in Early Christianity* (Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus, 101; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013) 186-202 (186).

[13] Clement, *Strom.* 3.1.1. (GCS 52: 195-196).

[14] Clement *Strom.* 3.6.50.1-2. (GCS 52: 219).

A subtler, but no less significant instance, of co-textual reference appears in Clement's oft-neglected *Eclogue Propheticae* or *Prophetic Exctracts* (ἐκ τῶν προφητικῶν εκλογαί, hereafter EP). This work comprises continuous notes on scriptural texts, making it an ideal candidate for our argument.[15] Carlo Nardi has argued that Clement treats three themes in this work: baptism, true "gnosis" and the divinisation of the soul.[16] Located within the section treating the first of these themes—the cause and goal of baptism (EP 21-26)—the 24th extract discusses the human person's rejection of the demonic and their restoration in the image of God.[17] Within this exploration of the theme of baptism, Clement employs Jesus's "render" saying while drawing on the commonly employed lexeme of the image (εἰκών) from the tribute passage The co-textual reference becomes the platform to explore the ascetic life through a variety of verbally connected intertexts.

Clement, *EP* 24 (Greek text)[18]	Clement, *EP* 24 (my English transl.)
24.1 Ὅτε χοϊκοὶ ἦμεν, Καίσαρος ἦμεν. Καῖσαρ δέ ἐστιν ὁ πρόσκαιρος ἄρχων, οὗ καὶ εἰκὼν ἡ χοϊκὴ ὁ παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος, εἰς ὃν ἐπαλιν 24.2 δρόμησεν. τούτῳ οὖν τὰ χοϊκὰ ἀποδοτέον, ἃ πεφορέκαμεν ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ χοϊκοῦ, καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ· ἕκαστον γὰρ τῶν 24.3 παθῶν ὥσπερ γράμμα καὶ χάραγμα ἡμῖν καὶ σημεῖον. ἄλλο χάραγμα νῦν ὁ κύριος ἡμῖν καὶ ἄλλα	For when we were of the earth we belonged to Caesar. But Caesar is the temporary ruler, whose earthly image is the old man, to which he has returned. To him, then, earthly things are to be rendered, which we bore in the image of the earthly, and the things of God to God. For each one of the passions is on us as a letter, and stamp, and sign. Now, the Lord marks us with

[15] On its neglect, note the comments of R. E. Heine, "The Alexandrians", in F. Young, L. Ayres, and A. Louth (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 121 remarks that "neither [*Excerpta Ex Theodoto* and the *Eclogae Propheticae*] contribute much to our understanding of Clement". Yet see B. G. Bucur, "The Place of the Hypotyposeis in the Clementine Corpus: An Apology for 'The Other Clement of Alexandria'", *JECS* 17 3 (2009): 313–335. For a critical introduction, see C. Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici* (Biblioteca patristica 4; Firenze: Nardini, 1985); *idem.*, *Il Battesimo in Clemente Alessandrino: Interpretazione di Eclogae Propheticae 1-26* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 19; Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1984); M. L. Turner, *The Gospel according to Philip: The Sources and Coherence of an Early Christian Collection* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996) 102. Both the authorship and the broader relationship of this work to Clement's *oeuvre* have been highly disputed. The work, as it is transmitted in the eleventh century Codex Laurentianus, follows book eight of Clement's *Stromateis* although it has been debated whether the work contains private notes of Clement's or those copied from his *Hypotyposes*. See for fuller discussion J. Kovacs, "Introduction", 14. P. Nautin, "La fin des Stromates et les Hypotyposes de Clément d'Alexandrie," *VC* 30 (1976): 268– 302 argued that the work, along with *Stromateis* VIII and the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, was a later compilation of his works taken from the *Hypotyposes*. This theory, as Kovacs notes, has not met with universal acceptance. Either way, the work is undoubtedly of Clementine origin (see Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici*, 9-12; Bucur, "The Place of the Hypotyposeis", 313).

[16] Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici*, 28–33.

[17] Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici*, 114–15 mentions that the baptismal candidate "receives the restoration of the image of Christ, the indelible character of the baptized". .

[18] GCS 17: 143.

ὀνόματα καὶ γράμματα ἐνσημαίνεται, πίστιν ἀντὶ ἀπιστίας, καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς. οὕτως ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλικῶν ἐπὶ τὰ πνευματικὰ μεταγόμεθα φορέσαντες τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου.	another stamp, and with other names and letters, faith instead of unbelief, and so forth. Thus, we are translated from what is material to what is spiritual, "having borne the image of the heavenly".

Clement conceives of Caesar in quasi-demonic terms, as the temporary prince (ὁ πρόσκαιρος ἄρχων; cf. Jn 14.30) to whom the human person renders "the things of dust" (τὰ χοϊκά; cf. 1 Cor. 15.47), or the passions that marked the existence of "the old man" (Col. 3.5; Eph 4.22; Rom 6.6) under Caesar's power. Through baptism, the Christian renders the old man to Caesar and gives to God what is God's. In the process, God marks believers with another stamp so that the Christian is translated from the earthly to the heavenly. The scriptural source of "the image" is slightly unclear. It is probable that in seeking to create a coherent reading of scriptural passages, Clement has simply fused the co-textual phrase, "the image of Caesar" with the Pauline reference to "the earthly image" (1 Cor 15.47-8). What remains significant for my purposes is that Clement shapes his interpretation on the basis of the co-text of the tribute passage, when he writes, "Caesar is the temporary ruler, whose earthly image is the old man, to which he has returned" (Καῖσαρ δέ ἐστιν ὁ πρόσκαιρος ἄρχων, οὗ καὶ εἰκὼν ἡ χοϊκὴ ὁ παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος, εἰς ὃν ἐπαλιν δρόμησεν).[19] Clement does not employ Jesus's words in isolation, but instead draws on the co-textual phrase "the image of Caesar" to fashion his interpretation of Jesus's saying.

What is the purpose of Clement's use of this co-textual detail and how does it affect his use of the saying? The "earthly image of Caesar" appears to be integral to his ascetical and liturgical reading of the pronouncement. Caesar's image is on the human person so that just as the coin bore his inscription and so belonged to him, so also the "old man" (Col 3.5; Eph 4.22; Rom 6.6) who is "of the earth" belongs to Caesar. Once again, it becomes clear that Clement is unconsciously drawing on details from the passage, not to make an argument by refuting or proving a point, but simply to describe what he sees as the reality of baptism. Clement's co-textual references correspond to the speculative, doctrinal motivations that will be observed in some of Origen's work and distinguishes his textual re-use from the often-argumentative ends of Tertullian. For Clement, co-textual details open up fresh intertexts, linked to the co-

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[19] Clement, *EP* 24 (GCS 17: 143).

text by catchword, that in turn elucidate traditions and doctrines in a way that made sense to Clement's philosophical sensibilities.

Clement's movement towards contextualising Jesus's words aligns with a broader impulse to contextualise biblical verses that is found in his works. In a significant passage in his *Stromateis*, for example, Clement explains that certain Christians "alter some of the accents and punctuation marks to force wise and constructive precepts to support their tastes".[20] Clement provides as an example, Malachi 3.15 "they opposed God and found salvation" which, Clement explains, these Christians were supposed to have corrected so that it read, "they opposed *the shameless God* and found salvation"—thus fitting a purportedly heretical agenda.[21] In response, Clement makes an appeal to the "passage" where, he notes, the verse clearly refers to the peoples's objection "to being disciplined for their sins" especially as the "the other nations were not being punished for their offenses while they alone were put down for every single offense"—a probable reference to Malachi 2.17 and the second half of Malachi 3.15.[22] Here, Clement's focus moves from the individual verse to its literary context. Taken together, then, these cases demonstrate Clement's movement towards co-textualisation at points where he engages the interpretation of rival Christian exegetes. Moreover, these examples from authors before Tertullian and Origen demonstrate the initial, embryonic stages in employing the immediate literary context of Jesus's sayings for interpretive purposes.

2.2. The Evidence: Co-textual Reference in Tertullian and Origen's Re-use of Jesus's Words

With Tertullian and Origen, these tentative practices get radically and more systematically reworked. For both authors, Jesus's words do not exist as isolated sayings, divorced from their wider literary contexts. Particularly with Jesus's climactic sayings, each author maintains that to interpret these pronouncements aright requires grappling seriously with the larger anecdotes in which they functioned. One common way in which Tertullian and Origen showed their awareness of textual contexts was the strategy of referencing Jesus's pronouncement while drawing on micro-level details from the anecdote, or co-text, in which the saying was known to have travelled.

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[20] Clement, *Strom.* 3.4.39.2 (GCS 52: 213).
[21] Clement, *Strom.* 3.4.38.1 (GCS 52: 213).
[22] Clement, *Strom.* 3.4.38.4 (GCS 52: 213).

While far less deliberate a technique than providing a verbatim report of the entire narrative (see chapter 1), the strategy of co-textual reference in the writings of Origen and Tertullian nevertheless demonstrates just as clearly the developing hermeneutical principle of literary contextualisation in the use of Jesus's words. In tracing the contours of co-textual re-use, I organise the evidence according to the five different ways in which these authors refer to the passage:

(1) Reference to a single word from the anecdote

(2) Reference to multiple words from the anecdote

(3) Reference to a phrase/s from the anecdote

(4) Reference to the setting, including the general subject of the story, reference to the interlocutors, as well as general references to "the passage" (Gk. τόπος; Lat. *locus*)

(5) Reference to the genre of the anecdote and similar cases

The first three modes of reading focus on specific words or verbal markers found in the passage itself, with each method of co-textual reference representing a more intense or stronger example of literary contextualisation than the next. The final two methods describe a broader reference to the passage and to similar anecdotes.

Given that I am considering instances of the re-use of the text of the anecdote, it is appropriate to comment on the biblical text (and especially the text of the Gospels) that was available to Tertullian and Origen. I am not primarily interested here in the sources each author draws on when referencing a detail from the anecdote.[23] Rather, my purpose is to securely identify each author's use of a co-textual detail, on the basis of what is known about the gospel texts in the second and third centuries.[24] In discussing this issue, differences in citation practice and historical circumstances (the genres each author employs and the biblical manuscripts that were available to them) must be recognised.[25] With citation practice, for example, Hugh Houghton notes that Tertullian "rarely, if ever, cites the same verse twice in exactly the same form,

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[23] On which, for the Greek fathers see G. D. Fee and R. L. Mullen, "The Use of the Greek Fathers for New Testament Textual Criticism", in B. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes (eds.), *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the* Status Quaestionis (NTTSD 42; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 351–363; H. A. G. Houghton, "The Use of the Latin Fathers for New Testament Textual Criticism", in *ibid.*, 375–406 for the Latin fathers. See more generally, B. M. Metzger, "Patristic Evidence and the Textual Criticism of the New Testament", *NTS* 18 4 (1972): 379–400.

[24] For an orientation on the state of the text of the Gospels, see Hurtado, "The New Testament in the Second Century", 3-27. Hurtado notes while there is undeniable fluidity in the state of the text of the NT in the second century, there is actually little to go in with the evidence. See for an alternative view that stresses the fluidity of the text, Koester, "The Text of the Synoptic Gospels", 19–37.

[25] See Fee and Mullen, "Greek Fathers", 353.

sometimes even within the same work".[26] Houghton's point is supported by Tertullian's references to details from the pronouncement stories.[27] The coin mentioned in the tribute passage, for instance, appears both as *denarius* and as *tributarius* or even, more generically, as *monetam*.[28] This variation might be attributable to the variety of text forms available to Tertullian, which seem to have included his own Latin translations of versions of Marcion's Greek text, alongside other Greek texts of the biblical passages that appeared outside of the Marcionite canon.[29] Despite the variation in Tertullian's citation practice, it is usually possible to determine that Tertullian's reference to a detail comes from the co-text of Jesus's saying, for reasons I will come on to shortly. In comparison with Tertullian, Origen's reference to biblical details is generally far more precise.[30] Yet there is the additional complicating factor that a good number of Origen's works discussed below are extant only in later Latin translations, by either Rufinus of Aquileia (e.g. *CommRom*) or Jerome (e.g. *Hom. In Luc*). For my part, I follow the recent consensus which supports the view that with careful evaluation, these sources can be profitably read as evidence of Origen's reading practices.[31]

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[26] See for a brief introduction to the issues, H. A. G. Houghton, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) vii–xi and for versions up to and including Tertullian, 3-9. Houghton (6) discusses as an example, Tertullian's citation of John 1.1 in *Adversus Praxeas*, where he uses two different phrases for "in the beginning"—*in principio* (13.3) and *a primordio* (16.1).

[27] Incidentally, the sayings of Jesus appear without much variation. In the case of the "render" command, there is, unsurprisingly for such a short and memorable phrase, little difference between the citations. Thus R. Braun, "Chronologica Tertullinea. Le de Carne Christi et le De Idololatria", in *Approches de Tertullien: Vingt-Six Études Sur Auteur et Sur Oeuvre 1955-1990* (Collection des Études augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 134; Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1992) 85-95 (84), who looks at *Id* 15.13, *Adv. Marc.* 4.38.3; *De Cor.* 12.4 which contain very minor changes in word order.

[28] Tertullian uses *denarius* in *AM* 4.38.4, *tributarius* in *De Fuga* 12.8, 9 (CCSL 2:1152-1153) and *monetam* in *De Idol* 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115).

[29] Houghton, *The Latin New Testament*, 6. Recent research supports the conclusion that Tertullian was not dealing with a Latin copy of Marcion's Gospel, but was actively translating a Greek copy of the work into Latin. See D. Roth, "Did Tertullian Possess a Greek Copy or Latin Translation of Marcion's Gospel?", *VC* 63.5 (2009): 429–467. Roth, "Matthean Texts" also draws attention to Tertullian's memory slips, where he draws on Matthean parallels to the Lukan text (e.g. Matthew's *regnum caelorum* instead of Luke's *dei regnum*). T. J. Lang, "Did Tertullian Read Marcion in Latin? Grammatical Evidence from the Greek of Ephesians 3:9 in Marcion's *Apostolikon* as Presented in the Latin of Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem*", *ZAC* 21.1 (2017): 63–72 (71-72) cautions against absolute judgments concerning a Greek or Latin *Vorlage*.

[30] Fee and Mullen, "Greek Fathers", 353. Origen also refers to some of the manuscripts he had at his disposable, on which see B. M. Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts", *Historical and Literary Studies* (1966): 78–95.

[31] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 19–21 is more alive than most to these problems (which he characterises as the fragmentary nature of Origen's corpus often as the result of ecclesiastical or imperial censure, the vicissitudes of the Origenist controversy, the problem of scribal emendation and the issue of translation). And yet he concludes that "when carefully vetted, Origen's writings satisfactorily yield the details required". See for further discussion on Rufinus' translation, R. E. Heine (ed.), *Homilies on*

While offering a definition of co-textual reference is relatively simple, the problems involved with *detecting* scriptural re-use should not be overlooked. How, then, do I go about *identifying* co-textual re-use in Tertullian and Origen's writings? To begin with, there are different types of re-use ranging from quotation to allusion to the rather hazier echo or influence.[32] For the purposes of this discussion, I follow the recent methodological advancements offered by William Tooman in his study of inner-biblical interpretation in Ezekiel.[33] Tooman usefully distinguishes between "implicit" and "explicit" references.[34] With explicit re-uses of scripture, an author marks the re-used text with a citation formula to set the quoted section apart from the larger context. The techniques of citing Jesus's words frequently follow the conventions of "explicit" reference.[35] Thus, Tertullian and Origen frequently include reference to the source of the saying when referencing it, or at the very least attribute it to Jesus (through the formulae, "as Jesus says" or "as the Lord says in the Gospel").[36] More relevant for re-use of the co-text is what Tooman calls "implicit" reference. In Tooman's discussion, implicit reference features "demonstrable repetition of some element or elements of an antecedent text" with the element defined either as "a word, phrase, clause, paragraph, *topos* or form".[37] This is more common to Tertullian and Origen's co-textual re-use. I follow Tooman's attempts to establish rules, or principles by which one can identify textual re-use. These principles include the uniqueness of the element in question to its source, and thematic correspondence between the borrowed text and the text being composed.[38] It is usually obvious when Tertullian and Origen are invoking the co-text. This is either because multiple words from the anecdote appear, or the word/words that do appear are recognizable from the context of the anecdote.

Genesis and Exodus (vol. 71; Fathers of the Church; Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982) 30–39. The later Latin translations cannot always be taken as reliable, however. On the unreliability of the Johannine catena fragments, for instance, see R. E. Heine, "Can the Catena Fragments of Origen's Commentary on John be Trusted?" *VC* 40 (1986): 118-134.

[32] Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 4-10.

[33] Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 23-34.

[34] Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 27-30.

[35] Although some authors re-use maxims as anonymous proverbs without the name of the sage attached, in many cases the name of the author is provided. See Morgan, *Popular Morality*, 86.

[36] Tertullian introduces the "render" command, to take just one example, in the following ways: "he added", "he said", "the Lord demanded to be shown a coin" (*De Idol.* 15.3), "his command", (*Adv. Mar* 4.38.4), "the scripture [*scripturam*]" (*De Fug.* 12.7-10). Origen introduces his citations of the climactic "render" command in the following ways: "Jesus said…and asked", (*CommMt.* 17.26), "our Saviour, 'the Logos of God'…says" (*CommMt* 17.27), "the Lord also said" (*CommRom* 9.25), "The Saviour Spoke", "Christ says" (*Hom. in Luc* 39).

[37] Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 27.

[38] Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 27–28, 29–30.

In the case of commentaries or commentary-like works, one can even more securely determine that the author is using a detail that corresponds to a version of the co-text, since either explicit reference is made to the larger context, or the author has earlier copied out the anecdote in full.

1. *Reference to a Single Word from the Anecdote*

The most basic form of co-textual reference is the re-use of a single word from the anecdote. In his *De Corona Militis* (*Concerning the Military Crown*), Tertullian refers to a single word from the anecdote to clarify the interpretation of Jesus's "render" command.[39] To understand the significance of his re-use requires a brief rehearsal of the context of this work. In the introduction to *De Corona,* Tertullian describes an episode in which a Christian soldier had been imprisoned, and even possibly martyred, both for refusing to wear the crown (*laurea*) and declining the imperial largess on the grounds of making the fateful confession, *Christianus sum*.[40] The scene Tertullian depicts concerns the visit by the emperor to a military camp.[41] It is probable that the event in question was the accession of Caracalla and Geta to the rank of co-emperors in 211 CE, although it is impossible on the current evidence to verify this.[42] During such visits, soldiers were required to wear the military crown or wreath—the *laurea*—and frequently received a donation from the emperor.[43] Tertullian reports that certain Christians had become angry with the soldier whose confession had apparently resulted in renewed persecution of Christians in the area.[44] Tertullian's *De Corona* therefore ostensibly functions as a defence of the soldier and takes the form of an extended proof of the idolatrous nature of the crown in pagan literature and Christian scripture.[45] Tertullian proscribes Christian involvement in the army because of the idolatrous religious practices associated with it.[46] Yet, as Geoffrey Dunn rightly notes,

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[39] *De Cor.* 12.4 (CCSL 2:1059).
[40] See *De Cor.* 1.2 where the soldier makes this confession when being asked why his dress was different from the rest (CCSL 2:1039). Dunn, "Tertullian and Military Service", 92n31 is right to note that "there is no evidence that the soldier was martyred" historically, yet Tertullian seems to present the soldier as a martyr, or awaiting martyrdom, at least in literary terms (see especially *De Cor.* 1.3).
[41] *De Cor* 1.1: *Proxime factum est: Liberalitatis praestantissimorum imperatorum expungebatur in castris, milites laureate adibant* (CCSL 2:1037).
[42] R. D. Sider, *Christian and Pagan in the Roman Empire: The Witness of Tertullian* (Selections from the Fathers of the Church 2; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001) 117.
[43] Sider, *Christian and Pagan*, 117.
[44] *De Cor.* 1.4-6 (CCSL 2:1040-1041).
[45] See the literature cited in Dunn, "Tertullian and Military Service", 87n1.
[46] Dunn, "Tertullian and Military Service", 102–3.

scholars should not primarily treat *De Corona* as an account of Tertullian's attitudes towards Christian involvement in the army and pagan society. Instead, *De Corona* first and foremost is a record of a debate over the correct interpretation of scripture.[47] When the larger purpose of the work is seen in this light, it is not surprising to find Tertullian proffering his own principles concerning the interpretation of the words of Jesus.

Within this context, Tertullian cites two sayings of Jesus in quick succession—the "render" command the saying about "mammon" ("you cannot serve God and mammon", Mt. 6.24; Lk 16.13).[48] Despite appearing to present Jesus's "render" command as a decontextualised saying, Tertullian in fact interprets his words in light of textual details from the co-text. Using the method of the humorous and sarcastic diatribe, Tertullian mocks his opponents, writing

> Will it be 'you cannot serve God and mammon', to deliver oneself over to mammon, and to depart from God? Will this be to 'Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's'—is it not instead to render the human person to God, and to even take the *denarius* from Caesar?[49]

Compared with the examples that I explored in the previous chapter, Tertullian's use of the anecdote here is far more restrained and subtle. Absent is any reproduction of the passage or explicit comment about the occasion for the climactic saying.[50] And yet, Tertullian draws on a single, incidental, but significant, word from the co-text— the *denarius*. Tertullian's reference to the *denarius* makes clear, for him, the purpose of the coin within the context of the tribute passage; one was to give back (*reddere*) the coin to Caesar as a tax.[51] Tertullian implies that the action of wearing the laurel

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[47] Dunn, "Tertullian and Military Service", 87: "Although Tertullian's pamphlet *De corona militis* at first sight appears to be a discussion about Christians and military service, with the hardline Carthaginian arguing against the possibility of Christians being soldiers because of the necessity of being involved in idolatry, he soon realized that he was involved more in an argument about the correct interpretation of scripture".

[48] It is probably not the case that Tertullian presents these citations as those of his opponents. It might be that some employed the "render" command to support receiving the *laurea* since it would seem to better support the opponents' view, although it is ultimately impossible to know. The "mammon" saying would hardly support the opponents' argument. I therefore take the view that Tertullian is presenting these citations as his own which he uses to mock his opponents by claiming that they do the precise opposite of what is commanded in scripture. See in support of this view, J. Fontaine (ed.), *Q. Septimi Florentis Tertulliani De corona = Sur la couronne* (Erasme, Collection de Textes Latins Commentés 18; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966) 151 and notes.

[49] *De Cor.* 12.4 (my trans.). See CCSL 2:1059.

[50] See 1.2, section 1 above (*De Idol.* 15.3).

[51] *De Cor.* 12.4 (CCSL 2:1059). The poetic rhyme and metrical structure should not go unnoticed in the Latin. Tertullian glosses the reading of the "render" command in the following way: *nec hominem deo reddere et denarium Caesari auferre* ("not rendering the person to God and stealing the denarius from Caesar").

and receiving the imperial donation contravene the words of Jesus since, by doing so, one serves mammon and departs from God. More gravely, by receiving the coin from the emperor, one not only fails to render (*reddere*) to Caesar but instead takes (*auferre*) his money from him.[52] By employing subtle details from the literary context of Jesus's words, Tertullian seeks to undermine his opponents' call for Christian soldiers to receive the largess and wear the crown. Significantly, Jesus's words appear not on their own, but alongside a single, but interpretively crucial, detail from its co-text.

2. *Reference to Multiple Words from the Anecdote*

While Tertullian could easily draw on a single keyword from the anecdote when using Jesus's words, he far more frequently supplies *multiple* co-textual details when doing so. Tertullian's use of multiple textual touchpoints within the anecdote is itself a nod to the rhetorical *topos* of "degree" whereby an author amassed textual details in support of one's argument.[53] By inundating his opponents with textual evidence, often coupled with the suggestion that his adversary had very little, Tertullian could claim the upperhand in the argument. The most prominent example of Tertullian's use of multiple co-textual details appears in his *De Fuga in Persecutione* (*Concerning Flight from Persecution*, ca. 203-206 CE).[54] The context for Tertullian's use of the "render" saying is his concern with Christians fleeing persecution either through bribery or by physically removing themselves from danger. The strength of this example merits generous citation of the passage:

> How could martyrdoms, too, take place to the glory of the Lord, if by tribute (*tributo*) we should pay for the liberty of our sect?...how can it be pointed out to me that there is the command, 'Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's?'…Of another sort is the *denarius* which I owe to Caesar, a thing belonging to him, about which it was started, it being *a tribute coin* (*tributarius*) due from those subject to the tribute (*tributariis*), not by children.[55]

In his attempts both to dismantle the reading of his opponents, and offer his own interpretation of the saying, Tertullian initially draws on two words from the passage:

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[52] Fontaine, *Sur la couronne*, 150 notes that this is an abbreviated but exact citation that matches the text of the later Vulgate. The verb *auferre* has negative connotations of thievery and robbery.

[53] See G. D. Dunn, "Rhetoric and Tertullian", 355 for further discussion.

[54] *De Fuga* (CCSL 2:1133-1156). See for support for this date, T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005), 177.

[55] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.8, 9 (CCSL 2:1152-1153): *Quid autem Deo debeo…nisi sanguinem, quem pro me filius fudit ipsius? Quodsi Deo quidem hominem et sanguinem meum debeo…*

tribute (*tributum; tributarius*) and *denarius*.[56] Each co-textual term shapes his interpretation of Jesus's climactic saying in key ways. Whereas his opponents apparently were arguing that one could "render to Caesar" by extorting Roman soldiers to avoid persecution, Tertullian clarifies the significance of the "render" command by defining the "things of Caesar" as the tribute coin (*tributaris*) and *denarius*. The accusation that his opponents used this text to justify flight is probably an invention of Tertullian's. Of greater significance for my purposes is Tertullian's textual use and the principles to which he appeals when using Jesus's words.[57] Tertullian insists that the *denarius* is not a payment that secures imperial favour, but instead, when read in the context of the anecdote, is a tribute paid by loyal subjects of the empire. By identifying the nature and purpose of the *denarius* in the tribute passage, Tertullian rules out his opponent's use of the "render" command to defend flight from persecution.

Tertullian then forwards a positive reading of the second half of the "render" saying by drawing on three additional details from the anecdote—the image (*imago*) which is inscribed (*inscriptam*) on the coin (*monetam*).[58]

> Or how shall I render to God the things which are God's—certainly, therefore, his own image (*imaginem*) and money (*monetam*) inscribed (*inscriptam*) with his name, that is, a Christian person?...But what do I owe God…but the blood which his own Son shed for me? Now if I owe God, indeed a human being and my own blood (*hominem et sanguinem*) I am surely guilty of cheating God if I do my best to withhold my payment. I have well kept the commandment, if, rendering to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, I refuse to God the things which are God's![59]

Just as Caesar inscribes (*inscriptus*) his coin (*moneta*) with his image (*imago*), the logic runs, so God must also have *his* coin, the Christian person (*hominem Christianum*) inscribed with his own image and likeness.[60] Tertullian draws on the catchword "image" to link Caesar's coin in the tribute passage with the "image" of God according to which the human person is created in the first chapter of Genesis (Gen 1.26-27). Just as Caesar has his property with its image, so too God makes certain

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[56] The final reference to *tributarius* appears to come from Matthew 17.24-7, the story of the half-shekel which includes the reference to "by those subject to tribute, not by children". The tribute passage and the passage about the temple-tax were frequently conflated by the fathers.

[57] See for further discussion of the issue of historical reality and rhetoric, 4.1 below.

[58] It is difficult to know precisely what Gospel Tertullian is drawing on here. The critical edition of the Vulgate (Weber-Grayson, 1560, 1596, 1648), a reconstruction of the text of the Latin Bible composed in a period later than the one in which Tertullian was writing, has for Matthew 22.20 *supra/superscription*, for Mark 12.16: *inscriptio* and for Lk 20.24, *inscriptionem*.

[59] *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153).

[60] *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153).

demands on human beings since they bear his image. The passage concludes with a striking call to martyrdom, as Tertullian goes on to define "the things of God" not simply as the human person, but as *sanguinis*, or human blood, which the Christian must offer to God as a martyr.[61]

Tertullian's call to martyrdom might strike modern readers as an extreme and arbitrary interpretation of the "render" command—and indeed, it is a highly idiosyncratic reading in the history of interpretation of this saying.[62] Yet for whatever else can be said of it, Tertullian's reading relies on certain carefully selected details selected from the immediate literary context of Jesus's words. It is instructive to compare Tertullian's use of co-textual details in his attempts at refutation, based on the denarius and tribute coin, with his efforts to exhort his audience to martyrdom, based on the inscribed coin of Caesar. In the first case, the *denarius* and tribute coin point back to the co-text in a straightforward and logical way. Since it is the denarius paid as a tax, and not money paid as a bribe, that belongs to Caesar, the reading of Tertullian's opponents appears arbitrary and unfounded. In the case of his martyrological reading of "the things of God", however, Tertullian relies on scriptural texts that both lie beyond, and yet are verbally connected to, the immediate co-text. To define "the things of God" as the human person, Tertullian must first draw a connection between Caesar's coin containing his image and God's "coin" inscribed with his image. Notably, Tertullian derives the intertextual link from the catchword association "image" (*imago*), shared by Genesis and the co-text of Jesus's saying. From this example, then, it is possible to see that while Tertullian employs the co-text to support polemical and refutatory ends, his attempts to fashion a pastoral and positive reading of Jesus's saying relies on textual details drawn from broader scriptural writings. I will return to the pastoral motivations behind Tertullian's re-use of intertextual details in chapter 3. For now, it is enough to observe that Tertullian employs the text of the anecdote both to refute rival readings and offer his own interpretation of Jesus's words.

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[61] I comment in greater depth on the martyrological overtones of Tertullian's use of this command in Burke, "Tertullian and the Martyrological Maxim".

[62] For more detail here, see my own discussion Burke, "'Render to Caesar'", 157–90 as well as P. C. Bori, "'Date a Cesare quel che è di Cesare' (Mt. 22. 21). Linee di storia dell'interpretazione antica", *Cristianesimo Nella Storia* (1986): 451–64 and the more recent discussion in M. Rizzi, *Cesare e Dio: Potere Spirituale e Potere Secolare in Occidente* (Saggi 712; Bologna: Il mulino, 2009) and U. Luz, *Matthew: A Commentary. 3. Chapters 21—28* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2005) 63-65.

A similarly argumentative use of co-textual details is found in Tertullian's treatment of Marcion's text of the "render" saying in his *Adversus Marcionem.* As Tertullian presents it, the Marcionite interpretation of the "render" command distinguishes between the Creator and the true God. Tertullian's response is to draw a connection between the Creator God and Jesus Christ and so undermine the existence of the Marcionite deity. Importantly for our purposes, while Tertullian applies the command to issues seemingly beyond its literary context in the gospels—namely, Christology and theology—he nevertheless uses the immediate literary context to form his interpretation.

> "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's". What shall be the things that are God's? Those that are like Caesar's *denarius*, God's own image and likeness. So, his command means that the human person must be given back to his Creator, in whose image and likeness and name and metal he was stamped into shape. Let Marcion's god go and fetch coinage for himself—Christ's command is for the *denarius*, which is the human person, to be rendered to its own Caesar, not to a stranger—except that the one that has to do this has not a *denarius* of his own.[63]

In a passage that is not so much exegesis as highly sarcastic mockery, it is nevertheless significant that Tertullian draws on two details from the passage—the *denarius* and the *imago*, words which Tertullian derived from his copy of the Marcionite gospel.[64] Because of the significance Tertullian attaches to the rival Marcionite theology and Christology, his attention is spent on defining the second half of the command—"the things of God". Yet he employs the co-text of Jesus's command to achieve this goal. He asks, "What shall be the things that are God's which are like Caesar's *denarius*?" This question, and the answer that follows, explicitly reveal the logic behind Tertullian's definition of *quae sunt dei* as the human person (*homo*). Just as Caesar's denarius contains Caesar's image, so too God's coin, the human being, bears his image and likeness and stamp. By employing the Genesis intertext to define "the things of God" as the human person, Tertullian seeks to draw a line of continuity between the Creator who made the human person in his image, and Christ who commanded the

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[63] Tertullian, *AM* 4.38.3 (SC 456: 468-469).
[64] Thus Roth, *Text of Marcion's Gospel*, 430. See also Roth, "Did Tertullian Possess?" where he argues that Tertullian was not working from a Latin translation of the Marcionite gospel but a Greek copy which he translated into Latin.

human person to offer himself to God.[65] Once again, Tertullian requires the Genesis intertext to support his point, only in this context, the conclusion that the human person belongs to God does not reinforce a martyrological argument but a theological one. Just as with the case of *De Fuga* above, so also here the intertext does not emerge from thin air. Rather, Tertullian draws on the Genesis intertext because of its perceived catchword associations with the saying's co-text. Once more, then, Tertullian draws on the literary context of the anecdote to interpret the climactic saying of Jesus.

Co-textual re-use was not all about the cut and thrust of argument, however. The use of details from the literary context could also resolve spiritual and metaphysical claims by opening up new ways of reading Jesus's sayings. Unsurprisingly, this type of co-textual re-use is typical of Origen. In his mystical reading of the tribute passage in his 39th Homily on Luke, for instance, Origen employs the same two lexemes used by Tertullian (the "image" and the "denarius") to fashion his ascetic interpretation.[66] Origen writes, "For, just as the coin, or *denarius*, has an image (*imago*) of the emperor of this world, so he who does the works of the 'ruler of darkness' bears the image of him whose works he does".[67] The reference to the "image" of Caesar on the denarius, a significant co-textual detail, evokes a steady stream of intertextual allusions that support his spiritual reading. For Origen, Jesus's command to "render to Caesar", when read in light of details from the passage and associated intertexts, means abstaining from vice, and pursuing a life of virtue. A major influence on Origen's reading of the tribute passage is the doctrine of "double creation", a dogma that was much influenced by Platonist philosophy.[68] According to this doctrine, the human person has two images—one given to her when created, which is subsequently removed as a consequence of the fall, and replaced with a second, earthly image. The task of the ascetic was to recover the image of God through strict discipline. While Origen's reading is undoubtedly shaped by Platonic philosophy, one

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[65] Beyond this point, Tertullian's comments amount to sarcasm rather than argument. Thus also R. Braun (SC 456: 466n1). Tertullian essentially argues that the Marcionite god cannot ask for his coin— the "human" person—since he has no "coin" (no humanity) of his own.

[66] Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454).

[67] Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454).

[68] Origen's statement that "there are two images in man" (*duae sunt imagines in homine*), is elucidated in the prologue of his *CommCant* where he comments that the spiritual body was initially created for paradise (Gen. 1.26-7), only for the cosmic Fall to precipitate the creation of an earthly body (Gen 2.1. See Origen, *CommCant* Prol. 2.4-5 where Origen glosses the Genesis text with Paul in 2 Corinthians 4.16 and Romans 7.12. See also H. Crouzel, *Théologie de l'image de Dieu chez Origène* (Paris: Aubier, 1956) 148–53.

cannot fail to observe the wealth of scriptural texts that form the backbone of his exegesis.[69] What is more, Origen connects each of these scriptural references to details from the co-text. The "image" on Caesar's coin appears throughout Origen's exegesis and evokes a rich network of scriptural passages. Thus, Adam received the first image, the heavenly image, when created "in his likeness and image" (Gen 1.26-7). The human person received the second image, "the earthly image" (1 Cor 15.49), when expelled from the garden for "disobedience and sin" (Genesis 3.23), following the enticements of Caesar, "the prince of this world" (Jn 14.30). This "earthly image" corresponds to the image on Caesar's *denarius* (Lk 20.24), so that Caesar becomes synonymous with the demonic powers—an interpretation that more than parallels that of Clement's above.[70] To render to Caesar and to God, then, entails removing the image of Caesar from one's face and taking on the image of God, so as to, in the end, achieve "the likeness of God" (Gen 1.27). In this example, co-textual details evoke and flow seamlessly into intertexts to create a web of new meanings for Jesus's saying. By referring to multiple touchpoints from the anecdote (the image, the *denarius* and Caesar), Origen could increase the number of potential intertexts that could be used, thus expanding the significance of Jesus's pronouncement.

One might rightly object at this point—are not Tertullian and Origen simply exegeting the co-text of Jesus's saying while drawing on other biblical texts in the process? By performing scriptural exegesis, what is actually novel in their treatment of Jesus's words? The point I wish to stress is that by using the immediate literary context to interpret Jesus's climactic sayings, Tertullian and Origen are breaking rank with the standard ways in which early Christian authors read Jesus's words. While the practices they employ might seem obvious to modern readers, very few of Origen and Tertullian's contemporaries interpreted and applied the words of Jesus in light of their immediate textual contexts. Even more significantly, none of them laid down principles for reading those sayings within their literary contexts, as Tertullian and Origen seem to do. The modern impulse to label Tertullian and Origen's work as "scriptural exegesis" *is* correct; yet what might seem to be novel to moderns is actually

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[69] A good deal of my thinking regarding Origen's complex relationship to Platonism has been influenced by the article by M. Edwards—"Origen's Platonism. Questions and Caveats", *ZAC* 12 (2008): 20-38.

[70] Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454): "For, in the same way that the coin, Matthew has *denarius*, has an image of the emperor of this world, so he who does the works of the 'ruler of darkness' bears the image of him whose works he does". Lienhard, *Luke*, 151 thinks that Origen probably erroneously attributes this detail to Matthew when it actually appears in Luke. Yet Origen's copy of Matthew might have had this detail. It is impossible to know. See Clement *EP* 24 (see 2.1 above).

a method that required articulation and development. In performing scriptural exegesis on Jesus's sayings, Tertullian and Origen were *not* doing something that was simply inevitable. Rather, the methods they use to read Jesus's sayings in fact represent the initial stage in a hermeneutic of interpreting his pronouncements contextually. Our familiarity with these methods should not blind us to the fact that such strategies required formulation over a period of time. Nor should our assumptions about the inevitability of these methods obscure the fact Tertullian and Origen's practice of literary contextualisation was but once choice among many other ways of reading Jesus's words.

3. *Reference to a Phrase from the Anecdote*

An even more intense and intentional form of co-textual reference was the citation of an entire phrase from the anecdote. Tertullian and Origen's use of co-textual phrases again demonstrates the divergence in each author's style and motives—Origen employs textual details to clarify and speculate, whereas Tertullian wields the text in polemical arguments. On two occasions, Origen re-deploys phrases from the co-text of Jesus's words to clarify the interpretation of those words. For Origen, the co-textual phrase specifies the referents of Jesus's saying and clarifies its significance by drawing further thematic connections between the pronouncement and other scriptural passages.

An example of this appears in Origen's comments on Romans 13.1 ("let every soul be subject to the higher authorities") in his *Commentary on Romans*.[71] Significantly, Origen employs Jesus's "render" command alongside the co-textual phrase "the inscription of Caesar" to exhort his readers to ascetic activities (*CommRom* 9.25).

> Now then, the Apostle is establishing precepts for believers and he wants us to preserve rest and peace in this present life, so far as it depends on us. And indeed, if we are such that, having been united with the Lord, are one spirit with him, we are said to be subject to the Lord. But if we are not yet that way, but there is still a common soul within us that still possesses something of the world, one that is in someone, a soul shackled by pre-occupations, the Apostle lays down precepts for it and tells it to be "subjected to the authorities of the world"; for the Lord also said that those who

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[71] This work is extant only in the later Latin translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* completed by Rufinus, merit generous citation. Rufinus's translation dates to ca. 406/7 CE. See discussion in SC 532: 9-116.

have the *inscription of Caesar* within themselves should "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's". [72]

While Origen's starting point for his discussion of this verse is a text other than the tribute passage, he nevertheless demonstrates an awareness of the immediate literary context of Jesus's "render" command. The fact that Origen is not commenting on the tribute anecdote in this passage arguably makes his attention to the co-text of Jesus's words even more striking. Origen focusses his attention on the Pauline reference to "the soul" which he uses to develop the common, middle-Platonic distinction between, on the one hand, those who "still possess something of the world" and who must therefore "be subject to the authorities of the world", and those who, on the other hand, have nothing to render to the higher authorities.[73] For Origen, Jesus's "render" saying supports this distinction found in the Pauline text. Modern scholars might balk at the seemingly arbitrary nature of Origen's exegesis, here. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that Origen completely extracts Jesus's words from their co-text, since he glosses the "render" command with the phrase "the inscription of Caesar" (which appears, in the later Latin translation, as *suprascriptionem Caesaris*).[74] Origen clearly draws on the larger co-text here, conflating and combining the question of Jesus ("whose's superscription is this?") in the tribute passage with the answer of his interlocutors (*Caesaris*) to form one composite phrase.[75] The significance of this co-textual phrase for Origen is that it clarifies the Pauline text by drawing out the precise identity of Caesar, namely as a demonic force. The coin with Caesar's image parallels the soul "shackled" by worldly preoccupations which must rid itself of earthly concerns in order to be united to the Lord. By clarifying Jesus's saying through the co-textual phrase, Origen also reinforces new connections between Jesus's words and the Pauline text. The command of Jesus—"render to Caesar"—can now more easily be seen to resemble the exhortation of the apostle Paul—"be subject to the higher authorities". The reference to the superscription of Caesar therefore underlines the link between these two texts and supports Origen's ascetic interpretation of the Pauline passage.

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[72] Origen, *CommRom* 9.25 (SC 555: 162-165).
[73] For Origen's discussion of this trichotomy see *PA* 4.2.4 (OECT: 496-499).
[74] Origen, *CommRom* 9.25 (SC 555: 162-165).
[75] The later Latin versions of Matthew's narrative frame has *et ait illis Iesus cuius est imago haec et suprascriptio* with Jesus's answer being *Caesaris* (see Weber-Grayson, 1560). In addition to this verbal association, it would appear that Origen draws on the saying and its co-text because of the perception that it shared similar content matter with the Romans passage, since both deal with the authorities and "money".

A further example of Origen's use of a co-textual phrase for clarificatory purposes appears in his discussion of the coin in the mouth of the fish in his *Commentary on Matthew* (on Matthew 17.24-27).[76] Origen employs the phrase "the coin with the image of Caesar" from the tribute anecdote to clarify Jesus's "render" command. As with the previous example, although the focus of Origen's exegesis is not on the tribute anecdote, he nonetheless draws on a distinct phrase from the co-text when using Jesus's climactic saying. Once again, the fact that Origen's explicit attention is not on the "render" command or its co-text makes his attention to the literary context all the more noteworthy. The immediate aim of Origen's comments is to provide a spiritual reading of the fish bearing the coin in Matthew 17. So, he writes

> But this coin was not in the house of Jesus, but it was in the sea, and in the mouth of a fish of the sea which, in my judgment, did well when it came up and was caught in the net of Peter, who became a fisher of men, in whose net was that which is figuratively called a fish, in order also that *the coin with the image of Caesar* might be taken from it, and that it might take its place among those which were caught by those who have learned to become fishers of men. Let him, then, who has the things of Caesar render them to Caesar, that afterwards he may be able to render to God the things of God.[77]

Far from untethering the climactic "render" saying from the narrative context of the tribute passage, Origen glosses the command with a phrase from the co-text—"the coin with the image of Caesar" (τὴν εἰκόνα Καίσαρος νόμισμα).[78] Origen uses this phrase to draw an analogy between the fish "dwelling in the sea" and the human bearing the image of Caesar. Just as Peter caught the fish and removed from it "the coin with the image of Caesar", Origen surmises, so also must the Christian who has the things of Caesar render them to Caesar, that afterwards they may be able to render to God the things of God.[79] Similarly to the Romans commentary, Origen seeks to employ the co-textual phrase to clarify the ascetic significance of Jesus's saying and so strengthen the force of his interpretation of the fish with the coin episode.[80]

While Origen employs co-textual phrases for explicitly clarificatory ends, Tertullian draws on these textual details for argumentative purposes. In his two uses of the "asunder saying" in *De Monogomia* (*Concerning Monogamy)*, Tertullian draws

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[76] Origen, *CommMatt* 13.10 (GCS 40: 208).
[77] Origen, *CommMatt* 13.10 (GCS 40: 208).
[78] Origen, *CommMatt* 13.10 (GCS 40: 208).
[79] Origen, *CommMatt* 13.10 (GCS 40: 208).
[80] Moreover, the two passages were commonly conflated by ancient Christian writers. On intertextual links see Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.8-10 and Clement, *Paed*. See further, G. E. Caspary, *Politics and Exegesis: Origen and the Two Swords* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) 165.

on a string of words from the surrounding literary context to defend his sexual ethic (*De Mon.* 5.1, 9.1).[81] For instance, in defending marriage as a divine institution rather than as a mere memorial, Tertullian cites the larger co-text where marriage was established "from the beginning" (5.1, *a primordio*).[82] For Tertullian, the fact that Jesus's command proves the indissolubility of marriage is supported by his reference in the passage "to the beginning" (*ad initium*), to the law about man and woman becoming one flesh (Gen. 2.24).[83] Thus, Tertullian references a phrase from the surrounding co-text to support his defence of the binding nature of marriage. Moreover, Tertullian draws on an additional phrase from the co-text when he explains the purpose of the Mosaic bill of divorce. He writes, "Moses permitted it [the bill of divorce] on account of their obduracy" (*illud propter duritiam ipsorum a Moyse esse permissum*; *De Monog.* 5.1).[84] There is little doubt that Tertullian is citing from the text of the Gospel anecdote here, given the obvious similarities with later Latin versions.[85] In both cases, Tertullian does not merely cite Jesus's words as a stand-alone saying to support his strict sexual ethic. Nor does he reproduce the entire anecdote. Instead, he draws on several co-textual phrases to bolster his interpretation of Jesus's pronouncement. [86]

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In the last three sections, I have presented a variety of cases in which Tertullian and Origen draw on textual details from the anecdote to interpret the climactic saying of Jesus. I have shown that there is both a diversity of style and purpose as well as a coherent hermeneutic at work in Origen and Tertullian's co-textual re-use. Through drawing on words from the passage, Tertullian's interpretation serves overtly argumentative objectives, in contrast to the highly speculative and pastoral ends to

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[81] Tertullian, *De Monog.* 5.1, 9.1 (SC 343: 148-149, 168-169).
[82] Tertullian, *De Monog.* 5.1, (SC 343: 148-149).
[83] Tertullian, *De Monog.* 5.1, (SC 343: 148-149).
[84] Tertullian, *De Monog.* 5.1, (SC 343: 148-149).
[85] Thus also Mattei (SC 343: 250). The Vulgate for Matthew (Weber-Grayson, 1555) reads, *Moses ad duritiam cordis vesti permisit vobis dimiterre uxores vestra*). There are slight differences in Tertullian's re-use, including placing the phrase in the third person (*ipsorum*). In addition, he shortens the permission of divorce to the pronoun *illud* and describes it as a concession to obduracy (*duritiam*) rather than "hardness of heart" (*ad duritiam cordis*).
[86] These two phrases, "from the beginning" and "Moses permitted it on account of their obduracy" precede the "asunder" saying in Mark's text while following it in Matthew's version. It would appear that Tertullian read them as preceding and grounding the "asunder" saying as his use of the climactic saying follows these two references (Weber-Grayson 1555).

which Origen put Jesus's sayings. While the motives of each author differ greatly, nevertheless both draw on a common method that seeks to interpret Jesus's words through the words and images of the immediate literary context. Thus, for both authors, textual details from the co-text serve as anchoring points that significantly guide the interpretation of Jesus's climactic sayings.

4. *Reference to the Setting of the Anecdote*

While Tertullian and Origen clearly draw on incidental details from the anecdote, they far more commonly make broader appeals to the co-text when employing Jesus's climactic sayings. These more general references included mentioning the subject of the response, as well as commenting on the characters involved in the anecdote. I now treat each of these in turn.

On at least two occasions, Origen makes reference to the setting of Jesus's climactic saying by using the term "passage".[87] It is perhaps not surprising to find that the two instances of reference to the broader passage both appear in Origen's treatment of the tribute passage in his *Commentary on Matthew* (*CommMt* 17.27 and 17.28 on Mt 22.15-22). This is because Origen commonly copied out or abbreviated the larger gospel pericope before commenting on it. What is perhaps more surprising, at one level, is the fact that these co-textual references appear in two sections devoted to the *non-literal* significance of Jesus's words. Yet, as I hope to have emphasized throughout my discussion, it is perhaps especially when providing a figurative reading of Jesus's sayings that Origen attends closely to the literary contexts of Jesus's commands. In the first case (*CommMt* 17.27), Origen makes a general appeal to the co-text as he takes up a figurative (τροπολογῆσαι) reading.[88] In introducing this interpretation, Origen explicitly mentions that he is addressing "the words in the passage" (κατά τὸν τόπον). The phrase κατά τὸν τόπον is common both to the commentary tradition, in general, and Origen's *tomoi* in particular, and represents his common way of introducing his reading of a larger *bloc* of text.[89] The significance of Origen's general reference for his interpretation of Jesus's saying can be stated quite

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[87] In these cases, a general reference is not the same as giving an account or paraphrase of the anecdote, on which see chapter 1. Origen has already reproduced the passage earlier in his commentary (*CommMt* 17.25).

[88] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 661).

[89] See for further examples, R. E. Heine, "Stoic Logic as Handmaid to Exegesis and Theology in Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of John", *JTS* 44.1 (1993): 90-117 (115).

simply: Origen requires a text to spiritualise and it is the text of the passage, and its associated intertexts that form the basis for Origen's figurative reading. I will return to this example shortly, as Origen follows up his reference to "the passage" with an extended re-use of the figures involved in the tribute passage.

In the following section (*CommMt* 17.28), Origen invites his reader to "examine this [the "render" saying] in relation to the passage" (i.e. the tribute pericope).[90] An appeal to the passage forms the basis for recommending that his readers listen to those seeking to test them. Origen recommends that his reader read the entire passage so that if they "are ever tested by those looking for occasions who propose certain problems", they can learn to give an answer that addresses those seeking to catch them.[91] Examining the saying in relation to the passage entails attending to the example of Christ, who listens to those seeking to test him and provides a "fully considered response".[92] Here, "the passage" signifies the larger dispute and, in particular, the agonistic context in which Jesus gave his exemplary answer. Through referring to the setting, Origen directs his audience towards imitating Jesus's model of answering his critics and objectors. Here, the agonistic context of the pericope becomes the basis for Origen's interpretation of the climactic saying.

Tertullian also makes use of the "setting" of Jesus's words, on multiple occasions. In my discussion of *De Fuga* 12.8-10 above, I noted that Tertullian draws on various words from the literary context to interpret Jesus's "render" saying. In addition, he also makes an explicit reference to the background of the passage. So, when answering his opponents' seemingly fragmented reading of the "render" command, Tertullian notes that the pronouncement finds its place within a larger literary setting: "it is another *denarius* that I owe to Caesar", Tertullian writes, "which belongs to him, about which it [the discussion] then was started" (*de quo tunc agebatur*).[93] Tertullian's elliptical comment refers, of course, to the larger discussion in the gospel pericope about the imperial tax. When read in light of its immediate literary context, Tertullian suggests, Jesus's climactic saying does not command Christians to pay a bribe to flee persecution. Rather, what is owed to Caesar is clearly read off the text of the passage—

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[90] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 661).
[91] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 661).
[92] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 661). As Origen notes, the response of Jesus embarrasses those who do not want to learn and teaches blameless doctrine to those wanting to be saved.
[93] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153): *Alius denarius, quem Caesari debeo, qui ad eum pertinet, de quo tunc agebatur*.

the *denarius* about which the discussion first began. This mirrors Tertullian's use of *consultatio* when discussing the setting of the tribute passage in his *de Idololatria*.[94]

In addition to more general references to the setting of the passage, Origen could also draw on the figures that formed the audience in the larger co-text. Origen's purpose in using this strategy was almost always to move from the audience in the Gospels to the audience of his day, and so encourage his contemporary readers to heed the lessons from Jesus's moral saying. This Origen does, for instance, when noting in his *Commentary on Matthew* that the saying, "'What God has joined together, let not man put asunder' was written with relation to the Pharisees" in the Gospel text.[95] Rather than representing a merely academic point that shows off Origen's knowledge of the passage, the reference to Jesus's interlocutors in the anecdote signals a distinction Origen wishes to make between the literal reading, addressed to the original audience, and the significance of the command *in the present*, located in a deeper reading of the saying. For "the Pharisees", the command refers to the significance of marriage and its indissoluble quality. Yet for the present audience, "those who are superior to the Pharisees" (πρὸς τοὺς Φαρισαίων κρείττονας), the command offers comfort that "nothing" (μηδὲν) will separate them from their union in Christ.[96] This case provides a clear example of Origen's creative ability to coordinate his agenda for a contemporary audience with the literary context of Jesus's words.

Similarly, Origen employs the characters of the tribute passage to support his ascetic application of the "render" command in his *Commentary on Matthew*.[97] This is the same section of his commentary in which Origen notes that he will provide "a moral reading of the passage" (see above). Origen fulfils this obligation by drawing an analogy between attitudes towards asceticism in his day, on the one hand, and, on the other, the attitudes of Jesus's two sets of interlocutors towards the tax as recorded in Matthew's Gospel—that is, the Herodians and the Pharisees. While "some act analogously to those who advise not to pay tax to Caesar [i.e. the Pharisees], by mistreating the body as much as possible" through various types of abstinence, "others [i.e. the Herodians] imagine that one must give the body its dues".[98] Although he does not explicitly name either group in this section, it is clear that Origen intends to refer

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[94] See 1.2, section 1 above.
[95] Origen, *CommMt* 14.17 (GCS 40: 327).
[96] Origen, *CommMt* 14.17 (GCS 40: 327).
[97] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 660).
[98] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 660).

to the Pharisees' insistence on zealous asceticism and the Herodians's licentiousness. His earlier discussion of the literal significance of the passage provides extended comments on these two groups and clearly shows that he has them in mind in this later section.[99] Both groups become the foils for Origen's version of ascetic activity. With the help of "the Logos of God", Origen charts a reasonable and clear (τρανῶς), middle passage of measured asceticism which allows for giving the body what is due to it, since the body, just like the tribute, "bears the image of Caesar and of physical things" (ἔχει Καίσαρος καὶ σωματικῶν πραγμάτων).[100] At the same time, one must "'give to God the things of God', by attending to the spiritual dues to the soul".[101] In other words, one is to make concessions to the body that do not diminish virtue while pursuing purity in such a way that one does not burden the flesh.[102] To fashion his *via media* of reasonable asceticism, Origen relies upon a paraphrase of the co-text, and appeals directly to the two sets of figures in the pronouncement story. In other words, Origen fashions his interpretation of Jesus's words directly from the literary context of the pronouncement. In both of these examples, the audience found in the co-text assists Origen in applying the saying of Jesus to his own readers. This strategy is no less a part of the hermeneutic of textual contextualization, since Origen relies on characters from the immediate literary context to interpret the climactic saying of Jesus for his present-day audience.

5. *Reference to the Genre/Similar Cases*

In the fifth and final type of co-textual reference, Origen and Tertullian take their lead from the genre of the passage by linking together similar co-texts that feature

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[99] Origen, *CommMt* 17.25-26 (GCS 40: 659). See for instance, Origen's comment: "For it is likely that among the people at that time those who taught to pay the tax to Caesar were called Herodians by those who did not want to do this, and the Pharisees who, in the fantasy of freedom, prevented paying the tax to Caesar". The later Latin text of *CommMt* 17.26 even more explicit: "for perhaps among the people at that time those who thought it necessary to pay the tribute were called Herodians…The Pharisees appeared to be observing the minuteness of the Jewish disciplines very carefully". So also, is the Latin translation of *CommMt* 17.27: "Those therefore who teach the law of God beyond the ordinary and command to have no concern about physical things and the needs of the body are the Pharisees...There are others, however, who think it necessary to indulge bodies beyond the ordinary and to satisfy the ruler of bodies in all ways. These are in the likeness 'of the Herodians'". See Heine, *Commentary on Matthew II*, 528.
[100] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 660).
[101] Origen, *CommMt* 17.27 (GCS 40: 660).
[102] This balance becomes more elaborate and explicit in the later Latin translation: "…so that virtue is not diminished while we serve the flesh beyond measure, nor is the nature of the flesh burdened, while we adhere more abundantly to virtues" (Origen, Origen, *CommMt* 17.27, GCS 40: 659). See Heine, *Commentary on Matthew II*, 529.

climactic sayings of Jesus. In his close reading of the "literal meaning" of the divorce anecdote (Mt 19.3-9 and parallels), Origen draws a parallel between the passage and other testing anecdotes in the Gospels. These include the query about the great commandment (Mt 22.34-40 and parallels), and the question about taxation in the tribute passage (Mt 22.15-22 and parallels).[103] In each of these testing stories, Origen goes on to explain, a trap is set for Jesus in the form of a yes-or-no question. Jesus's opponents offer him two responses, each of which will land him in trouble.[104] In the case of the divorce anecdote, pronouncing the legality of divorce would have led to the accusation that Jesus viewed marriage as a mere trifle, while a judgment against the legality of divorce on any grounds might have led to the accusation that he permitted a so-called "sinful union".[105] In the case of the tribute passage, the Pharisees and Herodians famously place Jesus on the horns of a dilemma by making him choose between affirming the tax, thereby betraying the wishes of the people, and denying its legality, thus giving cause for him to be handed over to the authorities.[106] Origen connects these three responsive anecdotes to show that Jesus was so transcendent (τηλικοῦτος) as to move beyond the terms of his interlocutors and answer "blamelessly and wisely" (ανεπιλήπτως και σοφῶς).[107] This meta-level, co-textual point shifts the focus away from the content of Jesus's response to the manner in which he dealt with his adversaries. Origen's re-use of these co-textual details surely serves his readerly agenda—namely, to establish Jesus's way of answering a testing question as a template for Christian teachers in his day. As Origen puts it, if "our Saviour" dealt with his adversaries with such calmness, "which of his disciples who is ordained to teach need be vexed?"[108] Yet it is no less significant to note that Origen interprets the command in this way with the aid of the literary context of Jesus's words and perceivably similar Gospel pericopes. By attending to the agonistic nature in which some of Jesus's words appear, Origen encourages his reader to emulate the character of Jesus when facing similarly difficult scenarios.

A comparable case of drawing on the genre of the anecdote emerges in Tertullian's *De Monogamia*. When using the "asunder" saying in this work, Tertullian

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[103] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16 (GCS 40: 325).
[104] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16 (GCS 40: 325).
[105] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16 (GCS 40: 325).
[106] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16 (GCS 40: 325).
[107] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16 (GCS 40: 318, 320): "And, as tending to convince them that they should not put away their wife for every cause, is it said, 'What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder'".
[108] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16 (GCS 40: 325).

demonstrates his awareness of the larger passage by noting that the saying pertained to "a question of divorce" (*De Mon.* 5.1: *quaestione repudii*; *De Mon.* 9.1: *in repudii retractatu*).[109] These two technical terms, *retractatus* and *quaestio*, denote an examination and signal Tertullian's wider awareness of the genre of the responsive anecdote.[110] Tertullian's reference to the subject of Jesus's response ("divorce") introduces the saying as evidence that is germane to the nature of his inquiry, since he is dealing with the issue of monogamy. Moreover, his awareness of the status of the larger co-text as a *retractus* or *quaestio*, suggests that this material is not only relevant in terms of its *content*, but its *genre*. Since Tertullian seeks to fashion a *quaestio* of his own, an inquiry into the nature and appropriateness of divorce serves his authorial purpose very well. By attending to the genre of the passage, then, Tertullian demonstrates the significance of the co-text for forwarding his interpretation of the climactic saying of Jesus.

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In summary, I have presented these cases to demonstrate the diverse methods and motives that make up Tertullian and Origen's use of co-textual details when interpreting the sayings of Jesus. More importantly, I have argued that Tertullian and Origen interpret Jesus's words through the words, phrases and figures surrounding that surround them. For both authors, the significance of Jesus traditions does not lie in those traditions *per se*, but in the textual contexts in which they are embedded.

Excursus: Cases of Co-Textual Reference More Broadly in the Works of Tertullian and Origen

One potential objection that might be levelled at this point can be stated in the form of the following question: to what extent do Tertullian and Origen employ the literary context of Jesus's words beyond those cases where there is a ready-made narrative in the form of a pronouncement story? In this excursus, I wish to forward two cases from each author which demonstrate that Tertullian and Origen were applying these techniques to Jesus's words more broadly. I also briefly include examples of literary

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[109] Tertullian, *De Monog.* 5.1 (SC 343: 299). *Retractus* is a synonym for *quaestio*.
[110] Waszink (ed.), *De Anima*, 112 notes that the term *retractatus* could mean examination/contemplation or doubt/difficulty/scruple. The former definition seems to capture the sense here.

contextualisation more generally in their biblical exegesis (that is, cases that do not concern Jesus's words), to indicate that this hermeneutic is present throughout their respective œuvres.

1. *Tertullian, de praes. 8.7-13 "seek and you shall find" (Mt 7.7)*

Tertullian's *de praescriptio haereticorum* is one of the most important early Christian treatises on the interpretation of scripture.[111] Tertullian attempts to lay down principles for the valid use of scripture and to rule out the heretics's use of scripture on the basis of their status as *haeretici*.[112] Near the beginning of the treatise, Tertullian takes up the treatment of the saying, "seek and you shall find" (*quaerite et inuenietis*). Tertullian claims that certain Christians to whom he feels allied (*nostri*) used this saying to seek for truth not already possessed, while heretics (*haeretici*) employed it to encourage speculation.[113] Tertullian is concerned that such a treatment of the verse encourages Christians to doubt whether they possess the truth since they are seemingly encouraged to continue to search for it. Tertullian's response merits full citation.

Tertullian, *de praes*. 8.1-6 (Latin)[114]	Tertullian, *de praes.* 8.1-6 (my transl.)
Venio itaque ad illum articulum quem et nostri praetendunt ad ineundam curiositatem et haeretici inculcant ad importandam scrupulositatem. Scriptum est, inquiunt quaerite et inuenietis. Quando hanc vocem Dominus emisit, recordemur. Puto in primitiis ipsis doctrinae suae cum adhuc dubitaretur apud omnes an Christus esset, cum adhuc nec Petrus illum Dei filium pronuntiasset, cum etiam Ioannes de illo certus esse desisset. Merito ergo tunc dictum est: quaerite et inuenietis, quando quaerendus adhuc erat qui adhuc agnitus non erat…	And so, I come to that word which our own bring forward to justify eagerness for knowledge, and which heretics also urge as a reason for introducing doubt. It is written, they say, "Seek and ye shall find" [Mt 7.7; Lk 11.9]. Now let us call to mind when it was that the Lord uttered these words. It was surely at the very beginning of his teaching, when all were still in doubt whether he was the Christ; when Peter had still not pronounced him to be the Son of God, when even John had ceased to be certain about him. With good reason, therefore, was it said at that time, "Seek and ye shall find", when as yet he had to be sought who was not yet recognized.

On the basis of the historical and literary context of the verse, Tertullian claims that Jesus's words do not justify the search for knowledge. He bases this judgement on four

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[111] As noted by Dunn, "Tertullian's Scriptural Exegesis", 141.
[112] Tertullian, *de praesc.* 19.3 (SC 46: 111-112): "who holds the faith to which the scriptures belong?" (*quibus competat fides ipsa, cuius sunt scripturae?*).
[113] Tertullian, *de praesc.* 8.1. (SC 46: 99-100).
[114] Tertllian, *de praesc.* 8.1. (SC 46: 99-100).

pieces of evidence. First, Tertullian notes that Jesus uttered these words at the very beginning of his ministry (*in primitiis ipsis doctrinae*). At this point, very few had believed in him, and so he encourages them to seek what they have "not yet recognised" (*agnitus non erat*). Second, Tertullian then claims that since this statement was made only to the Jews (*ad Iudaeos*), it should not be assumed that it applies directly to later readers. Since some of the "sayings of the Lord" (*dicta Domini*) were for "Jewish ears", many of them do not hold weight for contemporary believers.[115] Third, Tertullian does not employ the saying on its own but also seeks to interpret the two sayings surrounding it—"knock and it shall be opened to you", and "ask and you will receive". This demonstrates attention to the co-text of Jesus's words. Fourth, Tertullian also attempts to strengthen his interpretation by drawing on other scriptural passages, some of which share catchwords with Jesus's words. Tertullian glosses the seek/find saying with "search (*scrutamini*) the scriptures in which you hope for salvation, for they speak of me" (Jn 5.39).[116] "This will be [what] seek and you shall find [means]" (*Hoc erit quaerite et inuenietis*).[117] These two passages share conceptually similar terminology that concerns "seeking", even if the forms of the verbs vary (*quaerere* and *scrutare*).

Geoffrey Dunn has argued that the principles Tertullian lays down in this work are specific to the context in which he wrote. In Dunn's view, Tertullian opportunistically adapts hermeneutical principles according to the particular context in which he writes. To prove his case, Dunn presents another example of Tertullian's use of the seek/find saying in *de baptismo*, where he addresses catechumens after they have been baptised.[118] In this context, Tertullian encourages these Christians to "ask of your Father, ask of your Lord" for special gifts (*petite de patre, petite de domino, peculia gratiae*).[119] Dunn rightly notes that there is an inconsistency between Tertullian's two uses of the ask/receive saying as in the first context (*de praesc.*), Tertullian rules out

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[115] Tertullian, *de praesc* 8.16 (SC 46: 101): *Omnia quidem dicta Domini omnibus posita sunt, per aures Iudaeorum ad nos transierunt sed pleraque in personas directa, non proprietatem admonitionis nobis constituerunt, sed exemplum.*

[116] Tertullian, *de praesc.* 8.6 (SC 46: 100).: *scrutamini scripturas in quibus salutem speratis; illae enim de me loquuntur.*

[117] Tertullian, *de praesc.* 8.6. (SC 46: 100).

[118] Tertullian, *de bapt.* 20.5 (SC 35: 96).

[119] Tertullian, *de bapt.* 20.5 (SC 35: 96).

such asking while in the second (*de baptismo*) he allows it.[120] At the same time, it should be noted that Tertullian continues to use the co-text of Jesus's words—he cites the three sayings together. Moreover, a closer examination of Tertullian's use of the sayings shows that he understands the seek/find component in a similar way to that in *de praescriptione*. In *de baptismo*, Tertullian notes that the catechumens "have sought and have found" (*quaesistis enim et invenistis*), "have knocked and it has been opened to you" (*pulsastis et apertum est vobis*).[121] This seems to align with *de praescriptio* where, as Francis Watson notes, "seeking lies in the past", in the Christian scriptures.[122] In both cases, then, the seeking has come to an end, because it has reached its appointed end. If this analysis holds true, then Tertullian's treatment of the two sayings is not as different as Dunn has acknowledged, even if there are certain inconsistencies. More importantly, this case provides further evidence that Tertullian frequently, if not entirely reliably, coordinates his own changing contexts with that of the literary context of Jesus's saying.

2. *Tertullian, Adv. Prax. 20-24, "I am in the Father and the Father in me" (Jn 14.10)*

In his *Adversus Praxeas*, Tertullian suggests that his opponent supposedly fragments three sayings from John's Gospel and upholds these as the key evidence for their Monarchian Christology: (1) "I and the Father are one" (John 10.30), which Tertullian erroneously describes as Christ's answer to Philip (2) "The one who has seen me has also seen the father" (John 14.9) and (3) "I am in the Father and the Father in me" (14.10). Tertullian suggests that on the basis of these three sayings, as well as Isaiah 45.5, his opponents argue that the father and son were the same person.

Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 20.1-3 (Latin)[123]	Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 20.1-3 (English)
Sed argumentationibus eorum adhuc retundendis opera praebenda est si quid de scripturis ad sententiam suam excerpent, cetera nolentes intueri quae et ipsa regulam servant, et quidem salva unione divinitatis et monarchiae sonitu. Nam sicut in veteribus nihil aliud tenent quam, Ego deus	But for to further rebut their arguments we must pay attention to whatever they will glean from the scriptures to support their opinion, while they refuse to look at the others which also observe the rule, and that while safeguarding the divine unity and the impressiveness of the monarchy. For as in

[120] Dunn, "Tertullian's Scriptural Exegesis", 153: "The imperatives of this verse, in this instance, were not being limited to unbelieving Jews, as they were in the treatise we have considered above" (i.e. in *de praesc.*).
[121] Tertullian, *de bapt.* 20.5 (SC 35: 96).
[122] Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 359.
[123] CCSL 2:1186.

et alias praeter me non est, ita in evangelio responsionem domini ad Philippum tuentur, Ego et pater unum sumus, et Qui me viderit vidit et patrem, et Ego in patre et pater in me. His tribus capitulis totum instrumentum utriusque testamenti volant cedere, cum oporteat secundum plura intellegi pauciora. sed proprium hoc est omnium haereticorum. nam quia pauca sunt quae in silva inveniri possunt, pauca adversus plura defendunt et posteriora adversus priora suscipiunt. regula autem omni rei semper ab initio constituta in prioribus et in posteriora praescribit, utique et in paucioribus.

the old [testament] they retain nothing else but, "I am God and there is no other beside me", so in the Gospel they uphold the Lord's answer to Philip, "I and the Father are one", and, "The one who has seen me has also seen the Father", and, "I am in the Father and the Father in me". With these three citations they wish the entirety of both testaments to yield, though the smaller number ought to be understood in accordance with the greater. But this is characteristic of all heretics. For because there are a few which can be found among the undergrowth, they maintain the cause of few against the many and become advocates of the later against the earlier. But the rule determined for every subject in earlier instances ever since the beginning, makes a precedent for the later also—and the same in the case of the fewer.

Tertullian then proceeds to discuss the relationship of Son to father throughout John's gospel, beginning with the Johannine prologue until John 20. A good portion of discussion centres on John 14, however, the section surrounding Jesus's sayings cited by Tertullian's opponents.[124] Geoffrey Dunn has correctly called attention to Tertullian's use of the rhetorical *topos* of degree in this work, according to which he inundates his opponent with textual support for his case, and contrasts these with the lamentably few cases levelled by his interlocutor.[125] While this is certainly true, Tertullian also employs the literary context that immediately precedes Jesus's sayings, as well as the larger context of John's gospel, to correct the understanding of his opponents. As Tertullian notes at the end of his commentary-like discussion,

> On account of Philip's one remark and the Lord's reply to it we seem to have made a complete study of John's gospel, so that so many things clearly stated both before it and after it may not be overturned by one remark, which ought to be interpreted in accordance with them all, not in contradiction with them all and even in contradiction with its own meaning.[126]

[124] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 21-26 (CCSL 2:1186-1196).
[125] Dunn, "Rhetoric and Tertullian", 355.
[126] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 26.1 (CCSL 2:1196): *Propter unum Philippi sermonem et Domini responsionem ad eum videmur Iohannis evangelium decurrisse, ne tot manifeste pronuntiata et ante et postea unus sermo subvertat, secundum omnia potius quam adversus omnia, etiam adversus suos sensus interpretandus.*

In his discussion of the co-text, or verses surrounding John 14.9-10, Tertullian draws on verses 5-7 and the verse immediately following (v.11). As I will demonstrate more clearly in chapter 4, Tertullian here consciously picks up the Ciceronian trope of examining what "comes before and after" an ambiguous case in the pursuit of clarifying an author's intended meaning. The immediately preceding verses prove, for Tertullian, that the Son is the Father's "deputy", who shows the way to the father (Jn 14.6). Therefore, whoever knows the Son, and his works, "knows the father also" (Jn 14.9).[127] In his discussion of v.11, Tertullian questions what it is that Jesus asks his disciples to believe—"What? That I am the Father? I think it is not written so, but instead, 'that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or if not, believe because of the works'".[128] Tertullian therefore employs the surrounding context to attempt to show that the father and son are not the same person, but can be distinguished in the text of John's gospel. Regardless of the cogency of Tertullian's exegesis, the important point for the purposes of this discussion is Tertullian's appeal to, and explicit use of, the immediate literary context surrounding Jesus's sayings in his exegesis.

In addition to his use of the literary context to interpret Jesus's sayings, Tertullian also applies the hermeneutic of literary contextualistion more widely in his biblical exegesis. Ronald Sider puts it well when he states, "Perhaps no method of Biblical exegesis is more general in Tertullian, or followed with more salutary results, than the rhetorical rule of argument from context".[129] Sider provides a number of examples from Tertullian's works that demonstrate his application of these strategies to resolve ambiguities in scripture. For instance, Tertullian employs the literary context to resolve the identity of the offender in 2 Corinthians 2:7 in *De Pudicitia* (*Concerning Chastity*). The polemical context of the work is a debate over the identity of the individual the apostle Paul orders the congregation to forgive. Tertullian's Catholic opponents argued that the offender in 2 Corinthians 2:7 was the fornicator of 1 Corinthians 5.5 whom Paul called to be "given over to the destruction of the flesh".[130] Tertullian disputes this case by claiming that the verse is ambiguous. To resolve the argument, Tertullian draws on the words of the apostle in the previous verse (2 Cor. 2.6)—

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[127] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 24.6 (CCSL 2:1194).
[128] Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 24.8 (CCSL 2:1195): *...credite ait. Quid? me patrem esse? non puto scriptum esse, sed, Quia ego in patre et pater in me, si quo minus vel propter opera credite...*
[129] Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 97.
[130] Tertullian, *de Pud*. 13 (SC 394: 206-207).

"sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which is inflicted on many".[131] This comment cannot refer to the fornicator of 1 Corinthians since if Paul had meant this figure, he would not have described him as "inflicted" (*increpatio*) but "condemned" (*damnatio*). In chapter 15, Tertullian argues that the entire letter supports his position while the interpretation of his opponents is incongruous with the textual evidence. Tertullian inundates his opponents with textual support, before claiming that "the few are cast into the shadow (*adumbrantur*) by the many, the dubious by the certain, the obscure by the manifest".[132] This case is just one of a number that demonstrate Tertullian's use of the literary context in his biblical exegesis.[133]

3. *Origen, CommJo 19.1.1-19.2.11, "you know me and you know where I came from" and "you know neither me nor my father" (Jn 7.28; 8.19)*

Origen's use of the literary context also extends far beyond cases that pertain to the climactic sayings of Jesus. In one section of his *Commentary on John*, for example, Origen attempts to distinguish between parts of the gospel in which Jesus discusses his divine and human identities. One requires such a distinction to avoid contradictions, Origen observes, particularly as Jesus both states, "you know me" (Jn 7.28) and "you do not know me" (Jn 8.19). Origen appeals to the context of these two statements as a way of resolving such apparent contradiction.

CommJo 19.2.7-10 (Greek)[134]	*CommJo* 19.2.7-10 (My transl.)
οὕτως οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ τὸ παρὸν ἡμῖν ζητουμένων ἐκ τῆς συμφράσεως κατανοητέον. τὸ μὲν «Κἀμὲ οἴδατε καὶ οἴδατε πόθεν εἰμί» περὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἑαυτοῦ διαλέγεται, τὸ δὲ «Οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε οὔτε «τὸν πατέρα μου» περὶ τῆς θεότητος·τοῦ μὲν γὰρ «Κἀμὲ οἴδατε καὶ «οἴδατε πόθεν εἰμί» ταῦτα προτέτακται·	Thus we must learn about these things from the near context. The statement, "you know me and you know where I came from" is made of the man himself, but the statement, "you know neither me nor my father" is made concerning his divinity. For the statement, "you know me and you know where I came from", is preceded by the

[131] Tertullian, *De Pud.* 14.1 (SC 394: 214-215): *Sufficiat eiusmodi homini increpatio ist quae a multis*
[132] Tertullian, *De Pud.* 17.18. (SC 394: 244-245): *Pauca multis, dubia certis, obscura manifestis adumbrantur.*
[133] See Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 95-98 for discussion of two other cases where Tertullian appeals to the literary context: (1) *De Mon.* 11 in which Tertullian debates with the *psychici* about Paul's comment concerning the wife who is bound not to marry until the death of her husband (1 Cor. 7.39) (2) *De Praescriptione* 25.6 where Tertullian argues against certain Christians who claimed that Paul's words to Timothy about the "good deposit" (1 Tim 6.20; 2 Tim 1.14) and the "good commandment" (1 Tim 6.13) refer to hidden doctrine. Tertullian responds with an appeal to the context that comes very close to the wording of Cicero: "from what proceeds and follows in the document it will become manifest" (*ex supra et infra scriptis intellegere erat*; cf. Cicero, *superior et inferior scriptura*).
[134] Origen, *CommJo* 19.2.7-10 (GCS 10: 299-300).

«Ἔλεγον οὖν τινες ἐκ τῶν «Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν· Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὃν ζητοῦσιν ἀποκτεῖναι; καὶ ἴδε «παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν αὐτῷ λέγουσιν. μήποτε ἀληθῶς ἔγνωσαν «οἱ ἄρχοντες ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός; ἀλλὰ τοῦτον οἴδαμεν πόθεν «ἐστίν· ὁ δὲ χριστὸς ὅταν ἔρχηται, οὐδεὶς γινώσκει πόθεν ἐστίν»· 19.2.8 τοῦ δὲ «Οὔτε ἐμὲ οἴδατε οὔτε τὸν πατέρα μου» ταῦτα «Εἶπαν οὖν «αὐτῷ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι· Σὺ περὶ σεαυτοῦ μαρτυρεῖς· ἡ μαρτυρία σου οὐκ «ἔστιν ἀληθής. ἀπεκρίθη † ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Κἂν ἐγὼ «μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ, ἀληθής ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία μου, ὅτι οἶδα…

δῆλον οὖν ἐκ τούτων ὅτι ὑπὸ μὲν τῶν Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν ἐλέγετο· «Τοῦτον οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν», ἀναφερόντων ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν Βηθλεὲμ αὐτὸν γεγενῆσθαι…διόπερ καὶ μαρτυρεῖ τοῖς εἰρηκόσιν· «Οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν» διὰ τοῦ «Κἀμὲ οἴδατε καὶ οἴδατε πόθεν εἰμί». τοῖς δὲ Φαρισαίοις τὸ «Κἂν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ, ἀληθής ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία μου, «ὅτι οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω»· τῇ θειοτέρᾳ φύσει διαλεγό μενος ἔφασκεν ταῦτα καί, ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις, καθ' ὃ πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως ἦν.

words, "some therefore of Jerusalem said, 'Is not this not the one who they seek to kill? And behold, he speaks openly, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers known truly that this is the Christ? But we know where this man came from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where he came from.

It is clear then from these that those Jerusalemites said "we know this man, where he is from", referring to his birth which took place in Bethlehem… Therefore, he also testifies to those who said "we know where is from" with, "you know me and you know where I am from". But when he said to the Pharisees, "and I testify concerning myself and my testimony is true" because I know where I came from and where I am going", he was speaking about his divine nature and, as one might say, on this basis of his being the firstborn of all creation.

The solution to this problem lies in the context of each statement, and more particularly the recipients of each remark. As Origen puts it, "so then we must also learn from searching those things according to the near context".[135] Following this principle, Origen states that from the surrounding context of John 7.28 ("you know me, and you know where I come from"), it is clear that Jesus is speaking about his humanity (περὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), since the "people of Jerusalem" do in fact know him as a man.[136] Origen refers to Mt 2.1 and Jesus's birth in Bethlehem, details which are questioned in John 7.41, and suggests that his interlocutors would have known such facts. For Origen, this explains the fact that Jesus's interlocutors claim to know where he is from—his human origins—which Jesus does not deny. But when, in John 8.19, Jesus states, "you know neither me nor my father" he is referring to his divinity (περὶ τῆς θεότητος).[137] The clue here, Origen states, is found in the preceding verses where the

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[135] Origen, *CommJo* 19.2.7 (GCS 10: 299): οὕτως οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ τὸ παρὸν ἡμῖν ζητουμένων ἐκ τῆς συμφράσεως κατανοητέον.
[136] Origen, *CommJo* 19.2.7 (GCS 10: 299).
[137] Origen, CommJo 19.2.7 (GCS 10: 299).

Pharisees claim that Christ testifies concerning himself. Jesus's comment that they do not know him refers, then, to his divinity since he is discussing his divine origins with the father.

4. *Origen, CommMt 16.21-22, "my house shall be a house of prayer, but you have it a lair of brigands" (Mt 21.13)*

In his discussion of the cleansing of the temple in Matthew, Origen draws on a bewildering number of intertextual references which he connects with the co-text of Jesus's statement ("my house shall be a house of prayer").[138] Following a discussion of the literal meaning of the passage (*CommMt* 16.20), Origen turns to considering the significance of this scene for the church, the temple "built from living stones" (ἐκ λίθων ζώντων).[139] He observes how those selling doves resemble the bishops, presbyters and deacons (ἐπισκόποις ἢ πρεσβυτέροις ἢ διακόνοις) who through their greed abandon and betray the members of the church.[140] Origen derives this interpretation of Jesus's words from the co-text—"then he over turned the seats of those selling doves" (τῶν πωλούντων τὰς περιστερὰς καθέδρας) which he connects with Matthew 23.2—"those who haughtily sit on the seat of Moses" (οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς καθέδρας Μωσέως αὐχοῦντες καθέζεσθαι) through the catchword "seat" (καθέδρα) found in the co-text of Jesus's words.[141] More broadly, Origen's choice to discuss "bishops" and church leaders derives from a textual connection between the "temple" in the gospel passage and the "spiritual house" mentioned in 1 Peter 2.5. This example therefore provides further evidence of Origen's use of the co-text of Jesus's words, and not simply Jesus's words themselves, as the basis for drawing on other scriptural intertexts for interpretive purposes.

In addition to these cases, Origen also draws on the literary contexts for interpretive purposes in his scriptural exegesis more generally. These examples further establish Origen's contextual reading practice and provide a wider context in which to consider his literary contextualisation of Jesus's words. Space does not permit discussion of these examples, although consider by way of further illustration,

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[138] Origen, *CommMt* 16.22 (GCS 40: 549-550).
[139] Origen, CommMt 16.21 (GCS 40:546).
[140] Origen, CommMt 16.22 (GCS 40: 549).
[141] Origen, *CommMt* 16.22 (GCS 40: 550). Origen also cites Jer 4.22; Mic 2.9, passages which Origen seems to connect via thematic links, since these discuss the abusive use of leadership (*CommMt* 16.22, GCS 40: 550

Origen's use of the passage surrounding 2 Corinthians 5.7 ("we walk by faith, not by sight"),[142] his appeal to the context of John 13.26 (Judas taking the morsel dipped in the wine),[143] and his use of the sequence of the entry into Jerusalem narrative in *CommMt* 16.18-19.[144]

2.3. The Hermeneutical Significance of Tertullian and Origen's Practice of Co-Textual Reference

The implications of Tertullian and Origen's co-textual reference for early Christian hermeneutics associated with Jesus's words are clear and profound. The contribution this practice makes to the understanding of early Christian hermeneutics is threefold, relating to the *perception* of Jesus's words, the *principles or methods* used to interpret them and the *results or products* of this endeavour of disciplined exegesis. I now discuss each of these points in turn, treating the first two together.

1. *The Development of Interpretive Methods for Reading Jesus's Words: Story and Saying*

First, through their practices of co-textual reference, Tertullian and Origen represent a marked shift away from conventional ways of perceiving and interpreting Jesus's sayings. Whereas their contemporaries use Jesus's words that were at some point part of a larger literary context as fragmentable and isolated sayings, Tertullian and Origen view them as inherently connected to the surrounding anecdote. By drawing on textual details from the co-text, Tertullian and Origen demonstrate the increasing importance of viewing Jesus's words as literarily embedded lines of text.

The shift in the ways that early Christian writers perceived Jesus's words is best glimpsed through comparing Tertullian and Origen's co-textual practices with earlier Christian authors. In the previously discussed examples from Justin, Irenaeus and Clement, there is the growing sense that Jesus's words both belong to, and in themselves constitute, texts. This gradually emerging "literary contextualization" can be organised into three stages of development.

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[142] Origen, *CommJo* 13.53.356 (GCS 10: 282). Origen recommends reading what comes immediately before the verse.
[143] Origen, *CommJo* 32.24.305-306 (GCS 10: 467). Again, in his comments Origen recommends reading what comes before this verse (τοῖς προειρημένοις).
[144] See Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew I,* 16-17 (GCS 40: 535-543).

1. *The use of the narrative frame for dramatic effect* rather than to contextualise or aid in the interpretation of Jesus's saying (Justin, *Dial.* 17.3-4)
2. *The use of other words of Jesus* that lie in close textual proximity to the saying of Jesus in question (Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1); as a further sub-category, *Justin and Irenaeus both attest to the practice of using other parts of a gospel text to clarify Jesus's saying* (Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.13.1; cf. Justin, *Dial.* 17.3-4)
3. *The use of the immediate co-text to clarify and interpret Jesus's saying* (Clement, *EP* 20).

Each of these cases represents an increasingly more intense degree of literary contextualisation applied to Jesus's sayings than the next. In Justin's case, the saying of Jesus clearly evokes its larger narrative context, even if, as I have argued, Justin records the entire narrative not to interpet or contextualise Jesus's words.[145] This matches the early Christian use of pronouncement stories more generally, as discussed in the introduction. In the second stage, Irenaeus moves beyond the conventional listing of sayings for the purposes of proof. Instead, he makes interpretive use of multiple sayings of Jesus, employing one group of sayings to interpret another pronouncement. There is now an interest in interpreting, and not merely citing, Jesus's sayings. At one level, it is significant that Irenaeus locates the meaning of Jesus's words through other sayings, and not through a narrative context. Yet it is hard to think of how Irenaeus could have more closely appealed to the "immediate literary context" since the context of Jesus's sayings is the Sermon on the Mount, which Matthew presents as an extended dialogue. Third, Irenaeus's use of other *narrative* parts of the Gospel is a significant step towards literary contextualization. While this does not constitute use of the immediate literary context, underlying this practice is the recognition that the larger context of a work (for instance, Matthew's Gospel) can be brought to bear on individual units of teaching within that same work.

In the fourth and final stage, Clement, like Tertullian and Origen after him, fashion a fresh interpretation of Jesus's words by employing the *immediate literary context*. What is the significance of this shift for the early Christian perception of Jesus tradition? I would like to suggest that this interpretive use of the literary context of Jesus's sayings reflects the growing awareness that Jesus's words are textually

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[145] Justin, *1 Apol.* 17.1-4 (see Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 120-121).

embedded and, more significantly, that the relationship of Jesus's words to texts required hermeneutical reflection. That one finds strong evidence for this shift in the writings of Origen is most obvious from the fact that he writes commentaries *on entire gospel texts*. The same can be said of Tertullian's *Adversus Marcionem*, and to a certain extent, of Clement's *Quis Dives Salvetur*, which resembles a homily on the Rich Young Ruler passage. In these commentaries or commentary-like works, each author does not simply cite Jesus's sayings but draws on the literary context for explicitly interpretive purposes. The commentary/commentary-like genre inherently involves the tasks of establishing a text in its literary and historical contexts. I would submit that the presence of the commentary/commentary-like genre in the corpus of each author might help to explain their various uses of literary context in their other works. Having honed the hermeneutic in commentaries, where one was expected to attend to the literary context, these authors continued to apply the same reading strategies in occasional writings and other works that do not conform to the commentary genre. Assessing the use of Jesus tradition diachronically allows the contribution of Tertullian and Origen to come into fuller view: when Tertullian and Origen re-use Jesus's words, those words almost always evoke the immediate literary context in which the Jesus tradition is considered to have resided. While they might not supply the *entire* story, nevertheless they refer in subtle ways to that self-same, larger narrative to clarify and interpret Jesus's words.

The intensity of Tertullian and Origen's literary contextualisation of Jesus's sayings naturally raises the question, What explains Tertullian and Origen employ the literary context of Jesus's sayings in an interpretive fashion, especially when their predecessors were only doing so in an *ad hoc* manner, if at all? I will discuss this question in the chapter 4, where I will provide an account of the reasons for the divergence between Tertullian and Origen, on the one hand, and earlier early Christian writers, on the other. For now, it is enough to note that the prevalence of this way of reading Jesus's words as isolated sayings strongly suggests that Tertullian and Origen's contextual reading practices were far from inevitable. Rather, their decision to draw on the co-text forms but one choice among a number of other alternatives.

2. *The Exegetical Results: A New Type of Textual Boundedness*

While this was a seemingly fresh way of conceiving of Jesus's words, what was its practical impact on the interpretation of Jesus tradition? That is, does Tertullian and Origen's employment of literary context actually signal a discernible shift in the exegesis of Jesus's words? This question deserves serious thought since it could theoretically be the case that the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation produces the same interpretive variety as is witnessed in the early Christian use of Jesus's sayings more generally. In her influential monograph, *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire*, Teresa Morgan notes that Greek and Roman authors assumed that the words of the wise were universal or general rules of thumb that the interpreter could apply according to the specific situation at hand.[146] The result was a variety of interpretations of the one maxim. And at first glance, the evidence gleaned from Origen and Tertullian seems to suggest that both authors also held to this assumption.[147] The "render" command, for instance, is interpreted as a call to asceticism by Origen, as a plea to martyrdom by Tertullian, as a command to pay one's taxes by both, and appears more broadly within Christological and theological debates. By way of illustration, the table below (table 5) lists five areas of application for the "render" command. This variety in application shows that both authors perceived a single saying to relate to matters closely connected with the immediate context of the biographical account (taxation), while also transcending this narrative to speak to issues that seem to stretch the literary context to breaking point (for instance, martyrdom). Such interpretive variety would appear to reflect the natural way in which Roman authors viewed and used the words of wise figures.[148]

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[146] Morgan, *Popular Morality*, 19–21.

[147] In the case of Origen, multiple interpretations appear within a single work (see, for instance, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 and *CommMt* 17.26-28, both on the tribute passage).

[148] Thus G. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus* (Oxford Bible Series; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 229 "…an aphorism as a general truth makes a powerful point in its present context, but it could also make good sense in a very different context". See also D.-A. Koch, "Die Kontroverse über die Steuer (Mt 22,15-22 / Mk 12, 13-17 / Lk 20,20-26)", in G. Van Belle and J. Verheyden (eds.), *Christ and the Emperor: Gospel Evidence* (BTS 20; Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 203–228 (222-223).

Table 5: List of early Christian writings referencing the "render" command and the area to which the author applied the saying.

Area of Application of the "Render" Maxim	Text
Asceticism	Origen *CommMt* 17.27; Origen, *CommRom* 9.25; Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* 39; cf. Clement, *Eclogae Propheticae* 24.
Religio-Politics	Tertullian, *De Corona* 12; Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* 39; Origen *CommMt* 17.25-26.
Martyrdom	Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.8-10; Tertullian, *De Corona* 12
Christology	Origen, *CommMatt* 13.10; cf. Irenaeus, *AH* 3.8.1
Theology	Tertullian, *AM* 4.38.4

The crucial difference with Tertullian and Origen, however, is that authoritative religious texts appear to have suggested a significantly new kind of textual *boundedness* to the variety of interpretations of Jesus's sayings. For Origen and Tertullian, the words of Jesus, and particularly his climactic sayings, do not travel in complete independence from their narrative moorings. Even when both authors apply Jesus's words to issues that might appear unrelated to the context of the anecdote, they do so while using words and phrases from that narrative to shape their interpretation of Jesus's saying. The anecdote appears to have functioned for these two authors like a new norming principle, guiding the interpretation of Jesus's words. As we noted in the introduction, to the extent that authors used texts to interpret a maxim, they employed the text of the maxim (and other texts associated with it).[149] Tertullian and Origen, however, argue that the text of the anecdote provides at once a more expansive and rigid textual boundary for interpreting Jesus's words. The boundary for interpreting is more expansive because it stretches beyond the saying to encompass the larger story. This might lead one to think that the interpretations for Jesus's sayings would become innumerable, and perhaps even arbitrarily so. The textual boundary is more rigid than this, however. Tertullian and Origen suggest that the issues to which

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[149] Morgan, *Popular*, 185 speaks of "guidelines" provided in the culture as well as in the wording of the maxim itself. This is a point also made by Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 41.

a given saying of Jesus could speak depended on the saying's co-text, and not simply the saying itself.

This boundedness is most obvious with Tertullian who frequently invokes the textual borders of the anecdote in a conservative and argumentative fashion with the aim of confining the reading of Jesus's climactic sayings to the limits of the co-text. Thus, because Jesus refers to the "the things of the Caesar" as the *denarius* in the original context, Tertullian argues that his opponents are incorrect to use the command to defend paying a bribe or to avoid persecution.[150] It is perhaps surprising, although no less apparent, that Origen also views texts as circumscribing the variety of ways of reading Jesus's memorable pronouncements. The reason that this might appear unexpected is because Origen was famous for his exposition of the threefold significance of biblical texts.[151] Origen was not one to limit the meaning of a scriptural passage or verse. Yet by consciously selecting and placing religious texts in relationship with the sayings of Jesus (often on the basis of catchword and thematic commonalities), Origen assumes that there is a textual system of meaning that provides the normative parameters in which to read and interpret Jesus's words. Origen is, to be sure, far more willing than Tertullian to expand the boundaries of that system by drawing an increasing number of texts into relationship with Jesus's sayings. Yet the same hermeneutic, which interprets the pronouncement of Jesus in light of its literary contexts and not simply the situation of the reader, is clearly at work in both authors.

To appreciate the normative function of the literary context for both authors is not to say that it played precisely the same role in their two works. Literary contexts clearly functioned in different ways for Tertullian and Origen, as witnessed in the stark contrast between each author's style and motives.[152] Tertullian's engagement in highly polemical and controversial contexts often results in a highly argumentative re-use of co-textual details, driven by a desire to prove that his reading trumps all others. For Tertullian, the literary context of the anecdote circumscribes the significance of Jesus's words by tethering the meaning of his saying to specific details in the co-text. Co-textual details therefore primarily serve refutatory ends in his works. In his use of the *denarius* in *De Fuga*, Tertullian defines "the things of Caesar" as the coin, thus ruling

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[150] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.8, 9 (CCSL 2:1152-1153).

[151] See Origen, *PA* 4.2.4 (OECT: 496-499). For a discussion of this three-fold hermeneutic, see Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 138.

[152] The distinctive approaches of each author are well known. See, for instance, D. Wright, "Tertullian", in P.F. Esler (ed.), *The Early Christian World, Volume 2* (London: Routledge, 2000) 1027-1047.

out his opponents' apparent attempts to avoid persecution. He employs the same co-textual detail in his *De Corona* in an effort to refute the idea that the "render" command justified receiving the imperial donative as a Christian soldier. Tertullian prioritises co-textual details over and against his opponents supposed decontextualised re-uses of Jesus's saying.

Whereas Tertullian's style of textual re-use is predominantly argumentative in nature, for Origen, the text of the anecdote is not merely a restrictive boundary that rules out the readings of rival Christians. Rather, the co-text allows Origen to draw on an ever-increasing number of intertexts to open up new interpretations of Jesus's climactic saying. The exhortative use of Jesus's sayings in Origen's homilies clearly demonstrates his pastoral use of those pronouncements, and their textual contexts. The text of the anecdote, for Origen, often raises additional scriptural intertexts linked to the co-text by catchword association or theme. Thus, it was seen that in his *Homily on Luke*, Origen employs the catchword "image"—from the image on Caesar's coin—to draw together texts from across the Christian scriptures and thus strengthen his ascetic interpretation of the "render" command.[153] For Origen, the congregation's reading is to include the "simple" reading of the climactic saying ("pay your taxes"), although, crucially, it is not to stop there. This example, and others, show that it is not that Origen refrains from using textual details for polemical purposes. Rather, when Origen does use Jesus's sayings and co-textual details in an argumentative fashion, he often does not provide one singular reading but suggests that multiple interpretations could harmoniously exist alongside one another.[154]

Ultimately, the differences between Tertullian and Origen largely arise from their differing assumptions about the purpose of Jesus's words and their textual contexts—for Tertullian, co-texts largely function as weapons utilised in an urgent rhetorical war, whereas for Origen, they act like keys that unlock new worlds of meaning for the benefit of the reader.[155] Although there are differences in method and motivation between Origen and Tertullian, both nevertheless assume that the co-text provides the bounds within which to interpret and ethically apply the moral sayings of

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[153] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454).
[154] The example from *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23) also establishes this point. See chapter 3 for further discussion.
[155] See Origen, *Philocalia* 2.3 (*Commentary on the Psalms* 1; SC 302: 244.4-17) in which Origen writes that scriptural interpretation consists of finding the keys and matching them to the rooms which they are able to open.

Jesus. What each author has in common hermeneutically, then, is ultimately greater than what divides them. For both writers, the literary context forms the normative guidelines within which to explore the ethical significance of Jesus's words. While Tertullian and Origen certainly give a single saying of Jesus a variety of interpretations, they shape these readings via the immediately literary context of his words.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that when Tertullian and Origen employ Jesus's climactic sayings, they frequently attend to the textual context of the co-text, or larger anecdote. I have observed that when each author draws on co-textual references, they do so to varying ends and in various different ways. Tertullian and Origen's re-use of co-textual reference ranged from the use of lexemes to phrases and from generic mentions of the "passage" to the use of figures from the story. In terms of motive, whereas Tertullian frequently employs the co-text in polemical conflicts, Origen's primary *modus operandi* is to use Jesus's sayings and their immediate contexts for the positive ends of theological speculation and exhorting and encouraging his ecclesial community.

For all of this diversity, Tertullian and Origen are united by the assumption that the immediate textual context formed the basis for interpreting the words of Jesus. Their use of literary contextualisation represents a significant development in the perception of Jesus's words and the methods used to interpret them. The novelty of Tertullian and Origen's achievement—as well as its points of continuity with previous authors—is best glimpsed when set within the context of broader patterns of reading among early Christian authors. I have shown that early Christian authors before Tertullian rarely refer to the immediate context of Jesus's words. Origen and Tertullian, by contrast, assume and explicitly acknowledge that the text of the anecdote provides the limits within which to interpret Jesus's climactic statements. Tertullian and Origen's employment of co-textual details resulted in a new textual boundedness for the interpretations of Jesus's sayings. There was both variety (and emphatically *not* uniformity) in their interpretation of Jesus's words, and yet this variety was also *textually circumscribed* by the immediate literary context of Jesus's words.

Chapter 3— Jesus's Words as Scriptural Texts: Literary Contextualisation Through Intertextual Reference

Beyond the narrower re-use of co-textual details, Tertullian and Origen also drew more widely on scriptural texts when employing Jesus's sayings. Much like the Homeric corpus, both the Hebrew scriptures and the writings that would become the New Testament increasingly came to be seen in the Roman period not only as a library of discrete texts, but as a single book connected by common subject matter that shared words, content, phrases, ideas and themes.[1] This chapter examines Tertullian and Origen's use of inter-textual references when employing the climactic sayings of Jesus. By intertextual reference, I refer to each author's purposeful re-use of scriptural texts from outside the co-text, scriptural texts which the authors employ to interpret Jesus's words.[2] While the notion of scripture or even a canon was still under development during this period, both authors employ Jesus's sayings alongside a slowly-forming body of scriptural texts.[3] In so doing, these authors suggest, and in some cases explicitly claim, that Jesus's sayings and scriptural writings more broadly formed a single system of meaning that was self-referential and mutually informative.

The major contention of this chapter can be stated as follows: by interpreting Jesus's sayings through scriptural intertexts, Tertullian and Origen re-conceive of his words as an inherent part of a larger scriptural corpus. This requires further precision, however, since their predecessors were also linking Jesus's words with scriptural texts. I contend that Tertullian and Origen begin to draw on scriptural texts *through verbal associations with the co-text of Jesus's words, and not through the saying of Jesus itself*. I suggest that their use of the literary context of Jesus's sayings when employing intertexts again forms part of a larger shift towards perceiving and re-using Jesus's words as texts and not merely as disembodied, non-contextualised sayings. The impact on the interpretation of Jesus's sayings is complex. On the one hand, both authors produce textually-bounded interpretations by establishing their readings in and through the literary context of Jesus's sayings. On the other, the number of

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[1] Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 133.

[2] The bibliography on intertextuality in early Christianity is legion. On intertextuality in the patristic period, see D. J. Bingham and C. N. Jefford (eds.), *Intertextuality in the Second Century* (Bible in Ancient Christianity 11; Leiden: Brill, 2016); Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 119-139 (116).

[3] On the development of the canon in the patristic period, see von Campenhausen, *Formation of the Christian Bible*, 269-326.

interpretations created by this method is numerically far greater than if an author was to draw on an intertext *through the words of Jesus alone*. The use of intertexts to read Jesus's words therefore simultaneously expands the number of interpretations even as it roots them in a fairly solid textual unit (namely, the co-text).

While constituting an essential part of Tertullian and Origen's hermeneutic of textual contextualisation, I hasten to add that intertextual reference does represent a weaker form of literary contextualisation when compared with the practice of co-textual reference and anecdote reproduction. This is the case for two reasons. First, in some cases in which Tertullian and Origen use Jesus's words alongside scriptural texts, the immediate literary context of the anecdote disappears. In these situations, Origen and Tertullian often follow their predecessors in connecting the scriptural intertext to Jesus's saying, rather than the anecdote. Second, Tertullian and Origen at certain points adhere to the pattern of earlier authors by simply placing scriptural texts alongside Jesus's words—that is, they do not use these texts to interpret, explain or clarify the meaning of Jesus's words, but instead to argue their case or refute that of an opponent. Granted these caveats, the phenomenon of intertextual reference still contributes to the cumulative case made throughout this study. To this end, the argument unfolds in three parts with the first section examining initial intertextual strategies among Tertullian and Origen's predecessors, the second presenting the data for Tertullian and Origen's intertextual reading practices and the third showing its significance for early Christian hermeneutics.

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Before discussing the evidence, however, it is necessary to offer a precise definition of intertextual reference and explain my method for identifying such textual re-use. For the purposes of this discussion, intertextual reference denotes a shared analogy between two or more texts which appear in different contexts that is drawn often on the basis of a shared lexeme or thematic correspondence.[4] I use the term intertextual reference synonymously with inner-biblical reference, while recognizing that some see the former as more reader-centred and the latter as author-centred. In

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[4] See C. Kannengiesser, "The Formation of the Scriptural Canon" in *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis* (The Bible in Ancient Christianity 1; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006) I: 392-403 (398).

light of this discussion, I wish to underscore that the instances of scriptural re-use discussed *emerge purposefully from the patristic author's re-use* rather than from my own discovery as a reader.[5] It is worth stressing that the intertextual references proposed belong to the early Christian writer. In claiming that Origen, for example, is connecting two seemingly disparate texts, I am not adopting a reader-response approach but rather discussing what I consider to be a feature of Origen's reading practice.

While offering a definition of intertextual reference is relatively simple, the problems involved with *identifying* scriptural re-use should not be overlooked. How do we know when Tertullian or Origen is drawing on a word or phrase from scripture? As with my discussion of co-textual re-use, I follow Tooman's attempts to establish broad rules by which one can identify textual reuse. Tertullian and Origen frequently introduce the intertext by noting the author or passage cited. On other occasions, the association is much subtler, amounting to a single word or phrase. In these cases, I follow Tooman in examining the uniqueness of the element in question to its source, and thematic correspondence between the borrowed text and the text being composed.[6]

Intertextual reference has clear precedents, which I discuss in chapter 4, in both rabbinic and pagan literature. Tertullian and Origen also seem to draw on a variety of reasons to justify the practice. Tertullian appeals on numerous occasions to the well-known rhetorical trope of interpreting an unclear text by many passages within an author's work, rather than employing that text in isolation.[7] Origen appeals to scripture itself as a warrant for intertextuality. Paul offers a precedent when he "compares spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor 2.13) and calls for "two or three witnesses" to establish a matter (2 Cor 13.1; Deut 19.15).[8] One might also recall the quote from

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[5] I employ some of the insights of intertextuality while attempting to locate "inner-biblical" references. Thus, the references I discuss are the result of textual relationships which I argue derive from the author. For a helpful discussion that distinguishes between intertextuality and inner-biblical exegesis and inner-biblical allusion of these terms, see R. L. Meek, "Intertextuality, Inner-Biblical Exegesis, and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Ethics of a Methodology", *Biblica* 95.2 (2014): 280-291. Intertextuality as conventionally applied refers to the "synchronic study of textual relationships, in which responsibility for determining textual relationships rests with the reader, there is little or no concern for proving that such a relationship resulted from authorial intent" (284), and "intertextuality presupposes that the connection of texts lies solely with the reader".

[6] Tooman *Gog of Magog*, 27-8, 29-30.

[7] See *Adv. Prax.* 26.1 (CCSL 2: 1200); *de. pud.* 17.18 (SC 394: 244-245). See also J. F. Jansen, "Tertullian and the New Testament", *SecCen* 2 (1982): 191-207 (203-204).

[8] For references, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 61n122.

Origen's *Commentary on the Psalms* wherein he refers to scriptural texts as rooms unlocked not by the text at hand, but by other texts.

> According to that most pleasing tradition handed down to us by a Hebrew, the whole inspired scripture resembles, because of its obscurity, many rooms that are locked shut in one house. A key lies next to each room, but it does not correspond to the room, and so the keys for the rooms are scattered, each failing to correspond to those rooms which they lie beside. And it is a great labour both to discover the keys and to match them to the rooms which they are able to open. *Therefore, we come to understand these obscure Scriptures when we take starting points for understanding them not from any other place than from other passages which have the interpretation dispersed throughout them.* At any rate, I think that even the apostle suggests a similar way for understanding the divine words when he says: "And we speak these things not in words taught by human wisdom but in those words taught by the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things".[9]

This quote requires urgent comment, since it would seem to suggest that Origen does not interpret Jesus's words by drawing on their *immediate context* but by instead looking to other texts beyond the co-text—"from other passages which have the interpretation dispersed through them".[10] I would suggest that it is important not simply to take Origen's *explicitly stated hermeneutic* at face value but instead also examine the patterns of his re-use of Jesus's words. In doing so, a more significant question arises: *on what basis* does Origen draw on intertexts to interpret the text in question? Or, to put the question in more relevant terms for our discussion: how does Origen, or Tertullian for that matter, draw on scriptural texts to interpret the words of Jesus? As I will explore further below, both authors at times connect scriptural texts with Jesus's words on the basis of those words themselves. This strategy, I argue, perpetuates the older model of viewing Jesus's words as sayings. Crucially, however, each author moves beyond this paradigm by also employing scriptural texts on the basis of their connections with the co-text of Jesus's saying. This raises two conclusions: first, that Tertullian and Origen did not consider the significance of Jesus's words to derive simply from those words themselves, but also from their immediate literary context, and scriptural texts verbally associated with that co-text. This suggests, secondly, that Tertullian and Origen are beginning to consciously reflect on the exegetical and hermeneutical significance of the fact that Jesus's words constitute embedded lines of text.

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[9] Origen, *Philocalia* 2.3 (from *Commentary on the Psalms* 1; SC 302: 244.4–17).
[10] Origen, *Philocalia* 2.3 (from *Commentary on the Psalms* 1; SC 302: 244.4–17).

3.1. The Beginnings: Intertextual Reference in Early Christian Authors

In the period prior to Tertullian and Origen, a large number of cases exist in which early Christian authors place Jesus's words in relation to a body of texts considered to be religiously authoritative. In this section, I distinguish these earlier cases of intertextual reference from the intertextual practices of Tertullian and Origen in two ways: first, earlier authors connect the intertext with Jesus's saying via the text of Jesus's words, rather than its immediate literary context. Second, in the majority of cases, early Christian authors employ scriptural intertexts alongside Jesus's sayings as proofs. That is, these authors do not employ scriptural intertexts to explicitly *interpret, clarify or explicate* Jesus's words. Of course, *part* of their motivation might have been to explain the significance of Jesus's saying. Their primary focus, however, appears to have rarely rested on the meaning of Jesus's sayings, perhaps because the meaning was thought to be obvious to them and their audience. Instead, Jesus's words become the means of proving the argument at hand. Both points, I contend, suggest the enduring importance of the older model of reading Jesus's words as non-contextualised sayings.

Three important examples of Justin's use of intertexts demonstrate the pervasiveness of this older model of re-use. In *Dialogue* 18.1, Justin notes that he has prefaced three "short sayings" (βραχέα λόγια) of Jesus to three passages from Isaiah (52.5; 3.9-11; 5.18- 20).[11] The context of Justin's scriptural citation is a discussion concerning the supposed treatment of Christ and his followers by "the Jews". By remorselessly crucifying Christ and spreading "ugly rumours" about Christians, "the Jews", Justin argues, fulfil various Isaianic prophecies.[12] Justin follows these Old Testament citations with three references to the "sayings" of Jesus, beginning with Jesus's address to the money-changers in the temple where he refers to the temple as a house of prayer (Mt 21.13), and appends to this two sets of woes against the scribes and Pharisees (Mt 23.23 and Mt Mt 23.13).[13] It is difficult to discern Justin's rationale for linking the cleansing of the temple incident with the Isaianic passages, although it is perhaps the theme of supposed Jewish error that motivates his choice. The woes

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[11] Justin, *Dial*. 18.1 (Marcovitch, *Dialogis*, 99): "Since you, Trypho, admit that you have read the teachings of him who is our Saviour, I do not consider it out of place to have added those few short sayings of his to those from the prophets".

[12] Justin, *Dial.* 17. (Marcovitch, *Dialogis*, 98-99).

[13] Justin, *Dial.* 17 (Marcovitch, *Dialogis*, 990).

sayings are easier to explain since they share the catchword "οὐαί" with the text of Isaiah (Isa 3.9-11 LXX; Isa 5.18-20 LXX). Notably, Jesus's words form the basis for Justin's use of scriptural texts. Moreover, he does not use these scriptural texts to either explicitly contextualise or interpret Jesus's words so much as to form a larger proof of argument.

Similarly, in his *1 Apology* 61, Justin connects a saying of Jesus with other Old Testament passages in his discussion of the practice of baptism. Having cited the words of Christ, "Unless you are born again you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven", Justin provides a lengthy citation from Isaiah 1.16-20 to support his view that Christians are separated from their sins at baptism.[14] Justin appears to link the material on the basis of the shared theme of repentance. Later in this section, Justin argues that it was Christ who was revealed through the fire in the Exodus through employing two sayings of Jesus (Lk 10.16; Mt 11.27 and Lk 10.22) alongside a citation from Isaiah, and the episode of the Burning Bush in Exodus.[15] Finally, Justin connects the latter saying ("No one knew the Father except the Son or the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son should reveal him") with Isaiah 1.3, "The ox knew its owner", through the catchword, "know" (εἶδεν). Once more, Justin employs the text of Jesus's saying to establish an intertextual network. And once again, he does not use these scriptural texts to clarify the significance or meaning of Jesus's saying so much as to make a demonstration of his point. That Justin's focus lies elsewhere than the interpretation of Jesus's words is clear from his concluding remarks to this section, where he writes that "those sayings (οἱ λόγοι) *were made as a demonstration* (ἀπόδειξιν) that Jesus Christ is Son of God and apostle and was formerly Logos and was sometimes revealed in the form of fire".[16] The sayings of Jesus and their meaning are not the ends themselves, but rather the means to the end of demonstrating a larger argument.

No discussion of early Christian intertextual practices—or indeed of early Christian hermeneutics more broadly—would be complete without treating the work

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[14] Justin, *1 Apol*. 61 (Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 241): "Wash, become clean, put off your wicked deeds from your souls, learn to do good…". The source of Jesus's words is disputed.

[15] Justin, *1 Apol*. 63-1-10 (Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 244-247). Ex 3.2: "And an angel of God spoke to Moses in a flame of fire"; Ex 3.6, 10, "I am who is. God of Abraham…Go down to Egypt and lead out my people". Scholars have found it difficult to locate the source of these two sayings of Jesus. First, version of Lk 10.16 (The one who hears me hears the one who sent me"). Second—version of Mt 11.27 and Lk 10.22 ("No one knew the Father except the Son or the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son should reveal him").

[16] Justin, 1 *Apol*. 63.10 (Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 246-247).

and thought of Irenaeus of Lyons.[17] Unlike Justin, Irenaeus explicitly develops a more robust hermeneutical theory for the reading of scripture.[18] Particularly relevant for understanding his re-use of Jesus's sayings is Irenaeus's discussion of the "plot" (Gk.: ὑπόθεσις; Lat.: *argumentatio*) of scripture. Irenaeus comments on scripture's "plot" in an important passage in his *Adversus Haereses*, which merits full citation.

> . . . they attempt to adapt, in a plausible manner, to their assertions either the parables of the Lord (*parabolas dominicas*), the sayings of the prophets, or the words of the apostles, in order that their fiction may not appear to be unattested. They disregard the order (*ordinem*) and the connection (*textum*) of the Scriptures and, so far as in them lies, disjoint the members of the truth. Moreover, by transferring and rearranging passages, and making one thing out of another, they deceive many by adapting the words of the Lord (*dominicis eloquiis*) to badly composed fantasy. Indeed, it is as if one would take an accurate image of a king, which was carefully constructed out of precious stones by a skillful artist, destroy the existing image of the man, change around and rearrange those stones, and make the form of a dog or of a fox…In the same way these people cobble together old wives's fables, and, then, plucking words (*sermones*), sayings (*dictiones*), and parables (*parabolas*) from here and there, they want to adapt the words of God to their myths…[19]

In this rich passage, Irenaeus rebukes his opponents for their use of a wrong *hypothesis* which leads them to fragment parts of scripture so that they fit their agenda. Irenaeus is less concerned with their practice of *literary non-contextualisation* and more with the fact that they seek to follow a *hypothesis* different to the one that derives from scripture. It is not the abstraction of texts from their context *per se* that provokes Irenaeus's ire. Rather, it is their selection of texts *to fit an incorrect hypothesis* that is so egregious to Irenaeus. To be sure, Irenaeus understands the error of his opponents to *partially* consist of literary non-contextualisation—the removal of words from their literary contexts.[20] This becomes clear in his presentation of a Homeric cento, composed of disparate lines from the Homeric corpus.[21] Irenaeus mocks his

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[17] See now A. Briggman, *God and Christ in Irenaeus* (OECS; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019) 9-32; *idem*, "Irenaeus, Part 1", 500-527; *idem*., "Irenaeus, Part 2", 31–50. See also J. Behr, "Scripture and Gospel: Intertextuality in Irenaeus" in D. J. Bingham and C. N. Jefford (eds.), *Intertextuality in the Second Century* (Bible in Ancient Christianity 11; Leiden: Brill, 2016) 179-194; S. O. Presley, "The *Demonstration* of Intertextuality in Irenaeus of Lyons" in *ibid.*, 195-214.

[18] For the rhetorical and grammatical underpinnings of his hermeneutical theory, see Briggman, *God and Christ*, 9-70.

[19] Irenaeus, *haer.* 1.8.1 (SC 264: 112-115). See also 1.9.4 (SC 264: 146-147): "Then, once more collecting a set of expressions (*dictiones*) and names (*nomina*) scattered here and there, they twist them, as we have already said, from a natural sense to what is against the natural sense".

[20] As Briggman, "Irenaeus, Part 1", 505 rightly notes, "Irenaeus contends, his Gnostic opponents abstract verses, names, and expressions from Scripture and rearrange them such that they support a plot, narrative, or subject-matter other than that articulated by Scripture". "they are mis-handling scriptural texts by abstracting them from their original contexts and rearranging them" (521).

[21] Irenaeus, *haer.* 1.9.4. (SC 264: 148-149).

opponents' reading strategy by presenting a series of disconnected lines from the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* to prove the plot that Hercules travelled to the infernal regions on the order of Eurystheus.[22] In fact, no such thing happens in the original narrative. Irenaeus's point is that this plot does not exist if one reads the lines according to their order and proper context.[23]

Such an error is seemingly undone in two steps— "returning each word to its proper place" (*Unumquemque autem sermonum reddens suo ordini*) and "adapting them to the body of truth" (*et aptans veritatis corpusculo*).[24] The first step, "returning each word to its proper place", explicitly evokes the principle of literary contextualisation—reading a line within its immediate literary context. Irenaeus's use of the language of order/sequence (*ordo*) mirrors Origen's later appeals to reading Jesus's words according to the sequence (*ordo*; τάξις) of the passage in which those words appear.[25] This demonstrates clear parallels and continuity between the two authors in the terminology used to explain the interpretive process. Yet Irenaeus's comment also sits beside a reference to an additional textual context—the "body of truth" (*veritatis corpusculo*). While Irenaeus's hermeneutic explicitly mentions the importance of the immediate literary context for the correct interpretation of a text, on closer inspection, this gives way to the "plot" of scripture, as guaranteed in the rule of faith—the summary of scripture's contents.[26] Irenaeus is also concerned, then, with the context, order and message of scripture as a whole. Moreover, Irenaeus elsewhere guarantees the plot of scripture through an additional context—that of the community of the Church which guarantees the deposit of the scriptural *hypothesis*. Irenaeus concludes his discussion by distinguishing the "spirits of error" that guide the heretics from the church which preaches the firm Truth.[27] In fact, the church's handing down of the rule of truth serves as an *a priori* proof—one that precedes any demonstration from the evidence—for any scriptural interpretation.

What does Irenaeus's discussion of plot tell us about his use of the literary context of Jesus's words? To begin with, we must acknowledge that Irenaeus's statements

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[22] Irenaeus, *haer.* 1.9.4. (SC 264: 148-149).
[23] Briggman, "Irenaeus, Part 1", 504-505.
[24] Irenaeus, *haer.* 1.9.4. (SC 264: 148-149).
[25] See 1.2, section 5 above (Origen, *CommMt* 17.25-26).
[26] See Ireaneus, *haer.* 4.35.4 (SC 100: 874-876). For a clear summary of the rule of truth, see P. Parvis, "Who was Irenaeus: An Introduction to the Man and his Work" in P. Foster and S. Parvis (eds.), *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012) 13-24 (20).
[27] Irenaeus, *haer.* 1.9.5. (SC 264: 150-153).

about restoring words to their "order" forms a significant precedent for the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words found in Tertullian and Origen. As I have noted, however, Irenaeus's explicit hermeneutic also contains an appeal to a much broader literary context than the immediate narrative of Jesus's words—namely, the plot of scripture. How does this scriptural context fit with the immediate literary context? I now wish to show that Irenaeus far more frequently follows the scriptural context rather than the immediate literary context of Jesus's words. This focus on the scriptural context of Jesus's words, I suggest, in effect results in perpetuating the older model of "Jesus sayings", whereby Jesus's pronouncements are read apart their immediate literary contexts. Irenaeus's *actual practice* of using Jesus's words alongside scriptural texts demonstrates the significance of the "scriptural" context, rather than the immediate co-text. There is something of a divergence, then, in Irenaeus's explicit statements and his actual practice of textual re-use.

In his important study of Irenaeus's use of Matthew, D. Jeffrey Bingham notes that Irenaeus most frequently links Jesus's sayings from Matthew with verses or passages from Paul.[28] Bingham also claims that Irenaeus associates the texts for explicitly interpretive purposes; on some occasions the Pauline texts explain Jesus's sayings while, on others, the reverse is true.[29] An example of the former, is Irenaeus's use of Romans 4.3 to clarify the significance of John 8.56 in *Haer*. 4.5.3.[30] "He said to the Jews, 'your father Abraham rejoiced that he should see my day; and he saw it and was glad'. For what is this? (*Quid enim*) 'Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness'". It is striking that Irenaeus does not draw on the immediate co-text of Jesus's saying to clarify its significance, but instead looks to Paul. Irenaeus draws the intertextual connection from the text of Jesus's saying which shares the catchword *Abraham* with Romans 4.3. This suggests that while Irenaeus interprets Jesus's words in light of scriptural contexts, he nevertheless continues to view Jesus's words as independent sayings whose significance derives not from their immediate literary context, but from the text of the sayings themselves.[31]

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[28] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 301.

[29] Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 301. For examples of the former, see *Haer*. 2.26.1 (SC 294: 256-259) and, a more significant case of *interpretive* intertextuality, *Haer*. 5.9.1 (SC 153: 106-109).

[30] Irenaeus, *haer*. 4.5.3 (SC 100: 432-433).

[31] See also Irenaeus's use of 2 Cor 5.4 ("not that we would be unclothed but that we would be further clothed, that mortality might be swallowed up by immortality") as a gloss for the Jesus's use of the wedding garment in the parable of the wedding feast (Mt 22.1-14) in *Haer* 4.36.5-6 (SC 100: 902-903).

Another striking example appears in *Haer*. 4.20.1-4a in which Irenaeus links together Malachi 2.10, Ephesians 4.6 and Jesus's saying from Matthew 11.27 to prove that Christ reveals the one true God revealed in the prophets.[32] The context of Irenaeus's use of these scriptural intertexts is a polemical one, in which Jesus's saying is the subject of debate—"No one knows the Son, but the Father; and no one knows the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son has willed to reveal him". Irenaeus earlier explains that his opponents invert this saying so that it reads, "No one knows the *Father* except the Son, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and the one to whom the Son has revealed him".[33] In so doing, Irenaeus explains, his opponents contend that the true God was not known prior to Christ's advent and that the prophets reveal a god different to the God of Christ. In response, Irenaeus draws together proofs to demonstrate the importance of Christ's role in the one God's creative action. He connects Jesus's words ("all things are delivered to me by my father") to Malachi 2.10 and Ephesians 4.6 through the catchword *omnia* ("all things").[34] Much like Justin, Irenaeus does not employ scriptural texts to interpret Jesus's sayings so much as to form a catena of sayings that prove his argument.[35] He attempts to refute his opponents's translation of Jesus's saying by drawing on other scriptural texts that prove his argument.[36] Most importantly, Irenaeus connects these texts to Jesus's saying through the wording of Jesus's statement which contains the catchword *omnia*. In doing so, he continues to assume that Jesus's words are best used as independent sayings rather than lines of text embedded within a larger passage.

In turning to examine Clement's intertextual reference, one observes both continuities and discontinuities with his predecessors. First, much like Justin and Irenaeus, Clement frequently employs scriptural texts on the basis of connections with Jesus's words themselves. At the same time, he builds more intensely on Irenaeus's example by seeking to interpret and draw out the significance of Jesus's words rather

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[32] Irenaeus, *haer*. 4.20.1-4a (SC 100: 624-629). See S. O. Presley, *The Intertextual Reception of Genesis 1–3 in Irenaeus of Lyons* (The Bible in Ancient Christianity 8; Leiden: Brill, 2015) 253-254.

[33] Irenaeus, *haer*. 4.6.1 (SC 100: 436-439).

[34] See Presley, *Intertextual*, 253.

[35] See also Irenaeus's use of Isaiah 29.13 when citing Jesus's discussion of the seat of Moses (Mt 23.2-3) in *AH* 4.12.4 (SC 100: 516-519). Interestingly, Origen uses the same two texts (see Chapter 2, Excursus, section 4).

[36] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108 considers this an example of attention to the "written Gospels". This is true, although is an entirely different thing from awareness of the "literary context" of Jesus's sayings. In fact, Irenaeus does not provide any explicit evidence that he wishes to employ the literary context in this case.

than merely placing them in conjunction with scriptural texts. An important case that demonstrates both of these tendencies is found in his scriptural notebook, *Eclogae Propheticae* ("Prophetic Extracts"; hereafter *EP*).[37]

In an excerpt flooded with biblical intertexts, Clement describes the filial redemption and liberty experienced by the baptised (*EP* 20).[38] Through baptism in Christ, Clement argues, believers are made co-heirs of the one heavenly father and are willingly led by fear and love from their sins to salvation in Christ. Clement employs the "Mother and Brother" saying of Jesus (Mt 12.50 and parallels)—introduced with the typical formula, φησὶν ὁ κύριος—alongside three additional scriptural intertexts: Romans 8.17 ("children and coheirs"), Matthew 23.9 ("call no one father on earth") and Ephesians 3.15 ("the father, of whom is the whole family").[39] None of the scriptural traditions receives contextualisation via their immediate contexts, but instead take on new significance through a closely knit association constructed by the author. Clement links the verses by catchword, with co-heirs (συγκληρονόμους) seemingly triggering the link between the Romans text and the "mother and brother" saying which Clement, in turn, transforms into "brethren and coheirs". More broadly, Clement links the intertexts by themes of familial and kinship language: heirs, brothers, sons, friend, family, father. As Carlo Nardi notes, the two sayings of the Lord (Mt 23.9 and Mt 12.50) become one logion, the logic of which receives its grounding from the Pauline verse.[40] Clement's use of the Pauline intertext to gloss and clarify the significance of the dominical saying clearly resembles Irenaeus's use of Romans 4.3 to clarify the significance of John 8.56 in *Haer.* 4.5.3, discussed above. As we will shortly see, this explicitly *interpretive intertextuality* is intensified in the works of Tertullian and Origen. At the same time, Clement follows the established pattern of reading Jesus's words as non-contextualised sayings (non-contextualised, that is, with regards to their immediate contexts in the Gospels). In the case of the Mother and Brother saying, Clement interlinks the scriptural intertexts through clear verbal and thematic associations with Jesus's words themselves. The immediate context of the anecdote disappears from view and the non-contextualised sayings of Jesus take

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[37] For an introduction to this work, see Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici*.
[38] Clement, *EP* 20 (GCS 17: 142). See Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici*, 54-55, 110, and 114-5 for commentary.
[39] As Nardi, *Clemente Alessandrino, Estratti profetici*, 57 observes, the first half of this clause ("but in heaven is the Father") might come from Matt 6.9.
[40] Nardi, *Il Battesimo*, 170.

prominence. Yet on other occasions, such as his discussion of baptism in *EP* 24, Clement could also derive these intertextual links through the co-text of Jesus's sayings, offering a clear precedent for the methods that Tertullian and Origen later employ.[41]

3.2. The Evidence: Intertextual Reference in Tertullian and Origen's Re-Use of Jesus's Words

Through an examination of Tertullian and Origen's re-use of Jesus's words, two major trends emerge that distinguish their hermeneutical practices from those of their predecessors. First, Tertullian and Origen begin to move beyond the use of intertexts and Jesus's words as proofs to a more explicitly *interpretive mode of employing scriptural texts*. What I mean by this is that Tertullian and Origen start to use scriptural texts to explicitly *clarify the significance of* Jesus's words. Second, and in doing so, both authors draw on the co-text of Jesus's words, and not simply the words themselves, when making intertextual connections.

These changes do not happen all at once, however. On certain occasions, Tertullian and Origen's textual re-use follows that of Justin, Irenaeus and Clement's works, examined above. Here, both authors simply place the intertextual references alongside Jesus's sayings as equal parts of a larger argument or refutation; that is, neither author explicitly interprets Jesus's words in such cases. Both writers also follow their predecessors on occasion in drawing these intertextual connections *through the text of Jesus's words*. In most cases, however, Tertullian and Origen transcend the mode of proof-texting and begin to engage in what I have described as "interpretive intertextuality". When they interpret Jesus's sayings, Tertullian and Origen tend to fashion intertextual links *through the immediate literary context of Jesus's words*. This move suggests that they perceive and use Jesus's words not as independent sayings, but as texts embedded in larger literary units. I divide the data into two categories, which organise the cases into the means of reference (either through the text of Jesus's sayings or the co-text of Jesus's words). I should also note that the purpose of intertextual reference (interpretation vs. refutation/argumentation) cuts across these two categories in significant ways. Notably, Tertullian and Origen derive intertextual connections through the co-text when interpreting Jesus's words. Yet when they

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[41] See 2.1 above.

establish intertextual links through *Jesus's words*, they do so not to clarify the meaning of Jesus's sayings, but to connect them in the service of a larger argument. This shows that Tertullian and Origen's practice of intertextual references derived from the co-text of Jesus's words results in a more explicitly interpretive focus in which the aim is to explicate, clarify and explain the meaning of Jesus's sayings.

1. *Intertextual References Deriving from the Co-Text*

First, we examine Tertullian and Origen's creation of intertextual networks through the immediate literary context of Jesus's words. Such cases divide further according to the ends to which both authors put them—namely, (1) employing his words as sayings for the purpose of argumentation, refutation and exhortation and (2) more importantly, explicating Jesus's words. I now treat each of these in turn.

The argumentative use of intertextual networks is characteristic of Tertullian's textual re-use. So for instance, in his *De Corona,* Tertullian includes the "mammon" saying in conjunction with the "render" command to ridicule the position of his opponents.[42]

> Will it be 'you cannot serve God and mammon', to deliver oneself over to mammon, and to depart from God? Will this be to 'Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's'—is it not instead to render the human person to God, and to even take the *denarius* from Caesar?[43]

Tertullian's selection of the mammon saying alongside the "render" command appears, at first glance, to be entirely random.[44] To a large degree, Tertullian draws on the text because of his argumentative agenda—the text helps him to undermine the arguments of those Christians who consider it acceptable to receive the military largess and to wear the *laurea*. It also appears on first glance that Tertullian connects the two sayings on the basis of their wording alone. Structurally, the two sayings juxtapose God with some other entity ("Caesar", "Mammon"). In Tertullian's reading, the relationship between the two elements is one of mutual exclusivity and complete

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[42] Tertullian, *De Cor*. 12.4 (CCSL 2:1059).
[43] Tertullian, *De Cor.* 12.4 (CCSL 2:1059).
[44] Dunn, "Tertullian and Military Service", 99 writes that "Almost imperceptibly the scriptural truism that one cannot serve both God and mammon (Matt 6:24; and Luke 16:13) is mixed with the requirement to render to Caesar and God (Mark 12:16; Matt 22:21; and Luke 20:25) to become a statement that one cannot serve both God and Caesar and that for the Christian God is more important than Caesar (12.4–5)".

opposition. Tertullian's use of the "mammon" saying is therefore understandable on both structural and thematic grounds.

However, upon closer inspection Tertullian also derives the connection between the two sayings on the basis of verbal and thematic connections shared between the co-text of the "render" command and the mammon saying. Crucially, the "render" saying does not in itself betray an interest in monetary matters—it is only when read in the context of the tribute passage that the thematic correspondence between the two sayings becomes clear. That Tertullian does not merely have the saying of Jesus in view, but its broader co-text, becomes explicitly clear in Tertullian's employment of the *denarius*. Tertullian's use of the Mammon saying as an intertext for the "render" saying therefore derives from the immediate literary context of Jesus's words, and not from those words themselves.

A refutatory purpose also drives Tertullian's use of intertexts in his work *Scorpiace*, a tractate written against those who considered martyrdom to be unnecessary for Christians.[45] To support their view, Tertullian's opponents apparently cite Romans 13.1-7 and gloss it with the "render" command: "'Give back tribute to whom tribute [is owed] and tax to whom tax [is owed]; that is (*id est*), "To Caesar the things which are of Caesar and to God the things of God'".[46] It would be easy to overlook the fact that Tertullian's opponents interpret the saying of Jesus and the words of Paul in light of one another. It would seem that Tertullian's opponents consider scripture itself—and more particularly the words of Paul and Jesus—to prohibit martyrdom. To commit to the life of a martyr, in the eyes of Tertullian's adversaries, is precisely to disobey Caesar and the powers that be. Crucially, Tertullian's opponents derive this intertextual link through the *pronouncement* of Jesus itself which shares important thematic correspondences and catchwords with the Pauline verse.

Tertullian responds to his opponents's exegesis with a highly elliptical comment which he introduces with the adversative conjunction *autem—solius autem dei homo* ("but the human person to God"). I have argued elsewhere that the logic behind Tertullian's comment is the scriptural text, Genesis 1.27—"and God created the human person (*hominem*) in his image (*ad imaginem*)". Tertullian connects the text of Genesis

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[45] For an introduction to this work, see Barnes, *Tertullian*, 108-110; Dunn, *Tertullian*, 105-107.
[46] *Scorpiace* 14.2 (CCSL 2:1096).

1.27 with Jesus's words through the catchword *imago*: "whose image (*imago*) and inscription is this?" (Mt 22.20).[47] The logic here is clear—in the same way that the coin of Caesar bears his image, so too does God's "coin", the human person, bear his image. The implications of this comment are that the opponents have forgotten to consider "the things of God", given their preoccupations with "the things of Caesar". Since the human person belongs to God, divine honours belong to God alone, but also, more radically, the human person in martyrdom.[48] At one level, Tertullian does not respond by drawing explicitly on the immediate literary context of Jesus' saying. But if, as I have suggested, the basis for Tertullian's comment is the text of Genesis *inspired by catchword association with the co-text of Jesus's words*, then the implicit basis for his exegesis is the immediate literary context of the tribute passage. In Tertullian's view, neither the Pauline text, nor Jesus's saying, support the argument that one should avoid martyrdom. Instead, Tertullian avers, one should read the words of Jesus in light of a different intertext—namely, Genesis 1.26. The cynic might attribute Tertullian's choice of this scriptural text to the fact that it helps prove his argument, and there is certainly a large grain of truth to such an explanation. But when seen from the perspective of literary contextualisation, might it not be the case that Tertullian wants to establish the intertext for Jesus's saying in the words of the co-text?[49] I would suggest that this offers a better explanation of Tertullian's logic here. This example therefore would contribute to the case I am making for a developing hermeneutic of textual contextualisation whereby Jesus's words were read in light of their immediate literary contexts as well as scriptural texts verbally associated with that co-text.

In fact, in most of his re-uses of the "render" command, Tertullian defines "the things of God" as *homo* (the human person) and in every case most probably derives this from the catchword "image" shared by Genesis 1.26-7 and the tribute passage.[50]

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[47] *Scorpiace* 14.2 (CCSL 2:1096). See my forthcoming article, Burke, "Tertullian and the Martyrological Maxim".

[48] Burke, "Tertullian and the Martyrological Maxim". This martyrological logic becomes clearer when Tertullian refers to the fact that the Christian should not love one's parents or even one's life itself above God.

[49] Tertullian, *Scorpiace* 14.2 (CCSL 2:1096) also questions the appropriateness of the choice of Romans 13.1-7 for his opponents' argument on other grounds. For instance, he notes that while the passage advocates submission to the powers, this is "not on an opportunity occurring for his avoiding martyrdom" (*Ita non in occasione frustrandi martyrii iubet te subici potestatibus*).

[50] On two occasions (*Scorpiace* 14.2, *et quae dei deo; solius autem dei homo*; *De Corona* 12.4: *Hoc erit Reddite quae sunt Caesaris Caesari et quae Dei Deo, nec hominem Deo reddere et denarium Caesari auferre?*), there is no explicit reference to the "image of God" as the human person. Nevertheless, that

Just as Caesar has inscribed (*inscriptam*) his coin with his image (*imago*), so God must have his coin inscribed with his own image. Tertullian draws from this verbal parallel an ontological observation—since the human person (*homo*) bears the likeness and inscription of God, s/he belongs to the deity just as the coin bearing Caesar's image belongs to Caesar.[51] The implications of this ontological observation vary according to Tertullian's agenda in each of his works. The fact that the *homo* belongs to God serves a Christological argument in *Adversus Marcionem*, as was seen in the previous chapter. Here, Tertullian argues that Christ's command for the human person to give themselves to God proves that he is aligned with the creator God since the Marcionite god has no concern with human affairs.[52] Tertullian's agenda is clearly a significant influencing factor on his interpretation of Jesus's words, since he interprets the saying differently in each context. Nevertheless, in each case Tertullian reads the pronouncement of Jesus in light of other scriptural texts which he connects to the co-text of Jesus's words.

The argumentative use of intertexts is not limited to Tertullian, however. In his *Homilies on Numbers*, Origen employs the "asunder" saying—the climactic pronouncement in the divorce anecdote—as evidence of the fact that certain legal texts from the Hebrew Bible can possess both a literal and allegorical meaning that benefits the reader.[53] As an example of this phenomenon, Origen employs the Law of Genesis 2.24—"It is written in the law: 'Because of this, the man will leave his father and his mother and will attach himself to his wife, and they will be two in one flesh'".[54] The argumentative nature of Origen's use of scripture becomes clear when he explicitly states that he wishes to bring forth "apostolic and Gospel authority" (*apostolica et evangelica auctoritate*) to "fortify" (*munire*) this view.[55] Thus, he notes the allegorical significance of this command in Paul ("this is a mystery, I am speaking of the Church" Eph. 5.32), while then going on to note that the Lord teaches that this command should

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this scriptural text stands in the background can, I think, be inferred from Tertullian's other re-uses. See Tertullian, *De Idol.* 15.3 (*...et imaginem dei deo, quae in homine est*); *De Fuga* 12.9 (*utique proinde imaginem et monetam ipsius inscriptam nomine eius, id est hominem Christianum*); *AM* 4.38.3 (*quae erunt dei? Quae similia sunt denario Caesaris; imago scilicet et similitudo eius. Hominem igitur redid iubet creatori...*).

[51] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.3 (CCSL 2:1150-1151): "why then do you purchase Christ in the man in whom He dwells…" (*Ut quid ergo de homine Christum redimis in homine, in quo Christus est*).

[52] Tertullian *AM* 4.38.4 (SC 456: 468–469).

[53] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23).

[54] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442, 20–23).

[55] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442, 20–23).

be observed according to the "literal sense" with a quotation of Jesus's "asunder" saying, introduced with the formula, "and to show…he added" (*et ostendit…adjicit*).[56] While the Pauline intertext establishes for Origen that the command has allegorical benefit (Ephesians 5.32), Jesus's saying shows that marriage is also "a prescription to be observed in the literal sense" (*observanda haec etiam secundum litteram*).[57] Crucially, Origen links the asunder saying with Ephesians 5.32 and Genesis 2.24 on the basis of finding Genesis 2.24 in both the co-text of the gospel passage on divorce (Mt 19.5 and parallels) and the Pauline text.[58] Origen does not simply create an intertextual network on the basis of Jesus's saying, then, but through its co-text. In doing so, I would suggest that he sees Jesus's words about "not rending asunder" not merely as an independent saying but as an embedded line of text whose significance derives from the co-text in which it resides.

Tertullian and Origen could also create intertextual connections for *explicitly interpretive purposes*. In these two cases, both authors move significantly beyond the "proof-texting" mode of intertextual reference common to early Christian authors. I noted above that Tertullian employs the "image" to connect the "render" command and its co-text with Genesis and so attempt to refute Marcionite ideology. Tertullian employs this intertextual link elsewhere to support a martyrological plea (*De Fuga* 12.10) and a distinction between divine and imperial honours (*De Idol*. 15.2-3). In *De Fuga*, Tertullian uses the "image" catchword to argue that the human person, or Christian, should render her own self and blood (*hominem et sanguinem*) to God.[59] The co-text is much more obviously in Tertulian's mind in *De Idololatria* for there he reproduces the entire passage.[60] Just as clear is Tertullian's interpretive purpose as indicated by his gloss introduced by *id est*:

> "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's", that
> is (*id est*) the image of Caesar, which is on the coin [should be rendered to Caesar] and the

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[56] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23): "It is written: 'Because of this, the man will leave his father and his mother and will attach himself to his wife and they will be two in one flesh'; what God has united, let man not separate".

[57] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23). As another example of this kind of Law, Origen looks to the famous case of Hagar and Sarah who both beget sons to Abraham according to the letter but also, following Paul, resemble the two testaments when read allegorically (Gal. 4.22). See T. P. Scheck, (ed.), *Origen: Homilies on Numbers* (Ancient Christian Texts; Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2009) 51.

[58] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442, 20–23).

[59] *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153).

[60] See 1.2 (section 1) above. *De Idol*. 15.1-3 (CCSL 2:1115).

the image of God, which is in the human person, to God, so that you might render money to Caesar and to God yourself.[61]

The parallel Tertullian draws between the image of Caesar from the tribute passage, on the one hand, and that of God, from Genesis, is most clear here. Jesus's words about rendering to Caesar do not merely constitute an isolated saying but require reading within the context of the larger passage. For Tertullian, intertexts can also clarify Jesus's words, but they clearly must derive from the larger co-text, and not simply the wording of Jesus's saying.

The use of intertexts to explicitly interpret Jesus's words also appears with great frequency in Origen's works. In his discussion of the famous passage about the temple tax or *stater* in the mouth of the fish (Mt 17.24-7), Origen uses at least three intertexts to clarify the significance of the "render" saying and resolve a Christological conundrum (*CommMt* 13.10). In the course of his treatment, Origen admits to being vexed by Jesus's decision to "render to Caesar", especially since Jesus elsewhere asserts that he was not a debtor of the kings of the earth (Mt 17.26).[62] The wealth of Origen's scriptural reference merits generous citation of this passage.

> But this coin was not in the house of Jesus [Mt 17.25], but it was in the sea, and in the mouth of a fish of the sea…Let then, the one who has "the things of Caesar render them to Caesar", that afterwards he may be able "to render to God the things of God". But Jesus, who was "the image of the invisible God" [Col. 1.15], did not have "*the image of Caesar*", for "the prince of this age had nothing in him" [Jn 14.30]. Therefore, he takes from its own place, the sea, the "*image of Caesar*", that he may give it to the kings of the earth for himself and his disciple, so that those who receive the half-shekel might not imagine that Jesus was their debtor and the debtor of the kings of the earth, for he paid the debt. He did not assume it, or procure it, or obtain it, or even at any time make it his own possession, so that "*the image of Caesar*" might never exist alongside the "image of the invisible God" [Col. 1.15].[63]

Origen perceives a problem between, on the one hand, Jesus's status as the Son of God, free of obligation from "the kings of the earth", and on the other, his subjection to the tax. As Gerard Caspary notes, the passage raises the following question for Origen: does the *stater* episode affirm that Christ was free from all worldly responsibilities so that Christians possess the same freedom? Or, on the contrary, does

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[61] *De Idol.* 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115): *reddite, ait, quae sunt Caesaris Caesari et quae sunt dei deo, id est imaginem Caesaris Caesari, quae in nummo est, et imaginem dei deo, quae in homine est, ut Caesari quidem pecuniam reddas, deo temetipsum.*
[62] Origen, *CommMt* 13.10 (GCS 40: 208).
[63] Origen, *CommMt* 13.10 (GCS 40: 208, italics added to show the co-texual phrase).

it remind the Christian that even Christ remained in subjection and so they too must be subject to the powers?[64] In other words, Jesus's subjection to the tax immediately raises questions surrounding the manner in which Jesus pays the coin of the tax as Son of God. In his attempts to resolve this problem, Origen draws on the Pauline lemma, "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1.15) which he connects with "the image" on Caesar's coin from the tribute passage. Origen goes on to note that Christ does not bear the image of Caesar since the coin was not found "in his house" (Matt 17.25) but in the fish taken from the sea. Origen connects these intertexts with the larger co-text based on shared catchwords ("coin", "image") and the themes of authority and taxation.

Origen uses the Pauline and Matthean intertexts to create a clear and clean division between Christ and the kings of the earth. Together, these intertexts provide the impetus for Origen to clarify the meaning of Jesus's saying. Because the coin is not found on Christ's possession ("in his house"), he voluntarily renders it to Caesar by drawing it from the fish from the sea. Through making a voluntary payment, Origen's Christ preserves the distinction between "the image of God" and "the image of Caesar".[65] This example shows the influence of the broader literary context of Jesus's saying upon Origen's choice of intertext. The co-textual "image of Caesar"— and not Jesus's saying—evokes the "image of God" from Paul's letter to the Colossians. Origen also draws on a detail from the immediate passage—the fact that the coin was not found "in the house"—to further strengthen his interpretation. One gets a strong sense from this example of the importance of literary context to Origen's re-use of Jesus's words.

A second example of Origen's use of intertextual references to clarify the interpretation of Jesus's words appears in his Homily on the tribute passage (*Hom. in Luc.* 39).[66] To support his ascetic interpretation of the "render" command, Origen annotates the saying with the Pauline intertext from 1 Corinthians 15.49. "When Christ says, 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's,' he means this: 'Put off the person of the earthly man, cast off the earthly image, so that you can put on yourselves the person of the

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[64] For Caspary, *Politics and Exegesis*, 174 Origen's comments suggest that Christians at baptism became free. Peter catching the fish from the sea becomes a baptismal allegory.

[65] As Caspary *Politics and Exegesis*, 175 notes, the payment of the tax in Matthew 17 "both is and is not subjection".

[66] I discuss this example at 1.2 (section 6), noting Origen's use of anecdote reproduction to contextualise Jesus's saying and chapter 2.2 (Multiple Words from the Anecdote) where I observe his use of co-textual reference.

heavenly man and give 'to God what is God's'".[67] Here, the intertext from Paul functions as a gloss that explains the saying of Jesus. Through his use of 1 Corinthians 15.49 in his homily on the tribute passage, Origen both clarifies and bolsters his "mystical and secret" reading of the tribute passage that climaxes with an ascetical interpretation of the "render" command. The impact of the Pauline text is to support Origen's dichotomy between earthly and spiritual pursuits. Origen does not draw on the Pauline text in an arbitrary fashion or because it merely supports his argument. Rather, he introduces the Pauline text because it shares the catchword "image" with the co-text of the tribute passage. Thus, the co-text of Jesus's words, which Origen uses to draw on the Pauline intertext, significantly impacts his interpretation of the saying of Jesus.[68]

Thus far, it has been argued that Tertullian and Origen employ intertexts to clarify and dispute the interpretation of Jesus's climactic sayings. Yet intertexts could also serve more pastoral purposes. Origen, in particular, frequently combines co-textual and intertextual elements to open up new non-literal readings of Jesus's pronouncements. In doing so, he uses Jesus's climactic sayings to comfort, encourage and exhort his audiences. So, for example, in his comments on the divorce pericope (*CommMt* 14.17), Origen seeks to console his readers of the relationship between Christ and the Church.[69] Although lengthy, because the passage contains such a significant number of intertextual links which derive from the co-text, I now cite it in full.[70]

> But since the Apostle understands the words, "And the two shall be one flesh" [Gen 2.24; Mt 19:5; Eph 5.31] of "Christ and the church" [Eph 5:32] we must say that Christ keeping the saying, "What God has joined together let not man put asunder" [Mt 19.6], did not put away his former wife, so to speak — that is, the former synagogue— for any other reason than that this wife committed fornication, being made an adulteress through the evil one, and along with him plotted against her husband and killed him, saying, "Away with him from the earth, crucify him, crucify him". It was she therefore who herself revolted, rather

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[67] Origen, *Hom. In Luc*. 39 (SC 87: 454).

[68] Similarly, Clement, *EP* 24 supports his liturgical and ascetic reading of the "render" command by glossing "the things of Caesar" as "the things of dust" (τὰ χοϊκὰ, 1 Cor. 15.47), thus reflecting the transition of the baptismal candidate from "material things" (τῶν ὑλικῶν) to spiritual ones (τὰ πνευματικὰ). See 2.1 for further discussion.

[69] Origen, *CommMt* 14.17 (GCS 40: 325-327).

[70] Origen, *CommMt* 14.17 (GCS 40: 325-327). There are of course, intertexts that also directly emerge from Jesus's saying. The citation from Rom 8.35 and, by extention, Col 1.6 and Eph 6.12 are among these. Origen links Rom 8.35 with the "asunder" saying through the catchword "separate" (χωρίζειν). Origen transforms the wording of Jesus's saying so that it reads, "what God has brought together let *nothing* put asunder" (ὃ οὖν ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξεν μηδὲν χωριζέτο). The Latin text contains a longer quotation from Romans 8. 35, 38 making the intertextual even more explicit. See Heine, *Commentary on St Matthew II*, 440.

than her husband who put her away and divorced her; wherefore, reproaching her for falling away from him, it says in Isaiah, "Of what kind is the bill of your mother's divorce, with which I sent her away?" [Isa. 50:1; Mt 19.7] And he who at the beginning created him "who is in the form of God" [Phil. 2.5] according to the image [Gen 1.26], made him male, and the church female [Gen 1.26-17; Eph 5.31-32], granting to both oneness according to the image. And, for the sake of the church, the Lord — the husband — left the Father whom he saw when he was in the form of God [Phil. 2.5], left also his mother, as he was the very son of the Jerusalem which is above, and was joined to his wife who had fallen down here, and these two here became one flesh [Mt 19.5; Gen 2.24]. For because of her, he himself also became flesh, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us [Jn 1:14] and they are no more two, but now they are one flesh [Gen 2.24], since it is said to the wife, "Now you are the body of Christ, and members each in his part" [1 Cor 12:27] for the body of Christ is not something different from the church, which is his body, and from the members each in his part. And God has joined together these who are not two, but have become one flesh, commanding that men should not separate the church from the Lord. And he who takes heed for himself so as not to be separated, is confident as one who will not possibly be separated and says, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [Rom 8:35] Here, therefore, the saying, "What God has joined together, let no one put asunder" [Mt 19:6] was written with relation to the Pharisees [Mt 19.3], but to those who are superior to the Pharisees, it could be said, What then God has joined together, let nothing put asunder, "neither principality nor power" [Col 1.6; Eph 6.12]; for God, who has joined together is stronger than all those which any one could conceive and name.[71]

Origen derives at least three significant intertexts from the co-text of Jesus's words.

1. Origen begins by drawing on the co-textual phrase "and the two shall be one flesh"; this is, in fact, a citation from Genesis 2.24 which Origen knows also appears in Ephesians 5.31, where Paul interprets it in a mystical fashion to refer to Christ and the church.[72] In Origen's schema, the church corresponds to the female and Christ to the man who leaves his father and is joined to his wife so that the two become one flesh (Mt 19.5; Gen 2.24).

2. Origen cites Isaiah 50.1 on the basis of its connection with Matthew 19.7, since both seem to mention a "bill of divorce". There is a distinctly anti-Jewish flavour to Origen's allegorical exegesis of the divorce pericope as he writes that Christ has divorced his former wife, the Synagogue, because it apparently plotted against and crucified him. Isaiah's bill of divorce serves as proof, for Origen, that the blame lies squarely with the synagogue.

3. The incarnation of the Logos "in the flesh" (Jn 1.14) appears to derive from Matthew 19.5 (a citation of Gen 2.24) through the catchword flesh (σάρξ). In

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[71] Origen, *CommMt* 14.17 (GCS 40: 325-327).
[72] See above for a discussion of Origen's linking of these two passages in his *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23).

fact, from this one co-textual detail, Origen draws on another Pauline text that discusses the church as Christ's body (1 Cor 12.27). These textual networks suggest, to Origen, the highly intimate and mystical relationship between Christ and his body, the church. These scriptural intertexts, each of which he connects to the co-text, encourage Origen to interpret Christ's "asunder" saying in a nonliteral fashion so that it becomes true for the contemporary Christian community. As Henry Chadwick notes, "It is hard for us to appreciate the degree to which allegory made it possible...for the ancient text to be made contemporary".[73] The Church's union with Christ is assured by scripture and the activity of the Word in his incarnation.[74]

Origen's spiritual interpretation of the "asunder" saying might appear to conform to the general picture of "non-contextualisation" that characterised the re-use of a sage's moral sayings. One might wish to go further and draw the conclusion that Origen grasps at various scriptural intertexts almost at random. In actual fact, Origen's reading of Jesus's saying is thoroughly contextual, in the sense that he establishes his interpretation on the basis of the text of the anecdote itself. The staggering number of intertextual connections clearly arises from the fact that the Matthean divorce pericope itself is already shot through with biblical references (Mt 19.1-12). Yet Origen also draws on parts of the co-text that do not derive from other parts of scripture, such as the bill of divorce. My point stands regardless of the persuasiveness or cogency of Origen's reading—Origen shapes his interpretation of Jesus's words on the basis of words and phrases that arise from the immediate literary context of his saying.

In drawing this discussion to a close, it is instructive to note that Tertullian and Origen's use of intertexts that derive from the co-text of Jesus's words are distinctly *interpretive* in nature. By "interpretive", I mean that when connecting intertexts to the anecdote of Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen's focus centres on clarifying and explaining the meaning and sense of Jesus's words. Those words are not merely the means to further ends, such as engaging in stringing together proofs for a larger

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[73] H. Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement and Origen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966) 98.

[74] As Harl (SC 302: 141) rightly observes on this point in general that "the purpose of this method is to learn through the various biblical contexts, the use of Scripture when using these words, to enrich the reading of a word by the meanings it takes in other contexts, to eventually discover in another passage the allegorical value that it can have also in the text in question" (my translation).

argument, although this is also true. More significantly, they move beyond this mode of re-use and begin to clarify the significance of Jesus's words and their importance for urgent doctrinal and ethical discussions. When engaging in this interpretive and clarificatory task, they unfailingly employ the co-text of Jesus's words.

2. *Intertextual References Deriving from Jesus's Words*

At the same time, Tertullian and Origen also derive intertextual references from the wording of Jesus's sayings themselves. This method matches the general pattern of intertextual re-use explored for their predecessors (see 3.1). I do not discuss these cases merely for the purposes of balance; rather, I do so to demonstrate that when Tertullian and Origen employ this form of intertextual reference, they do so not to explicate the meaning of Jesus's words but instead to employ his sayings as proofs for the argument at hand. The focus of both authors, in such cases, is less on the words of Jesus, and more on their respective contexts. That this situation obtains is altogether natural and does not negate the main argument of this thesis; after all, we would expect both authors to focus less on the meaning of Jesus's words in such cases, since the significance and sense of Jesus's words was likely to be uncontroversial. In fact, each of the examples which I will discuss appear in intra-Christian works where the author could reasonably have assumed that the interpretive significance of Jesus's words would be understood by their audience. Jesus's words could therefore function as proofs without the need to explain their meaning with recourse to their literary contexts.

This section therefore reinforces the division between the process of deriving intertextual references through Jesus's words for chiefly argumentative purposes, on the one hand, and, on the other, the process of deriving intertextual references through the co-text which results in interpretive endeavours. Again, this is not to deny that the first mode of intertextual reference is entirely "non-interpretive"—it clearly is interpretive, to the extent that all forging of textual connections is interpretive. Rather, I only mean that the focus of the two authors in such cases is not on the words of Jesus, their meaning, significance, and exposition, but on employing those words for other ends. As we have seen, when Tertullian and Origen focus on clarifying Jesus's words, they employ intertexts that derive from the co-text of those words. Conversely, there is a striking overlap between the cases in which Tertullian and Origen use Jesus's

sayings for argumentative purposes and their use of intertexts which derive from the words of Jesus in isolation. In this mode of intertextual reference, biblical citations function as "proofs", and Jesus's words as "proof-sayings". The argumentative use of citations is not necessarily limited to polemical scenarios; this mode of intertextual reference can just as easily be found in Origen's attempts to persuade and exhort his congregations.

The argumentative use of Jesus's words is particularly characteristic of Tertullian's works. For instance, in his *De Anima* (*Concerning the Soul*), Tertullian employs the "God of the Living" saying—the climactic pronouncement in the anecdote about the Sadducees question (Mt 22.23-33 and parallels)—as part of a scriptural dossier of references used to defend the Stoic argument that the embryo is corporeal.[75] The texts Tertullian includes in support of this assertion include the conception of Esau and Jacob (Gen 25.22), the reference to John leaping in the womb of Elizabeth (Lk 1.41) and the *in utero* Jesus instigating Mary to sing the Magnificat (Lk 1.46).[76] Tertullian introduces the "God of the Living" saying with the particle *enim*, making clear that the pronouncement functions as important corroborative evidence for his claim: "For (*enim*) 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living'".[77] The saying of Jesus therefore becomes one piece of evidence alongside other intertexts to support a larger assertion. Crucially, there is no attempt to interpret Jesus's words and certainly no attempt to do so via intertexts that are linked to the co-text.

Similarly to Tertullian, Origen also employs the sayings of Jesus as one part of a larger refutation alongside other associated scriptural texts. Thus, Origen uses the "God of the Living Saying" to refute divination in his sermon on Numbers 23.11-24.[78] Origen forwards several texts from the Penteteuch in support of the prohibition (Lev 19.26, 31; Deut 18.9-12). He observes that both those who consult the dead and the idols being consulted are dead "since they do not share in life".[79] Origen seeks to castigate this way of life by introducing the "God of the Living" saying, which appears in Rufinus' Latin translation with the adversative *autem*—"But (*autem*) our God is the

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[75] Tertullian, *De Anima* 26.5 (Waszink, *De Anima*, 335).
[76] Tertullian, *De Anima* 26.5 (Waszink, *De Anima*, 335) also uses two other Old Testament references: "Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you" (Jer 1.5); "the Lord God formed man, and breathed into him the breath of life" (Gen. 2.7).
[77] Tertullian, *De Anima* 26.5 (Waszink, *De Anima*, 335).
[78] Origen, *Hom. In Num.* 16.7.7 (SC 442: 252-253).
[79] Origen, *Hom. In Num.* 16.7.7 (SC 442: 252-253).

God of the living, and not of the dead".[80] Origen appears to draw on the moral saying of Jesus through the catchword "dead" (*mortuus*) which links Jesus's pronouncement with the verse from Deuteronomy about "consulting the dead".[81] The immediate literary context of the saying fades completely from view with the result that Jesus's words function as a non-contextualised saying that forms part of a larger proof of argument.

On other occasions, rather than using Jesus's saying to encourage or exhort his audiences, Origen uses Jesus's saying to latch on to another scriptural text that becomes the tool of address. At least four examples of this are found in Origen's homilies. In the first case, Origen connects the "Physician" saying—"those who are well have no need of a healer, but those who are sick"—with Jeremiah 17.14 ("heal me and I will be healed") to invite his audience to approach Jesus for healing.[82] Since it was for the sick that "the healer has come", Origen writes, "and it was the healer who says to the sick, 'Those who are well have no need of a healer, but those who are sick', then everyone who wants to be cured from the sickness of his soul boldly speaks, 'Heal me and I will be healed'".[83] By linking Jesus's saying with the Jeremianic text through the catchword "heal" (ἰατρός/ἴασαι), Origen introduces Jesus as the healer and encourages his congregation to re-enact the Jeremianic text. In this case, Jesus's saying grounds Origen's personal address to his audience. Origen removes the saying from the literary context of the anecdote, and recontextualises it in a new setting. Origen's ostensible purpose in using Jesus's words is not to interpret them, but to use them as an authoritative saying to exhort his congregation to action.

Origen utilises the Physician saying in a similar fashion in his highly evocative and image-filled sermon on the lepers of Leviticus 12.[84] As with the previous example, Origen employs the pronouncement of Jesus as the basis for exhorting his

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[80] Origen, *Hom. In Num.* 16.7.7 (SC 442: 252-253): *Deus autem noster vivorum Deus est et non mortuorum*.

[81] The two verses can be compared in the reconstructed Vulgate. Deut. 18.10-11 (Weber-Grayson, 260): "neither let there be found among you…the charmer, nor any one who consults pythonic spirits, or fortune tellers, or that seeks truth from the *dead*" (*quaerat a mortuis veritatem*). Mt 22.32b (Weber-Grayson, 1561): "He is not the God of the *dead*, but of the living" (*non est Deus mortuorum sed viventium*).

[82] Origen, *Hom. In Jer.* 17.5 (SC 238: 170-171).

[83] Origen, *Hom. In Jer.* 17.5 (SC 238: 170-171).

[84] The homilies exist in the later Latin translation of Rufinus. Origen, *Hom. In Lev.* 8.1 (SC 287: 8-9): *Medicum dici in Scripturis divinis Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum etiam ipsius Domini sententia perdocemur, sicut dicit in Evangelis: Non indigent sani medico, sed qui male habent. Non enim veni iustos vocare, sed peccatores in paenitentiam*.

congregation to action. He writes, "Doctor is a title which divine scripture gives to our saviour Jesus Christ, as we are taught by a statement of the Lord himself in the Gospels: 'It is not the healthy that need a physician but those who are sick. For I did not come to call the just but sinners to repentance'".[85] Origen connects "the sentence of the Lord" (*Domini sententiae*) with the passage from Leviticus through the shared theme of healing and sickness.[86] While noting that Jesus's words come from the Gospels (*sicut dicit in Evangelis*), this does not lead Origen to attend to their literary context. Instead, the authoritative pronouncement of Jesus becomes the catalyst for Origen to directly address his audience as those who are sick and in need of healing. "Come then to Jesus, the heavenly physician. Enter into this medical clinic, which is his Church. See, lying there, a multitude of feeble ones".[87] Origen provides further encouragement for his congregation from associated intertexts in Leviticus and the gospels—the woman "unclean from birth" (Mk 5.25) and the leper from the Leviticus passage (Lev 13.46; cf. Mk 1.40).[88] While each of these individuals were considered unclean because of their illness, Origen now imagines them entering the church to receive the sacrament and healing. Together, these scriptural passages, all of which share thematic connections, aid Origen in pastorally exhorting those who are spiritually sick in his audience to receive the healing they need.

In the third example, Origen re-uses the "Mother and Brothers" saying in his commentary on Abraham and Romans 4 as the basis for exhorting his audience to virtuous living.[89] The centre-point of the discussion is the Pauline passage about Abraham and the birth of Isaac in Romans 4.18-20, a passage that already contains intertextual links with Genesis 21.6. In Origen's re-telling, the narrative becomes an allegory for producing joy, the first fruit of the spirit, since Isaac means to laugh (Gal 5.22-23).[90] Origen encourages his audience not only to produce joy but to give birth to Christ himself. In fact, Origen goes on to say, Christians are defined as those who mystically give birth to Christ, thus fulfilling the saying of Christ—"Whoever should do the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother".[91] In

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[85] Origen, *Hom. In Lev.* 8.1 (SC 287: 8-9).
[86] Origen, *Hom. In Lev.* 8.1 (SC 287: 8-9). The *lemma* for the sermon is Lev 12.2 ("Every woman who receives seed in her womb and bears a male child will be impure for seven days") and Lev 13-14 (on leprosy and purifications).
[87] Origen, *Hom. In Lev.* 8.1 (SC 287:10-11).
[88] Origen, *Hom. In Lev.* 8.1 (SC 287:10-11).
[89] Origen, *Comm Rom* 4.6.11. (SC 539: 266-269).
[90] Origen, *Comm Rom* 4.6.11. (SC 539: 266-269).
[91] Origen, *Comm Rom* 4.6.11. (SC 539: 266-269).

Origen's reading, Jesus's commendation of those who act as mother to him, alongside the Pauline passage about forming Christ in childbirth, together undergird his exhortation for his congregation to be those who pursue virtue and so produce Christ. Of course, in its immediate literary context, the saying of Jesus has very little to do with "producing Christ" in a mystical sense. Instead, Origen perceives thematic and verbal associations between the wording of Jesus's saying and other scriptural texts. Origen's lack of reference to the co-text of Jesus's words matches his goal in this work—to use Jesus's words as a saying that exhorts his congregation to action. Consequently, Origen does not explicitly seek to interpret or clarify the significance of Jesus's words by means of their co-text.

Finally, in his moral treatment of the family of Lot in his homily on Genesis 19, Origen again employs the "Mother and Brother" saying.[92] On this occasion, he draws on the saying of Jesus to exhort his audience to commit to pursuing righteousness in the struggle of the rational soul with the flesh.[93] Origen warns his audience that having made progress in the spiritual journey, they should beware Lot's two daughters—vain glory and pride (*vana gloria…et superbia*)—"lest [they] lie in wait for you…and with their embraces constrict you".[94] Instead of "embracing" pride, the audience is to "embrace wisdom and say 'wisdom is your sister'" (Prov. 7.4).[95] By "embracing Wisdom", one receives approval from none other than Jesus, who is Wisdom, and who says, "He who shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother".[96] Just as with the previous example, Origen employs the saying of Jesus to ground his exhortation to the congregation. Although associating the saying with a bewildering array of scriptural texts, Origen employs Jesus's pronouncement without any reference to its larger co-text. Instead, Origen connects intertexts from Genesis and Proverbs with Jesus's saying through the text of Jesus's utterance, which shares common familial themes and the imagery of begetting with the other, cited scriptural texts.

In summary, these examples show that when Tertullian and Origen do not seek to interpret Jesus's words, they simply supply them as proof sayings without any

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[92] Origen, *Hom. In Gen*. 5.6 (GCS 29: 64-65).

[93] Origen, *Hom. In Gen*. 5.6 (GCS 29: 64-65). The Homilies on Genesis come from the later Latin translation of Rufinus.

[94] Origen, *Hom. In Gen*. 5.6 (GCS 29: 64-65).

[95] Origen, *Hom. In Gen*. 5.6 (GCS 29: 64-65): *sapientiam sororem tuam esse*.

[96] Origen, *Hom. In Gen*. 5.6 (GCS 29: 65): *qui fecerit voluntatem Patris mei, qui in coelis est, hic meus et frater et soror et mater est*.

reference to their co-text. This pattern demonstrates more clearly the significance of those cases in which they move beyond this pattern of intertextual re-use. When they derive intertexts through the co-text of Jesus's words, both authors seek to clarify and interpret the significance of Jesus's pronouncements. This interpretive goal results in fresh methods of textual re-use.

3.3. The Hermeneutical Significance of Tertullian and Origen's Practice of Intertextual Reference

Having demonstrated both the methods and motives of intertextual reference in Tertullian and Origen's re-use of Jesus's climactic sayings, it is time to consider the broader significance of this data for early Christian hermeneutics. Three implications arise, once more relating to the *perception* of Jesus's words, the *methods* used to interpret them and the *results* of this endeavour of disciplined exegesis.

1. *The Development of Interpretive Methods for Reading Jesus's Words: Scripture and Saying*

From the outset, there was clearly a movement towards interpret Jesus's sayings in light of Old Testament texts among those composing early Christian gospel literature.[97] The Gospel of Matthew casts Jesus as in some sense a Moses *redivivus*, while Luke presents Jesus as the scriptural interpreter *par excellence*, who offers an extended reading of the Law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms.[98] "Scripture", in this context, refers unmistakeably to the texts of the Hebrew Bible. However, towards the end of the first and the beginning of the second century, early Christian authors increasingly had to reckon with an ever-growing corpus of texts, including literature of the "gospel" genre, as well as epistolary literature and apocalypses.[99] As this corpus

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[97] For an excellent primer, see E. E. Ellis, "Biblical Interpretation in the New Testament Church" in M. J. Mulder (ed.), *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (CRINT 2/1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 691-726; T. Hatina has edited three volumes on biblical interpretation in the Synoptic Gospels. See, for instance the essays in T. Hatina (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels. Volume 1: The Gospel of Mark* (LNTS 304; London: T&T Clark, 2006).

[98] D. C. Allison Jr, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993). On Lk 24.44 and Jn 5.46 as programmatic statements of Jesus's interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, see the discussion R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospel* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016).

[99] Justin notes the congregation would read either the memoirs of the apostles or the prophets (1 *Apol.* 67.3, Minns and Parvis, *Apologies*, 258-259): καὶ τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκεται, μέχρις ἐγχωρεῖ.

grew, so too did the urgency of the task of integrating and coordinating the message of these newer texts with those of the Hebrew Bible which, as Éric Junod has noted, continued to find widespread, though by no means universal, support and use.[100] Some of the urgent questions facing early Christian authors included, how do the texts that were becoming the NT relate to Old Testament texts? How can one establish the authority of these newer texts and justify their use alongside the Hebrew scriptures? While some authors, including most notably Marcion of Sinope, moved to replace the Hebrew scriptures with a collection of NT texts, others, in the face of these pressures, sought to establish the unity of both sets of writings. In addition to intra-Christian debate, there was also the need to justify the Christian philosophy, and its set of authoritative writings, in the face of external pressures from imperial, non-Christian and Jewish communities.

It is in light of these pressures that second century authors employ OT texts, and writings that were becoming the NT, alongside Jesus's sayings. And it is against this background that several shifts take place which require discussion and categorisation.

1. In the mid-second century, Justin empoys intertexts to defend the *authority* of Jesus's sayings. Given Justin's Jewish interloctuor in the *Dialogue*, this comes with the corollary that his sayings are authoritative precisely because they foretell OT events or signal their fulfilment in his life and ministry (cf. Justin, *Dial*. 18.1).

2. When Irenaeus employs scriptural intertexts alongside Jesus's sayings, it is with other Christian groups in mind. Since he aims to show the unity of the one God and his Christ, Irenaeus frequently places OT texts and Jesus's sayings alongside one another, with the intention of showing that neither contradicts the other (cf. Irenaeus, *Haer*. 4.20.1-4a).

3. Both Justin and Irenaeus frequently employ scriptural texts as glosses for Jesus's sayings (or vice-a-versa). That is, they frequently place OT texts alongside the sayings of Jesus in support of a larger argument or to refute the arguments of opponents (cf. Justin, *1 Apology* 61; Irenaeus, *Haer*. 4.20.1-4a). In these cases, both authors do not use scriptural texts to explicate the meaning of Jesus's words.

4. At the same time, with Irenaeus, and especially Clement, there is a growing shift towards *interpretive* intertextuality, where the author explicitly seeks to draw out the

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[100] É. Junod, "La formation et la composition de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Eglise grecque des quatre premiers siècles" in *Le canon de l'Ancien Testament, sa formation et son histoire* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984), 101-134 (109) notes that 90% of scriptural references in the second century come from the Pentateuch, Prophets and Psalms.

interpretive *significance* of Jesus's words. In such cases, authors employ scriptural texts to clarify the interpretation of Jesus's sayings (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.26.1-2; Clement, *EP* 20). Significantly, Clement at certain points seeks to make these connections through co-text of Jesus's sayings (*EP* 24, see 2.1) while at other points he follows the older model of using Jesus's words to do so (see *EP* 20, 3.1 above).

In the first stage, as seen in Justin's *Dialogue* 18, the apologist starts with his premise—that the Jews, in crucifying Christ, have contributed to evil rumours about Christianity—which he then seeks to support through proofs from religious writings. Justin places portions of Isaiah alongside Jesus's sayings in an attempt to demonstrate this larger argument. Driving Justin's textual use is the underlying assumption that the sayings of Jesus are invested with a similar authority because they fulfil the events of the "scriptures" of the Hebrew bible. Justin connects both sets of texts on the basis of catchword and theme, although the network always arises from the words of Jesus rather than their immediate literary context. While Irenaeus's concerns lie with other Christian groups rather than Jews, his method of using Jesus's words also frequently fits the category of proof-sayings. In *Haer*. 4.20.1-4a, Irenaeus employs the writings of the apostles, and Jesus's sayings, alongside OT writings to prove the unity of scripture. For Irenaeus, it is crucial to show that the sayings of Jesus and OT prophecies form a single unity that crucially emphasise the oneness of God, and show that Christ reveals the one God and brings into effect a new reality through recapitulating the old Adam.[101] While Irenaeus's audience and explicit purpose differ from Justin's, both share the view that Jesus's words constitute imminently useful sayings that prove a larger argument. That is, Jesus's words are sayings that provide "proof of testimony", so to speak, rather than texts that require *interpretation*.

Yet on some occasions, early Christian authors transcend this model and employ scriptural intertexts alongside Jesus's sayings for explicitly interpretive purposes. One such case is Irenaeus's use of Romans 4.3 to clarify the significance of John 8.56 (*Haer*. 4.5.3).[102] While Irenaeus's re-use of scriptural texts is interpretive in this case, it is still significant that he does not employ the co-text of Jesus's saying to draw this connection. This would suggest that while he is aware of the larger text of the gospel

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[101] J. Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity* (Christian Theology in Context; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 94-95.

[102] See 3.1 above. Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 301.

(in this case of John), Irenaeus employs Jesus's saying as the all-important unit of teaching.

Similarly, Clement draws together a network of texts (Romans 8.17; Matthew 23.9 and Ephesians 3.15) alongside Jesus's Mother and Brother saying on the basis of catchword *and* thematic/conceptual linkages. While on this occasion he uses Jesus's saying to draw the intertextual association, on other occasions he makes these catchword links *through the co-text* (see *Ecl. Proph.* 24; chapter 2.1). This method receives thorough re-working by Tertullian and Origen. So, when interpreting Jesus's words about "rendering to Caesar and God", Tertullian and Origen both draw on Genesis 1.27 through associating the "image" (εἰκών; *imago*) in the tribute passage with the "image of God" in which the human person is made. This method shows that the immediate literary context partly dictates and shapes the interpretation of Jesus's sayings by suggesting appropriate scriptural intertexts. To be sure, Tertullian and Origen at times fall into this first category of merely placing sayings of Jesus alongside other Old Testament texts. Or, when they do interpret Jesus's sayings the co-text does, on occasion, disappear from view. At the same time, both authors move beyond these methods and assume a distinctly interpretive mode of intertextual reference. Integral to this method is the association of the co-text of Jesus's sayings with scriptural texts— and not simply Jesus's sayings themselves. By establishing intertextual links on the basis of the immediate co-text or anecdote of Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen show that they conceive of Jesus's words as texts embedded within a literary framework.

2. *The Exegetical Results: A New Type of Textual Boundedness*

To what extent do Tertullian and Origen's practices of intertextual reference result in a discernible shift in the results of early Christian interpretation of Jesus's words? The question is an important and complex one. Tertullian and Origen's practices of deriving intertexts through the co-text of Jesus's words has important, if complex, implications for the early Christian exegesis of Jesus's words. At one level, the stream of scriptural texts employed by Tertullian and Origen appears virtually endless. One could be forgiven for thinking that their process of selecting biblical verses was a random, even fanciful, endeavour. What I have sought to show in this chapter is that Tertullian and Origen's selection of scriptural texts is often the very opposite of

arbitrary; rather, it relies on a set of methods that possess a high degree of internally logical consistency. These methods concern the creative re-combination of the contents of authoritative texts. While moderns are free to take issue with these methods, the very fact that they constitute methods requires acknowledgment.[103]

The hermeneutical impact of intertextual reference on the reading and interpretation of the pronouncements of Jesus is momentous, if complex. Intertexts play a paradoxical role in this process, since they widen the horizon of significance for Jesus's sayings while simultaneously anchoring the interpretation in the text of scripture itself. Each part of this complex dynamic requires unpacking. First, and in a very real sense, scriptural texts expand the horizons of significance for a moral saying.[104] Through their re-use of scriptural texts alongside Jesus's sayings, Tertullian and Origen frequently take the interpretation of Christ's pronouncements in radically new directions, at least when compared with their strictly literal or grammatical significance within their immediate literary contexts. Naturally, the areas of application for a moral saying increase with each new intertext. To what extent does this represent a new situation compared with Tertullian and Origen's contemporaries? The reader will recall that the *content* of the moral saying itself (its verbally coded structure, content and themes) forms a guideline for the interpretation of the saying. The climactic saying "it is royal to do well and be ill spoken of" clearly had a variety of interpretations, though Greek and Roman authors frequently apply it to kingly or imperial figures. There are a greater number of potential applications available if one connected the saying of a wise figure with other intertexts, than if one was to read those words in isolation. In comparison with simply employing the content of the isolated saying, then, Tertullian and Origen's use of scriptural intertext certainly expands the interpretation of Jesus's sayings, suggesting ever-new arenas of application. Moreover, in comparison to anecdote reproduction and co-textual re-use, Tertullian and Origen's re-use of scriptural texts results in a broader set of applications for Jesus's moral sayings.

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[103] D. A. Teeter, *Scribal Laws: Exegetical Variation in the Textual Transmission of Biblical Law in the Late Second Temple Period* (FAT 92; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013) 2-4 makes a similar point regarding the rules governing the textual transmission of legal material in the Hebrew Bible.

[104] The opposite is true as well, of course, as was seen most clearly the examples of proof of argument and refutation. While it is true that every intertextual link arguably leaves both texts transformed, this point has more to do with how we, as moderns, read and interpret the work of a patristic author. I am only interested, here, in the stated intention of the patristic author and the texts *they* explicitly seek to interpret or clarify when drawing on scriptural writings.

At the same time, Tertullian and Origen were frequently establishing these intertextual links through the words of the *co-text* of Jesus's saying. In the majority of cases in which Tertullian or Origen employ intertexts alongside Jesus's words, the immediate literary context is the necessary starting point in the work of establishing the appropriate context within which to interpret the pronouncement. This point becomes clear when we note the variety of co-textual details that Tertullian and Origen use to create intertextual networks when interpreting Jesus's command to "render to Caesar and to God" (see table 6). The co-textual terms/phrases that evoke scriptural intertexts divide roughly into two main categories: the "image", and variations on the word-group, "coin".

Table 6: Common catchwords from the tribute anecdote from which Tertullian and Origen derive associated scriptural passages

Co-textual Detail from the Tribute Passage	Scirptural inter-text and patristic text in which intertext appears
image (εἰκών; *imaginem*), **likeness**; **inscription** (*inscriptio; suprascriptio*) (includes "image of God", "image of Caesar" and "inscription of Caesar")	**Gen 1.26-7** ("let us make the human person in our image and likeness"; Tertullian, *Scorp.* 13; *De Fuga* 12.1-3; *De Idol.* 15.1-3). **Col. 1.15** ("image of the invisible God"; Origen, *CommMt* 13.10). **1 Cor. 15.49** ("and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly"; *Hom. In Luc.* 39).
coin (*nummum*); **tribute** (*tributarius*); **denarius** (*denarius*)	**Mt 17.24-27** ("those subject to tribute, not by children"; cf. Origen *CommMt* 13.10) **Acts 3.6** ("gold and silver I do not have"; Origen, *CommRom* 9.25) **Rom 13.7** ('Give back tribute to whom tribute [is owed] and tax to whom tax [is owed]"; Tertullian, *Scorp.* 14).

By connecting "the image of Caesar" on the imperial coin to the "image of God" on the human person in Genesis 1.27, Tertullian fashions a martyrological reading of the "render" command. Even when offering what might seem to modern readers to be a far-fetched interpretation that construes the "render" command as a call to asceticism (*Homily on Luke* 39), Origen draws on the wording of the biographical narrative to establish a network of scriptural intertexts. To be sure, the words of the apostle Paul clarify and enhance the significance of the words of Jesus although it is the words of Paul mediated by the co-text of Jesus's saying. After all, Origen links the two texts by

the catchword "image".[105] Or, to take another example, Origen links the "asunder" saying to other scriptural texts saying precisely through the co-textual phrase, "a man and woman shall become one flesh", which leads him to the letter to the Ephesians where the same verse from Genesis speaks about the Church and Christ (Eph 5.38).[106] These two cases demonstrate the unmistakable influence of the literary context of Jesus's words for Tertullian and Origen. These are not unanchored sayings that can simply be connected to other parts of scripture as one sees fit. Instead, for Tertullian and Origen, the intertextual link requires the medium of the anecdote. In short, Tertullian and Origen were still marking out their applications of Jesus's words via the immediate literary context surrounding his pronouncements.

The textual constraint of the anecdote is almost always absent in the reading practices of Tertullian and Origen's contemporaries and predecessors, Christian or otherwise. When earlier Christian authors employ intertexts to interpret Jesus's sayings, they almost always make these textual connections on the basis of the words of Jesus's saying. This suggests that these authors considered the textual boundary for interpreting Jesus's words to consist of texts that were verbally linked to the text of Jesus's saying. With Tertullian and Origen, a different type of textual boundary emerges—namely, that of the co-text. This new type of textual boundedness has implications for the potential number of interpretations a reader might produce. To begin with, there are numerically, a potentially greater number of applications available to Tertullian and Origen since they draw on intertexts via the co-text, rather the text of Jesus's saying itself. As was seen, this could lead to a variety of surprising interpretations of Jesus's sayings. Yet the data presented above demonstrate that the words and images of the co-text, in addition to marking out inappropriate readings of Jesus's sayings, seem to have created a set of viable interpretations for Origen and Tertullian. In this way, we might think of the immediate literary context as providing the appropriate hermeneutical "bandwidth"—the parameters for establishing meaning—within which Tertullian and Origen read and interpret Jesus's sayings.[107]

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[105] Origen, *CommMt* 14.17 (GCS 40: 325-327). Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23). See 3.2, section 1 above.

[106] Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 11.1.10 (SC 442: 20–23). See 3.2, section 1 above. Origen does also link intertexts to the saying of Jesus itself. For example, in *CommMt* 13.10, he alters the wording of Romans 8.38—"nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus"—which he connects with the "asunder" saying to encourage his audience to lay hold of the conviction that no one shall "separate" the mystical union of church and Christ..

[107] I have adapted this media-based metaphor from a conversation with Prof. Markus Bockmuehl of the University of Oxford in 2016.

The textual medium by which Tertullian and Origen expanded the significance of Jesus's pronouncements was the very same one through which they anchored those interpretations. Through linking scriptural fragments to Jesus's saying through the co-text, Tertullian and Origen were simultaneously increasing the interpretations of Jesus's words *and* establishing those readings in the immediate literary context.

Conclusions

In summary, I have argued in this chapter that Tertullian and Origen's employment of scriptural intertexts when re-using Jesus's climactic sayings provides important evidence for the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation. Through deriving intertexts through the co-text of Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen effect a significant shift away from the use of Jesus's words as proof-sayings, to interpreting them as scriptural texts. I noted that this shift was gradual. At certain points, Tertullian and Origen occasionally follow their predecessors in employing Jesus's pronouncements alongside intertexts as proofs in support of a larger argument or to refute the claims of their rivals. The assumption here is that Jesus's words do not require interpretation through their immediate literary context. Moreover, they also persist in connecting these intertexts with Jesus's sayings on the basis of the text of Jesus's words. In such cases, the immediate literary context of Jesus's words recedes from view, and the category of Jesus's words as sayings continues to dominate.

At the same time, Tertullian and Origen also begin to connect scriptural texts to Jesus's saying through the immediate literary context of Jesus's sayings. This exegetical choice marks a change in the perception of Jesus's words, as it confirms Tertullian and Origen's awareness that Jesus's sayings were climactic pronouncements and did not exist in splendid isolation. The impact of this method on the exegetical results is complex. The practice of deriving intertexts from the co-text of Jesus's words ironically increases the number of applications for Jesus's sayings, even as it establishes them in the text of the anecdote. I also noted that it is precisely as Tertullian and Origen derive intertexts from the co-text of Jesus's words, that they begin to interpret and draw out the significance of those words in a disciplined fashion. Co-textually derived intertexts spawn a new mode of reading Jesus's words—not simply as sayings that prove arguments, but as *textually embedded* lines of content that require interpretation.

To be sure, intertextual reference can represent a weaker mode of such contextualisation in comparison with co-textual reference and anecdote reproduction. The relative weakness of this method is particularly witnessed in those occasions when, in their use of scriptural intertexts, Tertullian and Origen seem to ignore the immediate literary context of Jesus's saying. Nevertheless, when assessed alongside the other practices examined in this study, intertextual reference contributes to the cumulative case for Tertullian's use of a developing hermeneutic of literary contextualisation when reading Jesus's words.

Chapter 4—The Origins and Causes of the Hermeneutic of Literary Contextualisation: The Role of Literary, Historical and Ideological Factors

Having demonstrated Tertullian and Origen's persistent use of the literary context of Jesus's words, and particularly his climactic sayings, one question immediately comes to the fore: what explains the strong pressure of the immediate literary context on their re-use of Jesus's words? Put more sharply, why does this hermeneutic of literary contextualisation appear to be a feature of Origen and Tertullian's re-use of Jesus's words, while it is usually absent in the re-use of the majority of other Christian authors in the Roman period? In this chapter, I seek to trace both the origins for, and causes of, the hermeneutic of textual contextualisation in the writings of Tertullian and Origen; that is, I attempt to show *where* these practices might have emerged from, and *why* Tertullian and Origen apply them to the climactic sayings of Jesus.

The major contention of this chapter is that Tertullian and Origen's pratices of literary contextualisation can only be understood in light of a combination of historical, ideological and literary factors. Among the factors that explain *where* literary contextualisation comes from, the most important are the broader set of contextual reading practices available in the Roman world, as well as the development and use of the genres of the commentary and homily. Yet these practices and genres were available to Tertullian and Origen's contemporaries and predecessors. They do not therefore fully explain *why* Tertullian and Origen took up these strategies when interpreting Jesus's words. In accounting for this development, I conclude that the most crucial factor is the changing principles and focus of the debates in which early Christian authors were engaged. When employing Jesus's words, Clement, Justin and Irenaeus were naturally more focussed on their *authority*, *or textual basis*, and far less on issues of *hermeneutics* and *interpretation*. Through establishing the authority of Jesus's sayings, Justin, Clement and Irenaeus naturally set the scene for more intense disputes about their interpretation under Tertullian and Origen. The instances of Tertullian and Origen's appeal to the literary context of Jesus's sayings emerge precisely from disputes over their interpretation. I argue that these interpretive debates result in Tertullian and Origen emerging as the first early Christian authors to reflect

on the hermeneutical implications of regarding Jesus's words as scripturally embedded texts.

The argument unfolds in two parts. In the second and more substantial section, I account for Tertullian and Origen's appeals to, and uses of, the literary context surrounding Jesus's climactic sayings. I begin, however, by explaining the origins and causes of non-contextualisation among Tertullian and Origen's predecessors and contemporaries. My rationale for doing so is simple. While the focus of this thesis is on literary *contextualisation*, it is instructive to reflect on the origins and causes of non-contextualisation. This is not least because at the historical level, *both* reading strategies were choices, not inevitabilities—and at certain points, as we have seen, Tertullian and Origen flit between the two. Moreover, through accounting for the non-contextualisation of Jesus's words, the factors that gave rise to Tertullian and Origen's strategies come into sharper relief.

4.1.   Explaining Literary Non-contextualisation

In accounting for the early Christian practice of non-contextualisation—the practice of drawing on Jesus's words as sayings without attending to their immediate literary context—I begin by addressing the explanations given by Tertullian and Origen, while noting the severe limitations of their comments. Tertullian and Origen attribute the reading strategies of their opponents to a blend of bad motives and bad methods. Because Tertullian and Origen make these value judgements of opponents in highly polemical contexts, I seek to go beyond the highly problematic evidence that they provide. Whereas these two authors attribute the non-contextualisation of their opponents to a lack of education, I argue that the opposite scenario is most likely the case. That is, the most obvious reason for the non-contextualisation of Jesus's sayings is the fact that this was the standard way in which Roman-era readers were taught to read the words of wise figures.

1. *Tertullian and Origen's Explanations: Malevolent Motives and Mistrustful Methods*

Tertullian and Origen both give two reasons for the non-contextualisation of Jesus's climactic sayings: they attribute the practice to pernicious motives, while also

highlighting their opponents's lack of education. In Tertullian's view, his opponents adapt Jesus's moral sayings as scriptural proofs that conveniently justify certain behaviours or beliefs.[1] In the hands of his opponents, Jesus's command to "render to Caesar" excuses placing imperial wreathes on one's house or, alternatively, warrants bribing imperial officials to avoid persecution.[2] For Tertullian, reading Jesus's climatic pronouncements as fragmented sayings is the result of devious motives. In his *de Idololatria*, for instance, Tertullian mentions that while some are ignorant of idolatry, others feign ignorance (*dissimulata*).[3] In other words, some Christians wilfully ignore, and even misuse scriptural texts to fit their desired agenda. The objections Tertullian presents throughout the work probably belong, in Tertullian's mind at least, to this group of Christians. In *De Fuga*, Tertullian implies that those who pay bribes to escape persecution or death, fail to note that the more important concern is "antichrist, who demands (*instante*) the blood not the coin of the Christian".[4] In *De Corona*, Tertullian likens those who take the imperial *corona* and largess to Judas selling Christ for pieces of silver.[5] When attributing motives to his opponents, Tertullian is unrestrainedly severe.

Tertullian also attributes the reading practice of non-contextualisation to dubious *methods*. On several occasions, Tertullian notes that his opponents do not read the scriptural text in its entirety, presumably because doing so would undermine their readerly agenda. In *De Fuga*, for example, Tertullian has his opponents cite the first half of the command and omit its latter half—"render to God what is God's".[6] Similarly, in his *De Carne Christi* Tertullian represents his opponent Apelles as an exegete of questionable credentials since he takes Jesus as denying having ever been born on the basis of his saying, "who is my mother and who are my brethren?"[7] Tertullian implies that Apelles and Marcion fail to read the utterance of Jesus in its entirety. In both cases, Tertullian paints a highly unflattering portrait of his adversaries and essentially accuses them of being incapable of reading full sentences. In Tertullian's view, his opponents fragment portions of the scriptural text as proof to

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[1] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.8, 9; *De Idol.* 15.3; *Scorpiace* 12; *De Corona* 12.
[2] See *De Idol*. 15.3 (CCSL 2:1115) for the former, *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153) for the latter.
[3] Waszink and van. Winden (eds.), *De idololatria*, 9, 24-25, 99.
[4] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.8 (CCSL 2:1152-1153).
[5] *De Cor*. 12.3-4 (CCSL 2:1059): *Plane non gratuita idololatria, aliquibus aureis uenditans Christum, ut argenteis Iudas.*
[6] *De Idol* 15.3. See Waszink and van Winden (eds.), *De idololatria*, 52–53.
[7] *De Carne* 7.1 (SC 217: 240-241): *…dominum volunt negare esse [se] natum quia dixerit Quae mihi mater et qui mihi fratres?*

support their preconceived notions. Tertullian thereby links the pernicious motives of his opponents with an equally devious reading strategy.

While Origen focusses much less than Tertullian on the devious motives of his opponents or congregation, he also attributes the non-contextualisation of Jesus's climactic sayings to a lack of grammatical prowess. In his comments on the tribute passage in his *Commentary on Matthew* (see 1.2, section 5), Origen remarks that those who contemplate refusing the imperial tax act analogously to the Pharisees by reading the command to justify their actions.[8] Origen is probably not interacting with an actual group of Christians who were advocating tax rebellion. Yet he can clearly imagine the multitudes of Christians in his own day commiting the same error as the Pharisees by hastily reading Jesus's words as non-contextualised sayings. At numerous points in his discussion of the tribute passage, Origen notes that an appropriate interpretation of Jesus's command emerges from rigorous historical and literary investigation. While the pious multitudes might not grasp the importance of the historical and literary context, the one who "is able to see with intense scrutiny" perceives their significance.[9] For Origen, non-contextualisation of Jesus's climactic sayings was a strategy used by the uneducated who latched on to a pithy saying without considering the wider context.

While these explanations help to illuminate Tertullian and Origen's perceptions of their opponents, they do not provide an entirely satisfactory account for non-contextualisation at the historical level. There are at least three important reasons for this. First, and most obviously, there is reason to treat these accounts with suspicion since Tertullian and Origen represent opponents with whom they are in polemical debate. In these cases, the historian does not have direct access to the reading strategies of those who engage in non-contextualisation or the motives that drove this process. Instead, Tertullian and Origen present the historian with value judgements concerning the apparent insufficiencies of this practice. Since the only access one now has to these readings comes exclusively from Origen and Tertullian, such evidence must be treated with caution. The second, and related, problem with basing an explanation for the practice of non-contextualisation on the comments of Tertullian and Origen is that it is not clear how far their opponents, or indeed their methods and motives represent historical reality. A variety of options present themselves on this score.

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[8] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 655).

[9] Origen, *CommMt* 17.25 (GCS 40: 655): Gk. τῷ δὲ δυναμέμῳ βεβασανισμένος ὁρᾶν; Lat. *qui…diligenter considerat.*

1. One might conclude that the opponents and their methods are a complete rhetorical invention.

2. Or, one might come to the conclusion that the opponents or interlocutors fail to represent historical reality, but that their methods were known to have existed, even if they have been embellished and exaggerated, and their motives invented.

3. Or, further still, the reverse might be the case. The opponents might be a known entity (for instance, "Marcionites") but their methods and motives are invented, at worst, or at best subject to heavy embellishment.

4. Or, lastly, the opponents, their methods and motives represent historical reality, as far as it is possible to tell.

Since each case study in this study involves a different set of interlocutors and a slightly different set of descriptors, I suggest that it is best to treat each individually. In the case of Tertullian's *De Idololatria* and Origen's discussion of the tribute passage in the *Commentary on Matthew*, the supposed opponent is anonymous. Tertullian's opponents in *De Idololatria* are widely assumed to be imaginary on the basis of Tertullian's rhetorical conventions.[10] At the same time, Origen's congregation (and indeed Clement and his readers) all attest to the practice of alighting on a saying of Jesus apart from its immediate literary context. One can therefore imagine that both authors perceive that such non-contextualised use of this, and other sayings of Jesus, is a common practice among certain Christians. I would suggest that both of these cases therefore probably belong to category 2 above. In other cases, when an opponent or exegetical interlocutor is known—for instance, in Tertullian's *AM* on two occasions and in Origen's *Hom. In Luc.* 39—it is far from clear that they receive a fair representation from either author. In the case of Origen's homily, Origen mentions that "some think that the Saviour spoke on a single level" when uttering the "render" command. Origen would have little reason to invent his interlocutors, or their reading strategy (option 4). In his responses to the Marcionites, Tertullian makes little attempt to consider the methods of his opponents used when interpreting Jesus's sayings. In the case of the Sadducees passage, for instance, Lieu has noted that the Marcionite reading "the god of that age" might derive from the Pauline epistles.[11] These examples

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[10] Waszink and van Winden, *De Idololatria*, 9.
[11] *Tertullian, AM* 4.38.5 and the discussion at 1.2. example 2 above.

would therefore appear to fall into category 3—Tertullian deals with real opponents but invents or embellishes their reading strategies and motives. Clearly, then, the extent to which Tertullian and Origen's opponents represent reality requires handling on a case-by-case basis. In examining Tertullian and Origen's opponents, their motives and their methods, one finds that usually one of these is a rhetorical or literary fiction, and in some cases all three are.

The third problem with Tertullian and Origen's explanations is that they make certain assumptions about the lack of education of their opponents/interlocutors. In actual fact, there are clear counter-examples where *educated* authors fragment a climactic saying from its broader literary context. For instance, Clement decontextualizes the "render" saying in his *Paedagogus*, while the emperor Marcus Aurelius does the same with the saying attributed to Antisthenes.[12] These examples, of which there are countless others, demonstrate that the non-contextualisation of a climactic saying was not purely the function of an individual's lack of grammatical education. In fact, the very exact opposite seems to have been the case, as I will now show.

2. *Roman Education and the Non-contextualisation of the Moral Sayings of the Sages*

A casual reading of Origen's comments in his homily and commentary on the tribute passage might lead one to the conclusion that the non-contextualisation of Jesus's sayings resulted from a failure to learn the basic lessons of grammar. In reality, the most obvious explanation for the non-contextualisation of Jesus's climactic sayings is the fact that this was a popular and natural way to read these pronouncements. The argument can be stated simply: a basic, fundamental explanation for the early Christian non-contextualisation of Jesus's sayings finds its roots in the pedagogy of the day.[13] Through tracing the conventional ways in which the sayings of

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[12] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 7.36 (LCL 58: 180-181). Clement, *Paed.* 3.12.92 (GCS 12: 286).
[13] On which see H. -I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (Translated by George Lamb; London: Sheed & Ward, 1956) 156, 325; S. F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (London: Methuen, 1977); Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students*; *eadem.*, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (2nd ed.; Princeton (N.J.): Princeton University Press, 2005); T. Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

the sages were used in Roman education, it becomes clear that non-contextualisation conforms to the standard conventions of Roman-era pedagogy and literate education.

Having learned to read and write with the help of lists of syllables and words, a student in the Hellenistic or Roman-eras then began to practice the basic skills of literacy by copying out maxims and anecdotes mined from literature.[14] The use of moral sayings and stories was thought to provide the basic, preliminary instruction in virtue that was a prerequisite to the more complex tasks of reading longer passages of prose and poetry as well as the construction of speeches.[15] On this view, one moved from an initial stage of mining literature for ethical content to the distinct phase of criticising literature by reading longer sections of text in context. Teresa Morgan documents these two discrete, pedagogical stages in an important, extended passage that merits full citation.

> It is worth noting that criticizing literature and mining it for ethical instruction constitute two slightly different approaches to texts. In later literary theory, particularly in Christian writers [here Morgan cites Augustine. *De Gen. ad litt.* I.1], the different ways of reading texts are distinguished more explicitly, and distinctions are made between, for instance, moral, allegorical, and mystical types of reading. *In earlier educational texts, however, the distinction remains binary and implicit, between taking fragments of literature out of context for moral edification and studying the interpretation of passages in context with the aid of literary critical tools.* (These are not, of course, mutually exclusive alternatives: literary critical tools can be used, as we have seen, to extract morals from suitable authors. Many texts received both kinds of treatment, and thereby had their authority doubly enhanced).[16]

Morgan is right to note that the relationship between ethical instruction and literary-criticism is not mutually exclusive, since the task of selecting maxims itself involved the basic literary-critical skills of identifying and extracting maxims and establishing the text of a particular saying saying.[17] Yet beyond these rather basic text-critical endeavours, the task of grammatical analysis—a key part of which was probing the literary context of the saying—remains absent when it comes to using moral sayings. Thus, the dichotomy between employing fragmented maxims, on the one hand, and

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[14] Cribiore, *Writing*, 131–37; Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 160–84.
[15] Cribiore, *Writing*, 131–37; J. Mansfeld, *Prolegomena: Questions to be Settled Before the Study of an Author, or a Text* (Philosophia Antiqua 61; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 1 on the preliminary role of moral sayings in a philosophical context.
[16] Morgan, *Literate Education*, 151 (italics added).
[17] Moreover, this dichotomy can also be challenged on the grounds that one continued to read maxims throughout one's progression from the primary to secondary stages of education. It is still useful, however, as a heuristic.

performing literary-criticism on longer passages of prose, on the other, remains rather stark. The lack of interest in the textual context of Jesus's moral sayings most likely reflects the standard pedagogical progression in the Roman period.

The theoretical literature on the use of moral sayings reinforces this point by focussing on the use of maxims (Gk. γνώμη; pl. γνῶμαι; Lat. *sententia*; pl. *sententiae*). The sources for early Roman-era pedagogy range from the *progymnasmata*, or handbooks that provided the advanced student with exercises that prepare him/her for giving a speech, to the popular Latin treatise on oratory by Quintilian (ca. 35-100 CE).[18] Without fail, when these sources discuss the use of moral sayings, they focus on maxims or *sententiae*. While some maxims were coined, proverbial sayings (the equivalent of the modern, "don't cry over spilled milk"), many came from literary sources.[19] In the Roman era, the writings of Homer, Socrates, Hesiod, Menander and Demosthenes were among the most popularly cited.[20] Crucially, the primary task when re-using maxims was to select an appropriate saying that fitted the argument of the speech. The chief task of the user of the maxim was to adapt the saying to fit the case at hand. The central focus, in other words, remains on the interpreter who, to borrow Craig Gibson's phrase, turns the maxim "to the service of an argument".[21] The three earliest extant handbooks from the Roman period—those of Theon of Alexandria (ca. first century), Hermogenes of Tarsus (ca. second century) and Aphthonius (ca. fourth century)— provide in their curricula a set of exercises that prepare the student to give speeches (μέλεται).[22] Near the beginning of these handbooks, one usually finds discussion of the maxim.[23] Each handbook provides an initial definition of the maxim and a list of practices that one should perform with the saying.[24] These exercises

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[18] See Kennedy, ed., *Progymnasmata*, x. These are exercises (*gymnasmata*) that are preliminary (*pro*) to the declamation, or the task of giving speeches.

[19] See Morgan, *Popular Morality*, 84-90.

[20] Morgan, *Popular Morality*, 86; Morgan, *Literate Education*, 316 discusses the contents of school anthologies and the distribution of authors in school exercises geographically.

[21] C. Gibson, *Libanius's Progymnasmata: Model Exercises in Greek Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Writings from the Greco-Roman World 27; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009) xxi: "Through the *progymnasmata*, students learned to take their knowledge of classical literature—its myths, heroes and ethical values—and turn it to the service of an argument". Libanius' *progymnasmata* dates to a period subsequent to Tertullian and Origen.

[22] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, x.

[23] Theon combines the exercise on the maxim with the one on chreia. The order of the different exercises differs according to the handbook. See Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, xiii.

[24] Each of these three handbooks is found in Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*. See also Hock and O'Neil, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric*, for the exercise on *chreia*. Each of these exercises is repeated in the fullest of the handbooks—that of the fourth century sophist Libanius, on which see Gibson, *Libanius's Progymnasmata*.

include (1) a brief encomium or praise of the speaker of the maxim (2) a simple paraphrase (3) a statement of the cause or rationale behind the maxim (4) an elaboration by contrast (5) an elaboration by comparison (6) examples of the maxim from history or mythology (7) testimony of the ancients who support the maxim (often called judgment) and, finally (8) an epilogue which exhorts the reader to practice the maxim.[25] In the often detailed discussions of the various parts of the exercise on maxim, there is little, if any, focus on the literary context from which maxims emerged.[26] The "cause" or rationale of a maxim might appear to offer the opportunity to explore the literary context of the saying, and the reason for its appropriateness, or an incident in its textual context that might have precipitated the saying. In actual fact, the authors of the handbook use the "cause" to provide reasons for the appropriateness of the saying without attending to the literary context. So, for the Homeric saying, "a man who is a counsellor should not sleep through the night" (*Iliad* 2.24), Hermogenes of Tarsus provides the following cause—"A leader should always be engaged in thought, but sleep takes away counsel".[27] The cause gives a rationale for the saying that is not based on its literary context, but on some other criterion, usually common-sense.

Moving from the Greek to the Latin speaking world, one finds the lengthiest discussion of the maxim in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*. Among the four different definitions of *sententiae* Quintilian provides, the first is most relevant: the simple *sententiae* that are equivalent with maxims, or universal pronouncements "such as might be praiseworthy even outside the context of a Cause".[28] While these maxims provided sentiments that could "in principle be separated from the immediate context (*quae etiam citra complexum causae possit esse laudabilis*)", as Paul Holloway notes, such maxims could "and should be linked to its context and thus made more pointed (*vehementius*)".[29] While this sounds promising as a parallel to Tertullian and Origen's contextual activities, the context in view here is not the narrative or literary work from which the maxim emerged, but the context of the rhetorician's argument. Again, as

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[25] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 78 (on Hermogenes).
[26] This is obviously not applicable to coined maxims, which the authors sometimes provide.
[27] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 77-78 (on Hermogenes).
[28] The other three types are: (2) sententiae with an added reason ("because"); (3) double sententiae: two clauses. Quintilian then states that some authors have given ten different types (4) "from opposites". See Quintilian, *Inst*. 8.5.3 (LCL 126: 408-409).
[29] P. A. Holloway, "Paul's Pointed Prose: The 'Sentia' in Roman Rhetoric and Paul", *NovT* 40.1 (1998): 32–53 (37); Quintilian, *Inst*. 8.5.3 (LCL 126: 408-409); D. M. Kriel, "The Forms of the Sententia in Quintilian VIII.v. 3-24", *Acta Classica* 4 (1961): 80-89 (81).

with the Greek preliminary handbooks, so with Quintilian, the interpreter is to adapt the maxim to the context of the speech.[30] The focus on the interpreter becomes even clearer when Quintilian notes how one might make a *sententia* more forceful through personal application. One can take the *sententia* of Cicero—"I had power to save: do you ask, have I power to destroy?"—and transform it so that it reads in a more pointed fashion: "Caesar, your fortune confers on you nothing greater than the power, and your nature nothing better than the desire, to save as many people as possible".[31] These, and other examples, show a greater interest in the context of the reader's argument rather than the literary context in which the saying at one point functioned. As such, there appear to be very few, if any, extant examples in the available, early theoretical literature where the author seeks to locate the co-text of the maxim as a way of contextualising the saying in aid of its interpretation. In summary, this brief survey of Roman thinking about the moral sayings of the sages—both in theory and in the material evidence—shows that the maxim dominates. In light of the popularity and pervasiveness of these methods, it is unsurprising to find early Christian readers employing the words, and particularly climactic pronouncements of Jesus as something akin to non-contextualised maxims. Indeed, the use of the term *logia* or *dicta* to describe Jesus's words by early Christian authors before Tertullian and Origen seems in many ways to resemble the use of "maxim" by non-Christian, Roman and Hellenistic authors.[32]

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[30] See the story of Seneca the Elder, *Contr*. 1. praef 23 (LCL 463:22-25) which further demonstrates the non-contextualisation of maxims: "He practised another sort of exercise: one day he would write only 'exclamations' [*epiphonema*], one day only *enthymemes*, one day nothing but the traditional passages we properly call *sententiae*, that have no intimate connection with the particular *controversia*, but can be quite aptly placed elsewhere too, such as those on fortune, cruelty, the age, riches [i.e. *loci communes*]".

[31] So, Quintilian, *Inst*. 8.5.7, writes "Here he has attributed to the person features that belonged to the circumstances" (LCL 126: 411). Of additional relevance are the *epiphonema*—or "final utterances clinching a Narrative or a Proof", not for proof but "as a final flourish"; a summary state of the main idea just discussed [413]. Examples from Virgil, end to prologue of his *Aeneid* 1.33—"so great a task it was to found the Roman race" and Cicero, *Pro Milone* 9— "the honourable young man preferred the risks of action to the disgrace of passivity". Paul Holloway notes that Quintilian's awareness that Cicero's insult comes at the end might be important for rhetorical force, if not the meaning. The focus is on composing such final flourishes rather than applying final pronouncements that already existed in narratives.

[32] Early Christians do not often used the term "maxim" to describe Jesus's words. In Rufinus's translation, Origen refers to Jesus's words as *sententiae Domini* in *Hom. In Lev.* 8.1 (SC 287: 8-9). For the use of the term "saying" (*logia* or *dicta*), see the introduction. Even Tertullian and Origen continue to fall into this practice, though they also move beyond it. See further on this, Barton, *Holy Writings*, 79.

3. *Literary Explanations: Genre and Purpose*

In addition to the role of education, generic conventions also help to explain an author's choice to decontextualize Jesus's climactic sayings. For example, Clement's decision to cite the "render" command as a stand-alone saying in his *Paedagogus* makes sense in light of the genre and purpose of the work he is composing.[33] The non-contextualised form of Jesus's saying matches the purpose of this section of the *Paedagogus* in which Clement attempts to provide a compilation of pithy quotations from scripture that illuminate Christian ethical conduct. As Clement states at the beginning of this section, "And these things he [the Instructor] has suggested to us and proposed by a summary of portions of the scriptures".[34] This is not to say that Clement is necessarily unaware of some version of the tribute anecdote, or indeed of the written text of the Gospels. He clearly knows and employs the four gospels, and others besides. Rather, his choice of the fragmented saying makes sense in light of his choice of genre, and his agenda in this section of the *Paedagogus*—namely, to anthologise portions of scripture that provided ethical injunctions.[35] Further evidence of this is found in an important passage in which Clement divides the Christian life into two distinct parts, with Christ performing different roles in each. Christ first assumes the mantle of the tutor (Παιδαγωγός) who teaches basic moral principles, "giving bare commandments" (γυμνὰς παρατιθέμενος τὰς παραγγελίας) and "adapting them to the time of guidance" (ἁρμοζόμενος μὲν τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς καθοδηγήσεως).[36] Only once the Christian has reached maturity does Christ adopt the role of Teacher (διδάσκαλος) who provides the interpretation of these commands and more difficult portions of scripture.[37]

Clement's impulse to anthologise also mirrors broader compilatory practices in the intellectual and literary cultural of the Roman period. Jason König, Greg Woolf

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[33] Clement, *Paedagogus* 3.12.96 (GCS 12/3: 286) cites the saying with the gloss, "concerning socio-political conduct" (καὶ περὶ πολιτείας· Ἀπόδοτε τὰ Καίσαρος Καίσαρι καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ). This part of the work consists of scriptural citations that function as injunctions for certain behaviours and beliefs.

[34] Clement, *Paedagogus* 3.12.87 (GCS 12/3: 296): ταῦτα δὲ ἡμῖν ἐν κεφαλαίου μέρει δι' αὐτῶν ὑποτίθεται καὶ παρατίθεται τῶν γραφῶν.

[35] Clement cites the command in chapter 2 of the same work although there he conflates it with the story about the coin in the fish. This demonstrates that he was probably aware of some version of the larger passage, especially as he writes that the "stater" is capable of multiple interpretations.

[36] Clement, *Paed.*, 3.12.87.1 (GCS 12/3: 284). On this trilogy, see Osborn, *Clement*. 5. Christ invites people to salvation (*protreptikos*) before guiding them and healing their passions (*paidagogos*) and teaches them by clarifying symbolic statements. This last work has caused confusion. Does it refer to the Stromateis, or some other work?

[37] Clement, *Paed.*, 3.12.87.1 (GCS 12/3: 283-284).

and Teresa Morgan have recently noted that there was a large demand for anthologies of moral sayings in late antiquity.[38] Among the important practical considerations that drove anthologizing was the fact that book production proliferates in this period. Overwhelmed readers appear to have wanted master scribes to compile anthologies of texts for their benefit, which had the added advantage of freeing them from the task of wading through masses of material.

An additional, possible literary explanation for non-contextualisation was the author's assumptions about the knowledge of the audience. Clement might have considered an anecdote like the one about paying Caesar his tribute to have been so famous and memorable that it hardly needed reciting. The climactic saying on its own would have called to mind the entire passage. After all, he appears to have written his *Paedagogus* at least in large part, for an educated audience.[39] If they knew the context of a saying of Jesus, then citing the saying might have been all that was required to trigger the context of the pronouncement.[40] Furthermore, Clement might have thought that the lack of context created a bond between him and his audience, as it was assumed that both parties possessed enough erudition to know the larger passage without providing an explicit citation.[41]

4.2. Explaining Literary Contextualisation

In the following section, I argue that a satisfactory account of Tertullian and Origen's practice of literary contextualisation requires a multi-faceted approach that accounts for historical, literary and ideological factors. I discuss each of the three reading strategies within each section, to the extent that they pertain to the factor under investigation. The central contention can be stated as follows: I argue that while historical and literary factors (contemporaneous practices of contextual reading and

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[38] J. König and G. Woolf, "Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire", in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 23–63 (23); T. Morgan, "Encyclopaedias of Virtue? Collections of Sayings and Stories about Wise Men in Greek" in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, 108-128.

[39] On the mixed audience of Clement's works, see Hägg, *Clement of Alexandria*, 66-70.

[40] It is also significant that Clement glosses the saying, "concerning civil conduct" (*Paedagogus* 3.12.91). This "interpretation" of sorts, mirrors the conventional, literal way of interpreting the command.

[41] At a practical level, the limitations of space and the expense of writing materials might provide additional justification for an ancient author citing the pronouncement of the sage on its own. See H. Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1997) on book production. This is unlikely to be a factor for authors who had wealthy patrons, but it might have restricted other writers.

the choices of genre) help to indicate *where* the practices of literary contextualisation might have emerged from, they do not account for *why* Tertullian and Origen take them up and apply them to Jesus's words. In addressing this question, I contend that the *changing principles* of the debates in which Tertullian and Origen were engaged provides a crucially important explanation for the rise of this hermeneutic. It is the move towards *interpreting* Jesus's words that precipitates serious reflection upon the methods for doing so. While Tertullian and Origen's predecessors seem to have held Jesus's sayings in high regard, they did not reflect on the hermeneutical implications of this decision. Indeed, as I have suggested above, they most likely could not, because the nature of the battles in which they were engaged concerned the authority of, and sources for, Jesus's words, rather than the rules according to which they were to be interpreted. With Tertullian and Origen, to read Jesus's words aright entails a rigorous engagement with their literary contexts. That this situation arose is due, in large part, to the success of those who had come before them.

1. *Historical Factors: Homeric Criticism, Rabbinic Exegesis of Scripture and Latin Rhetorical Treatises*

The many contemporaneous parallels to Tertullian and Origen's use of the co-text of Jesus's sayings offer an important set of backgrounds for their reading practices. The following discussion of literary-critical and grammatical principles associated with Homeric commentaries and rabbinic scriptural exegesis is not meant to be exhaustive; rather it offers a representative review that demonstrates the pervasive use of co-textual practices on larger texts. These historical parallels, I argue, offer an account of *where* Tertullian and Origen might have learned to attend to the practice of literary contextualisation. At the very least, they show that Tertullian and Origen's practices of literary contextualisation do not emerge *ex nihilo* but form part of a broader way of thinking about texts in antiquity.

Jewish practices of literary contextualisation are particularly worthy of examination, especially as Origen admits to learning the practice of cross-referencing from "a certain Hebrew".[42] One of the rules (*middot*) of Rabbi Hillel (ca. 110 BCE-10 CE) calls for "an interpretation of a word or passage from its context" (דבר הלמד

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[42] Origen, *Commentary on the Psalms* 1 (*Phil.* 1.3; SC 302: 244.4–17).

מעינינו).[43] Numerous examples of this rule exist in rabbinic and Talmudic literature.[44] Among these, the the discussion of Exodus 20.15 in the *Mekhilta*, or collection of midrash on the book of Exodus, forms a strong and significant example. In a treatment of the divine command, "you shall not steal" (Exodus 20.15), the author queries whether this command prohibits the stealing of persons or of money.[45] The midrashist calls for the reader to "Go and learn it by one of the thirteen rules [of interpretation] according to which the Torah is interpreted: What does scripture deal with here?"[46] The solution to the interpretive problem is a restatement of the principle of reading within the literary context.[47] The author goes on to note that the other two commandments (the prohibitions against murder and adultery) both explicitly entail the punishment of death for violation. Because the property of theft is not a capital offence, while stealing a person is, the commandment not to steal must also concern the stealing of persons, rather than the stealing of things.[48] The *Mekhilta* here provides a significant and roughly contemporaneous parallel to the phenomenon and practice of co-textual reference performed by Tertullian and Origen.

Beyond the explicit application of Hillel's law, Jewish writers frequently provide contextual readings of scriptural verses. For example, Rimon Kasher discusses the method of *peshat* in rabbinic literature.[49] *Peshat* refers to "an exegetical method that seeks to expose the meaning of scripture by considering its context, using philological insights and with historical 'awareness'".[50] Peshat appears both in the exegetical questions and conclusions of rabbinic commentaries on scripture. Kasher notes that in

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[43] H. Danby, *Tractate Sanhedrin, Mishnah and Tosephta* (Translations of Early Documents; London: S.P.C.K., 1919) 77 translates this as, "the conclusion to be drawn from the context". See D. Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 22 (1949): 239–264. The rule is also mentioned in *Avot de R. Natan* A37.10 and Sifre 3A. On the former, see J. Neusner, *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan: An Analytical Translation and Explanation* (Brown Judaic Studies 114; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1986) 225. See for further discussion Ellis, "Biblical Interpretation", 700-702.

[44] I draw here on the analysis of J. W. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953) 70-71.

[45] See *Mekhilta Bahodesh* 8. For critical edition, see J. Z. Lauterbach, *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael: Volume 2* (The JPS Library of Jewish Classics; Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1976) 260-1. This example is also discussed in *B. Talmud Sanhedrin* 86a.

[46] Lauterbach, *Mekilta*, 261.

[47] See Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics*, 70-71.

[48] A. Yadin, *Scripture as Logos: Rabbi Ishmael and the Origins of Midrash* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013) 102.

[49] R. Kasher, "The Interpretation of Scripture in Rabbinic Literature" in M. J. Mulder (ed.), *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Ancient Christianity* (CRINT 2/1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 547-590 (553-560).

[50] Kasher, "Rabbinic Literature", 553.

the Mekhilta, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya interprets the term "water" "as it sounds" (כשמועו) rather than following those who interpret water metaphorically as the words of Torah.[51]

In her monograph on Jewish exegesis and Alexandrian scholarship, Maren Niehoff provides an important example of a Jewish scriptural exegete resolving a textual problem through an appeal to context. The case appears in the discussion of Demetrius (*fl.* 3rd century BCE) which is extant in Eusebius's *Praeparatio*.[52] Demetrius records the answer of a previous colleague who discusses the perceivably problematic text in which Joseph gives Benjamin five portions despite him being too young to eat meat (Gen 43.34). The anonymous colleague resolves the problem by noting that Joseph, in apportioning larger quanities of meat for himself and Benjamin than for the other brothers, seeks to remedy the inbalance of power among Jacob's sons.[53] As Niehoff notes, the "unrealistic presentation is thus justified by reference to its narrative purpose in the drama of the hero's psychology".[54]

Alongside these Jewish parallels, there are numerous examples of reading classical literature in a contextual fashion. Many examples of such practices can be found in the scholia or annotations on the Homeric corpus.[55] These fleshed-out cases demonstrate the importance of attending to the co-text of a word or line as part of the task of interpreting Homer. As such, they provide a larger framework within which the contextual reading practices of Tertullian, and especially Origen, can be understood. In her recent study of the Homeric commentator *par excellence*, Aristarchus of Samothrace (216–144 BCE), Francesca Schironi provides ample evidence that the context of the line or passage helped to clarify the meaning of a word in Homer's

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[51] Those who interpret metaphorically are called *doreshe reshumot* (see Kasher, "Scripture in Rabbinic Literature" 564). For further on the use of terms like כמשמע/כשמועו see Kasher, "Scripture in Rabbinic Literature", 553-554.

[52] Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9.21.14-15 (SC 369: 252-253).

[53] Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis*, 47. "He [Joseph] did this because seven sons had been born to his father from Lea, but [only] two from his mother Rachel. Therefore, he served Benjamin five portions and took himself two. Then there were seven portions corresponding to those [which] the sons of Lea received". Philo follows this exegesis when he argues that Joseph gave a richer portion "to his maternal brother" to determine whether his siblings remained envious. See Philo, *De Iosepho* 234 (Laporte, 138-139): καλέσας ἐπὶ ξενίαν καὶ ἑστιῶν πολυτελεστέραις εὐώχει τὸν ὁμομήτριον παρασκευαῖς, ἀποβλέπων εἰς ἕκαστον καὶ τεκμαιρόμενος ἐκ τῆς ὄψεως, ἐι τις αὐτοῖς ὑποικούρει φθόνος.

[54] Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis*, 47 notes the colleague's use of an intertextual strategy as well (47-48).

[55] For an introduction to these scholia and the literary-critical practices therein, see E. Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship: A Guide to Finding, Reading, and Understanding Scholia, Commentaries, Lexica, and Grammatical Treatises, from Their Beginnings to the Byzantine Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 18-23; N. J. Richardson, "Literary Criticism in the Scholia to the *Iliad*: A Sketch" in A. Laird (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Ancient Literary Criticism* (Oxford Readings in Classical Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) 176-210.

Iliad.[56] This was an especially crucial task for words that did not appear to make sense within the context of the lines in which they appeared.[57] One notable example is Odysseus's rebuke of his commander Agamemnon, whom he calls a "wretch" (οὐλομενε).[58] Deeming this an instance of shockingly inappropriate insubordination, a number of Homeric scholars attempted to restore a more appropriate wording. Aristophanes, for instance, rejected this translation in favour of the rather more tame interjection δεινέ.[59] In response, Aristarchus seeks to establish "οὐλομενε" as the correct reading on the basis that, in the context of the passage, Agamemnon clearly reacts in such a way as to suggest that Odysseus has rebuked him (*Il* 14.104-5).[60] Aristarchus then supports his decision by introducing a principle of contextual reading: one ought to "look intently at the particular circumstances" (εἰς τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀτενιστέον).[61] While seemingly concerned with the meaning of a single word in this instance, Aristarchus in fact employs the word to establish the entire context of the speech, since he writes, "his speech is for Agamemnon's and the allies' benefit" (ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ γὰρ λέγει τοῦ ᾿Αγαμέμνομος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων συμμάχων).[62] By relating the meaning of word to the context of the line and speech in which it was found, Aristarchus was able to establish the text and shape its interpretation. Additional examples of such contextual reading practices abound in Aristarchus' works, and there is no need to recite them here.[63]

Moving forward in time, we come to Porphyry (ca. 234–305 CE) who provides further striking parallels to the phenomenon of co-textual reference in his *Homeric Questions*. Porphyry notes that in addition to using Homeric passages from farther afield within the Homeric corpus—the famous principle of Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν ("Homer explaining Homer")—one can also use adjacent lines to clarify

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[56] Schironi, *Aristarchus*, 793.
[57] Homeric critics frequently athetized such words (place obelisks around the word or line in question). Although more hesitant to do so, Aristarchus did at times sense the need to athetize a line. See Schironi, *Aristarchus* 474; Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 207.
[58] *Sch. Il*. 14.84a: see H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (Scholia Vetera)* Vol. III. (Berlin: De Gruyter 1974) 579.
[59] *Sch. Il*. 14.84a. Erbse, *Scholia* III, 579.
[60] Schironi, *Aristarchus* 258. See discussion of this passage in Nünlist, "Kontext und Kontextualisierung", 114.
[61] See discussion in R. Nünlist, "Poetics and Literary Criticism in the Framework of the (Greek) Language" in F. Montanari, S. Matthaios and A. Rengakos (eds.) *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship* (Brill's Companions in Classical Studies; Leiden: Brill, 2015) 2:706-755 (747).
[62] *Sch. Il*. 14.84a: Erbse, *Scholia* III, 579.
[63] See Schironi, *Aristarchus*, 221-223 on the attention to context (τὰ συμφραζόμενα) when explaining glosses and in choosing between concurrent readings (258-9).

unclear words or sentences.[64] As Porphyry puts it, "sometimes Homer explains himself immediately" (παρακειμένως).[65] To illustrate his point, Porphyry observes that the explanation for the *hapax legomenon* εἰροκόμος ("aged woman") in Homer's *Iliad*, "lies added right next to it" (παράκειται συνεζευγμένη ἡ ἐξήγησις), in the following line (*Iliad* 3.386-7): "What then is an εἰροκόμος? 'One', he adds, 'who skilfully worked out beautiful things in wool for her'".[66] Thus, an unusual or rarely used term can be explained with reference to the immediate context of the passage.[67]

Numerous additional examples exist in which commentators employed the literary context to elucidate the significance of a Homeric line, and not only a word. Rene Nünlist's discussion of the question and answer literature, which dates back as far as Aristotle, demonstrates the importance of contextual reading for solving difficulties, and more especially perceived contradictions, in the Homeric text.[68] Homeric scholia of the "problem and solution" type sought to ask why a certain detail was present in the text, introduced with διά τί (difficulties were known as ζητήματα) before then offering a solution usually introduced by ὅτι (solutions were referred to as λύσεις). The solution could emerge from a variety of textual contexts—a careful semantic analysis of the word in its context (λύσις ἐκ τῆς λέξεως); a solution from the character delivering the line (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου), and a solution from the specific moment (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ)—that is, through careful examination of the immediate

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[64] Porphyry, *Hom. Quaest.* 1.56.4-6. For text see R. R. Schlunk (ed.), *The Homeric Questions: A Bilingual Edition* (New York: Lang, 1993) 46-47. For a recent discussion of the meaning of this phrase, and variants thereof in the fragments attributed to Aristarchus of Samothrace, see R. Nünlist, "What Does Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν Actually Mean?" *Hermes: Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie* 143.4 (2015): 385-403. Nünlist treats examples of the principle in which the phrase is not used, a particular strength of his study. He also notes that Aristarchus uses the principle with "a sense of proportion" and an awareness that there were occasions when the rule was unsuitable. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis* 49-51 provides discussion of the use of this principle. See for a discussion of similar formulations in the writings of Proclus with regard to Plato, and Galen with regard to Hippocrates, Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, I: 277; J. Pépin, *La tradition de l'allégorie, de Philon d'Alexandrie à Dante*: *Études historiques* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987) 194-197. For further discussion of the influence of this principle on Origen, see Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 276–277. Porphyry ascribes the quotation to Aristarchus (*Hom. Quaest.* I 1.12-13). The origins of this phrase are debated. See C. Schäublin, "Homerum Ex Homero", *Museum Helveticum* 34 (1977) 221–27 who sees it as a fairly widespread principle. For further references see J. A. MacPhail, (ed.), *Porphyry's Homeric Questions on the Iliad: Text, Translation, Commentary* (Texte und Kommentare 36; Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2011) 4n27. MacPhail writes that "the idea is uncontestably Aristarchean" (3n23).
[65] For text and translation of Porphyry, see Schlunk, *Homeric Questions: A Bilingual Edition*, 46–47.
[66] Schlunk, *Homeric Questions*, 46–47.
[67] See Neuschäfer, *Origines als Philologe*, 276–77.
[68] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 11; Schironi, *Aristarchus*, 535-9. On Aristotle and the genre of question and answer, see Pfeiffer, *Classical Scholarship Volume 1*, 69-71.

context.[69] One example of λύσεις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ which appears in the epitome, or marginal, scribal scrawling, recorded in Porphyry's *Homeric Questions*, demonstates the principle.

> ἄλογον τὸ μὴ πορεύεσθαι εὐθὺς εἰς Αἰθιοπίαν· λύεται δὲ ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ· τοῖς γὰρ θεοῖς εὐωχουμένοις ἄτοπον ἐνοχλεῖν, καὶ ἄλλως διὰ τὸ τοὺς συμμάχους τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐκεῖ τυγχάνειν·

> It seems unreasonable that she [Thetis, mother of Achilles] should not immediately have gone to Ethiopia. But this is solved by the context: for it is absurd to annoy the gods as they feast, and besides she would meet there those [gods] who fight alongside the Greeks. [70]

In this case, Porphyry comments on the twelve-day visit of the gods to Ethiopia in Homer's *Iliad* (1.488-492). Achilles petitions his mother Thetis to implore Zeus to act on behalf of Troy against the Greeks. Yet Thetis is not able to make this request for twelve days because the gods are feasting with the Ethiopians. The delay in Thetis' visit constituted a famous problem among ancient readers of this passage. Why did Thetis wait twelve days before offering her plea for aid from Zeus on behalf of Achilles? Some held that the delay was designed to embolden the Trojans.[71] The solution Porphyry forwards emerges, he argues, from the context of the passage. Thetis considered it detrimental to her cause to interrupt the gods when they were feasting. And, in any case, there were gods present there who were on the side of the Greeks, the sworn enemies of the Trojans. If she were to raise a public plea on behalf of Troy she would risk undermining her son's scheme. Far better for her to meet and petition Zeus in secret. The context of the larger episode therefore resolves the problems raised by an individual line. Various other examples exist of this reading practice in the scholia but also in Plutarch's treatment of the context of Homeric lines in his *De audientis poetis*.[72]

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[69] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 11. There is also the solution from habit (differences between habits in the work and now; λύσις ἀπό τοῦ ἔθους). See Nünlist, *Ancient Critic* 116-134 for examples of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου. Compare Origen's attention to the speakers in scripture (Martens, *Origen and Scripture* 58-59). For λύσις ἐκ τῆς λέξεως see F. Combellack "The λύσις ἐκ τῆς λέξεως", *American Journal of Philology* 108.2 (1987): 202-219.

[70] My translation. A 420, (on visit of gods to Ethiopia in *Il.* 1.488-492). For text, see MacPhail Jr., *Porphyry's Homeric Questions on the Iliad*, 278. I owe this discussion to an email exchange with Prof. Dr Nünlist.

[71] See R. Scodel, "The Gods' Visit to the Ethiopians in 'Iliad' 1", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 103 (2007): 83-98 (87).

[72] Porphryry, Γ 315 (on Hector measuring the space; *Il.* 3.315). See Plutarch's literary contextualisation of *Od.* 4.197–198; *Il.* 24.525–526 in, "How the Young Man Should Study Poetry" (*De aud. poet.*; LCL 197: 114-115). For text and discussion, see Nünlist, "Kontext", 107-109. Plutarch employs two interesting terms to refer to the linguistic context—the words that lie near (τὰς ἐκ τῶν παρακειμένων) and the context (συμφραζόμενα)

Particularly relevant as background to Tertullian's co-textual practices are the Latin rhetoricians, Cicero (106-43 BCE), Hermagoras (*fl.* 1st century BCE) and Quintilian, each of whom authored handbooks on rhetoric. Within these works, each author discusses resolving cases of ambiguity in legal documents (*scriptura*) through using the context to discern the intent of a writing. So, Cicero writes in a famous passage worth citing:

> "[I]t must be shown that from what precedes and follows in the document (*ex superiore et ex inferiore scriptura*) the doubtful point becomes plain. Therefore, if words are to be considered separately by themselves, every word, or at least many words, would seem ambiguous; but it is not right to regard as ambiguous what becomes plain on consideration of the whole context (*ex omni considerata scriptura*)" (Cicero, *Inv.* 2.40.117).[73]

In his *Institutio,* Quintilian provides an example of the outworking of this principle when he discusses an ambiguously worded *controversia*, which he argues can be resolved through grammatical analysis.[74] In the case of the legal ruling, "my heir shall be bound to give my wife a hundred pounds of silver as chosen", Quintilian remarks that it is unclear who is to choose to give the inheritance. Quintilian appeals to the resolution "by addition"—one can add "by him" or "by her" to clarify the agent with legal power.[75] The influence of these Latin handbooks on Tertullian's contextual reading practice is, as Robert D. Sider has argued, profound and pervasive.[76] I have discussed several such cases above (see Excursus in chapter 2).

My intention in briefly surveying these historical parallels has been to show the precedents for co-textual reference among a variety of authors and reading cultures. Significantly, however, these contextual practices did not extend to the reading of the moral sayings of wise figures. Yet their influence on Tertullian and Origen at a general level cannot be downplayed. The extent to which these various cases *directly* contributed to Tertullian and Origen's intertextual practices is rather difficult to determine. Tertullian seems to have attained a robust rhetorical education, as Sider demonstrates, and so the influence of Latin rhetorical treatises can be reasonably assumed.[77] In Origen's case, there is good reason to think that he was aware of the

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[73] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.40.117 (LCL 386: 284-285).
[74] Quintilian, *Inst.* 7.9.10 (LCL 126: 284-287). A version of this controversy also precedes Cicero's discussion of context in the text above.
[75] Quintilian, *Inst.* 7.9.10 (LCL 126: 284-287).
[76] Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 97.
[77] On the subject of education, some have posited that Tertullian's use of rhetorical techniques strongly suggests that he had a juridical training which undoubtedly influences his style and argumentation, even

intertextual strategies of Philo and rabbinic authors. In his study of Origen's borrowing from Jewish modes of scriptural interpretation, Nicholas de Lange hits upon an important problem to do with the literary evidence—namely, that since the the church fathers and Pharisaic rabbis were in direct competition and polemical dispute, one cannot "expect either the Fathers of the Church or the Rabbis to acknowledge openly their debts to exegetes of the other school".[78] Yet, as de Lange goes on to discuss, direct evidence of the influence of contemporaneous Jews on Origen's reading strategies does exist.[79] One important example is Origen's reference to the "Hebrew" who taught him that the significance of a scriptural passage is often located elsewhere in the scriptural canon.[80] In terms of the influence on Origen of philological methods applied to Homer, the work of Bernhard Neuschäfer, Peter Martens, and more recently, Carl Johan Berglund, has established that the Alexandrian was well aware of the commentary traditions and the theory and practice of "interpreting Homer by Homer".[81] Martens has also documented the evidence establishing Origen's involvement as a grammar teacher in the schools of Alexandria. Origen's activity as teacher of grammar reinforces the fact that he was well-versed in the practice of cross-referencing and contextual reading.[82]

Yet these methods were also available to Tertullian and Origen's predecessors. Lewis Ayres and Ansgar Wucherpfennig have recently demonstrated the importance of philological methodology for second century authors, including Irenaeus, the

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if the extent of that education has been disputed. See for a positive appraisal, Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 11–20, 87; Dunn, *Tertullian*, 3-4. D. I. Rankin, "Was Tertullian a Jurist?", *SP* 31 (1997): 335–342 suggests that Tertullian's educational background suggests that he was an advocate rather than a jurist. So also, Osborn, *Tertullian*, 6–11.

[78] N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Oriental Publications 25; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976) 103.

[79] De Lange, *Origen*, 105 rightly notes that Origen's accusations made against Jewish literalism is far from the sum total of his engagement with Jewish exegesis. See more broadly, *idem*., "Jewish Influence on Origen", in H. Crouzel, G. Lomiento, and J. Ruis-Campo (eds.), *Origeniana: Premier Colloque international des études origéniennes* (Bari: Istituto di letteratura, 1975) 225–242.

[80] See the introduction for a discussion of Origen, *Philocalia* 2.3 (from Commentary on the Psalms 1). For further references and discussion, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture* 62n132. See de Lange, *Origen*, 111.

[81] See Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 202-240; C. J. Berglund, "Interpreting Readers: The Role of Greco-Roman Education in Early Interpretation of New Testament Writings" in F. Wilk (ed.), *Scriptural Interpretation at the Interface Between Education and Religion: In Memory of Hans Conzelmann* (Themes in Biblical Narrative, 22; Leiden: Brill, 2018) 204-247; A. Grafton and M. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) examine Origen's creation of the Hexapla.

[82] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 14-19.

Valentinian Heracleon, Justin, Irenaeus and Theodotus the Cobbler.[83] Why, if they were aware of, and possessed the common stock of grammatical skills, did they not also read Jesus's words in their literary contexts? It is precisely at this point that we notice the insufficiency of historical parallels as an explanation for the presence of literary contextualisation in Tertullian and Origen's works. Clearly the presence of co-textual reading practices in these adjacent reading cultures demonstrates that neither author was developing this strategy *ex nihilo*. It does not explain why either author took it up.

2. *Historical Factors: Roman Education and Grammatical Theory*

In addition to the extant evidence of co-textual reading practices in literary sources, the theoretical literature of the period also demonstrates the importance of reading a line or word of a classical text in light of its immediate textual context. To support this point, this section will briefly outline the main contours of literary-criticism/grammar, or philology, as it was also known (Greek: γραμματική; Latin: *grammatica*). According to the major grammarian of the Hellenistic period, Dionysius Thrax (*fl.* 100 BCE), grammar involved the "general usage of poets and prose writers" and contained six discrete skills—(1) accurate reading, (2) explaining literary devices, (3) notes on phraseology and subject matters, (4) etymology, (5) patterns and analogies, and (6) the critical study of literature "which is the finest part of the art".[84] This sixth and final component—*krisis poiematon*—literally means "the study of poetry" although Dionysius defines it as exegesis, textual criticism, aesthetic evaluation and judgment of a text's authenticity.[85] While it appears to be the most relevant for our purposes, its

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[83] Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians", 153–187; A. Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus: Gnostische Johannesexegese im zweiten Jahrhundert* (WUNT II 142; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).
[84] Dionysius, *Ars Grammatica* (Τέχνη γραμματική) 1,1. For critical edition, see G. Uhlig (ed.), *Dionysii Thracis: Ars Grammatica* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1883). My translation adapted from A. Kemp, "The Technē Grammatikē of Dionysius Thrax: English Translation with Introduction and Notes" in D. J. Taylor, (ed.), *The History of Linguistics in the Classical Period* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1987) 169–190 (172) (Kemp uses the translation of Taylor). See for comments, Cribiore, *Gymnastics*, 185. M. Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350–1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 45. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship Volume 1*, 231. On the date of this work, see V. di Benedetto, "Afterword" in V. Law and I. Sluiter (eds.), *Dionysius Thrax and The Technē Grammatikē* (Henry Sweet Society Studies in the History of Linguistics 1; Muentser: Nodus, 1998) 151-153. Di Benedetto dates the work to the fourth century CE. Dionysius was a pupil of Aristarchus and so was first and foremost an interpreter of Homer (Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship Volume 1*, 266-7). For an introduction to Dionysius' work with helpful bibliography, see Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship* 77-80.
[85] Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 186.

precise significance remains unclear and has been debated by scholars.[86] Rather frustratingly, Dionysius does not offer any discussion of this final element in his *Art of Philology*, focussing instead on the more technical, micro-level aspects of grammar such as accents, punctuation and parts of speech.[87] Yet these aspects are, themselves, constitutive of grammar and so deserve attention. To each of these we now turn.[88]

First, accurate reading, or reading aloud (the ἀνάγνωσις) refers to the dictation of a text by the grammarian to the student. This entailed close attention to the accents, text-critical symbols and vowel length. While the focus in ἀνάγνωσις is ostensibly on literary fragments such as words, syllables and even diacritical markings, these directly impinged upon, as was seen above with the Homeric cases, the interpretation and understanding of larger units of text. Second, ποιητικοὶ τρόποι or "poetical phrases" referred to parts of a text considered obscure. This not only included the ability to understand when an author was using metaphor or allegory, but also included the more seemingly mundane task of word order. With the task of ὑπερβατόν, for instance, the grammarian taught his student to invert the normal word order so that it better reflects the logic of the text.[89] Third came γλῶσσαι and ἱστορίαι, or, respectively the treatment of foreign words and historical information about people, places, myths or other events and realia. One was to provide a straightforward rendering (πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις) of such words and terms on the basis of a breadth of knowledge of classical literature, as well as the context of the work in which the author used those terms or words. Fourth, etymology (ἐτυμολογίας) served to establish the meaning or form of rare words, as well as the tool through which one established the correct pronunciation of words.[90] Fifth came analogy and patterns. These most resemble the modern form of grammar, with an interest in the inflection of verbs and nouns. Thus, one scholiast on Dionysius's work writes that through the comparison of similar things, one arrives at grammatical

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[86] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 269 considered it to refer to "literary-criticism" while di Benedetto, "Afterword", thought it simply meant "text-criticism". Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind* 186 refers to it as "the critical study of literature".

[87] Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 269: "anybody expecting an elaboration of the rest will be disappointed".

[88] In the following, I draw heavily on A. Wouters and P. Swiggers, "Definitions of Grammar", in F. Montanari, S. Matthaios and A. Rengakos (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship* (Brill's Companions in Classical Studies; Leiden: Brill, 2015) 1:526-528 (515-544).

[89] The term comes from the notion that the author had "overstepped" the meaning of the word. See Wouters and Swiggers, "Definitions", 527. See for Origen's use of ὑπερβατόν, Martens, *Origen and Scripture* 57.

[90] Wouters and Swiggers, "Definitions", 527. See *Scholia* on Dion. T. 454.21-29 (the Byzantine Scholia Londinensia AE) in A. Hilgard, *Scholia in Dionysii Thracis Artem Grammaticam* (Grammatici Graeci I.3; Leipzig: Teubner 1901; Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1965) 454.

rules. For instance, when observing why one has different articles for ὁ Ὅμηρος, τοῦ Ὁμήρου ὁ φίλος τοῦ φίλου, on the one hand and τὸ βέλος τοῦ βέλους, on the other, one can develop the rule that all masculine and feminine nouns in -o take the genitive ending -ου, while neuter nouns ending in -ος take the genitive ending, -ους.[91] Each of these five tasks represents close, sustained attention to the text of a piece of poetry, and each is a crucially constitutive part of reading contextually.

When one turns to the *scholia* on Dionysius' work, an even fuller picture of the grammatical task, and its relevance for co-textual reference, emerges.[92] These scholia often seek to categorise more systematically the different parts of grammar. So, Tyrannion, one of Dionysius' students, lists four major philological exercises taught and practiced among Homeric critics: (1) text-criticism (διορθωτικόν), (2) reading a passage aloud (ἀναγνωστικόν), (3) literary and historical analysis (ἐξηγητικόν), and lastly, (4) an evaluation of the style and morality of the work (κρίσις ποιημάτων).[93] Each of these parts receive support from a further four instruments (ὄργανα): the understanding of an individual word's meaning (γλωσσηματικόν); the study of historical and scientific questions mentioned in a text (ἱστορικόν); grammatical and rhetorical analysis of the work (τεχνικόν); and comments on the metre and style of an author (μετρικόν).[94]

The grammatical method matches and undergirds the practices found in Homeric and rabbinic reading practices discussed in the previous section. Much of this evidence mirrors Origen and Tertullian's work in applying literary-critical principles to the climactic sayings of Jesus. Through text-critical methods, Tertullian first established the full text of the pronouncement, taking care to supply the correct punctuation and syntactical order. Tertullian refutes the Marcionite version of the

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[91] Wouters and Swiggers, "Definitions", 528. cf. *Scholia* on Dion. T 15.14-23 (*Commentarius Melampodis seu Diomedis, cod. C*) in Hilgard, *Scholia* Grammatica Graeci I.3, 15. This commentary dates to ca. 13th century.

[92] For fragments, see K. Linke, W. Haas, S. Neitzel (eds.), *Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Dionysios Thrax, Die Fragmente der Grammatiker Tyrannion und Diokles, Apions Γλώσσαι Ὁμηρικά* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1977); H. Usener, *Ein altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie* (München: Sitzungsber. Der Münchner Akad. der Wissensch. 1892) 265-314.

[93] See S. Matthaios, "Greek Scholarship in the Imperial Era and Late Antiquity", in F. Montanari, S. Matthaios and A. Rengakos (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship* (Brill's Companions in Classical Studies; Leiden: Brill, 2015) 1: 184-296 (198-99). Asclepiades of Myrlea divides philology into three parts, a technical part (the description of language), a peculiar part (philology and text-criticism) and an historical part (the interpretation of realia).

[94] I draw here on the discussion in Matthaios, "Greek Scholarship", 198-9 as well as Martens, *Origen and Scripture* 42 and Neuschaefer, *Origenes* 139, 287; 139-263 for each component. See Neuschaefer, *Origenes* 203-240 on *technikon*.

answer to the Sadducees based on the claim that it incorrectly punctuates the pronouncement.[95] Both authors then move outwards from the saying to consider the importance of the larger literary context for the moral saying. Origen's use of the literary technique of attending to the τάξις ("order") or ἀκολουθία ("sequence") of a passage is just as important in explaining his use of co-textual references as it is his practice of anecdote reproduction. The importance of sequence for the practice of co-textual reference can be seen in those cases in which Tertullian and Origen attend to the genre of the responsive anecdote. In his discussion of the divorce anecdote, for instance, Origen notes that the response Jesus provides answers a testing question from his opponents, much in the same way that Jesus's responses on the question of tribute and the great commandment emerged from agonistic scenarios. By grouping together three testing anecdotes from the Gospels, Origen shows that the genre of the passage bears significantly on the interpretation and application of the response Jesus gives.[96] Jesus's response, in each case, provides a model for the Christian to follow by charting a *via media* between the options provided by one's opponents. Similarly, Tertullian draws on the agonistic context of the tribute passage when responding to his opponents' fragmentary re-use of the "render" command to justify bribery. Tertullian notes that the pronouncement is part of a narrative sequence precipitated (*agebatur*) by a question about the coin that was to be paid to Caesar. Taking stock of the order of the narrative, in Tertullian's view, discounts the arbitrary exegesis of his opponents.[97]

By applying these methods to Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen appear to be insisting that his pronouncements belonged to a broader corpus of texts and, in fact, themselves constituted texts. In doing so, there is a fusion of both old and new elements in Origen and Tertullian's treatment of Jesus's sayings. Origen and Tertullian were composing new ways of reading Jesus's words forged from the traditional grammatical techniques common to Greco-Roman and Jewish literary circles and applied to larger corpora (the Hebrew Bible and Homer).[98] The result was the creation of a new way of

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[95] See 1.2, section 2 above.
[96] Origen, *CommMt* 14.16. See chapter 2.2, section 5.
[97] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.10 (see chapter 2.2, section 4).
[98] The musical metaphor from W. Meeks, "Understanding Early Christian Ethics", *JBL* 105 (1986): 3–11 (11) while applying to ethics, aptly describes both the precedents for and uniqueness of the hermeneutical achievement of Tertullian and Origen: "What was Christian about the ethos and ethics of those early communities we will discover not by abstraction but by confronting their involvement in the culture of their time and place and seeking to trace the new patterns made of old forms, *to hear the new songs they composed from old melodies*" (italics added).

perceiving Jesus's words, and of interpreting them in light of their immediate literary context.

While the practice of co-textual reference existed in a variety of reading cultures, this did not necessitate that Tertullian and Origen also pick up these strategies. This is even more true since many of their predecessors—and especially Justin, Irenaeus and Clement—would have been introduced to some, if not all of these practices.[99] Pedagogical factors and historical parallels do not therefore provide an answer to the question of *why* Tertullian and Origen adopted such reading strategies, especially when other Christian, and non-Christian writers, possessing a similar knowledge of these techniques, did not.

3. *Literary Factors: The Role of the Commentary and Homily*

Part of the origins of literary contextualisation also lie in the genre of the commentary, and commentary-like works. In all but one of the six cases in which Tertullian and Origen fully reproduce the story to contextualise Jesus's words, they do so in a commentary or homily—in a work where the text of the gospel is ostensibly the focus of the author's attention.[100] Origen frequently reproduces the anecdote in his commentaries because the genre encouraged close attention to the textual background of those sayings as part of a larger Gospel text. Out of the four sections in which Origen discusses the tribute passage in his *Commentary on Matthew*, the Alexandrian explicitly devotes two to detailed historical and literary study, where the aim is to provide a reading of the literal sense (πρὸς τὴν λέξιν).[101] Origen's attention to the context comports well with the commentary tradition in the Greco-Roman world more generally. The commentary or ὑπόμνημα provided the ideal context for the scholar that wished to address textual matters and competing readings all with an eye to initially establishing the text within its literary context.[102] As Francesca Schironi notes of Homeric commentaries, authors provided the lemma (a line of Homeric verse)

[99] On Justin, see Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians", 180–184. On Irenaeus, see Briggman, "Irenaeus, Part 1"; *idem*., "Irenaeus, Part 2"; D. J. Bingham, "Paideia and Polemic in Second Century Lyons: Irenaeus on Education" in K. M. Hogan, M. Goff and E. Wasserman, (eds.), *Pedagogy in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Early Judaism and Its Literature 41; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2017) 323-358. On Clement, see Osborn, *Clement*, 20-23.

[100] See the examples in 1.2. The one exception, of course, is de *Idololatria*, an occasional tractate (see 1.2, section 1).

[101] Origen, CommMt 17.25-26 (GCS 40: 653, 657). Note Origen's use of κατά τὸ ῥητὸν at the beginning of 17.25.

[102] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 41-2, 54-63; Neuschäfer, *Origines als Philologe*, 292.

alongside a gloss on the meaning of a difficult word or phrase.[103] Those sections of Origen's commentaries that were consulted followed a variation of this practice, where Origen either copies out the entire passage, or provides an abbreviated version of the anecdote, often concluding with καὶ τά ἑξῆς ("and so on").[104] In the case of the tribute passage, for instance, Origen references the initial lemma ("the Pharisees came to Jesus") and then substitutes the rest of the anecdote with an abbreviation, "and so on until 'they were amazed'".[105] The literary convention of providing the lemma signals the intent of the author to treat the text of a line, or in Origen's case, the full text of a pericope.

Following the copying of the lemma, the erudite commentator had ample space to consider a text in detail. Peter Martens discusses the three main components of philology that were common to the commentary tradition and which abound in Origen's commentaries—text-criticism, literary-and historical analysis, and aesthetic and moral evaluation.[106] Most relevant for our purposes is literary analysis and, within this, the sub-task of giving careful attention to the "sequence" (ακολουθία) and "order" (τάξις) of a passage.[107] In his discussion of the tribute passage just discussed, Origen comments that one must "pay attention to the sequence of argument" so that the literal meaning might be ascertained.[108] David Dawson has shown that Origen follows Stoic thought and its insistence on "sequence" for logic, physics and ethics. [109] The conclusion of an argument had to follow from its antecedent (ἀκολουθεί τῳ Α τὸ Β). It is very probable that Origen appropriated this argument from sequence and applied it to the reading of scripture, in general, and the climactic of sayings of Jesus, in particular. In the same way that the Stoics maintain a tight relation between the cause

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[103] F. Schironi, "Greek Commentaries", 409–410.

[104] In addition to the tribute passage, see Origen's use of καὶ τά ἑξῆς in the following passage on the question of the Sadducees (*CommMt* 17.29; GCS 40: 663): "'and on that day, Sadducees who say there is no resurrection came to him' and so on until 'they were astonished at his teaching'".

[105] The Latin has the full anecdote while the Greek has this shorter paraphrase (GCS 40: 652-3).

[106] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 42: "Origen thought pericopes within Scripture were characterized by a variety of order, sequences, or series". See *PA* 4.2.9 for further comments on order (SC 268: 334-341). Note Origen's awareness of the order of the stations in *Hom. in Num.* 27.6.

[107] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 59–60; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 239–40; D. Dawson, "Allegorical Reading and the embodiment of the soul in Origen", in L. Ayres and G. Jones (eds.), *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community* (London: Routledge, 1998), 26–44 (30-38). Martens and Dawson both note that sequence can be disrupted so that reader has opportunity to ascertain hidden sense. Even still, sequence was important at the literal level as well. In his *Comm. Cant.* 8.75.13-16, Origen notes that linguistics (*logike*) "seems to consist of the literal and figureative definitions of words and expressions, of genres and their kinds, and to teach the tropes of each sort of expression".

[108] *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 658).

[109] Dawson, "Allegorical Reading", 31.

and effect in the universe, so also Origen in his Commentaries appears to trace the cause of Jesus's pronouncement to the prior moments in the discourse. Just as the pronouncement follows from the story, so also the interpretation of the saying must take account of the surrounding narrative.

The use of the co-text also emerges in Origen's exegesis in his homilies. Where the commentary offered time and space for ample discussion of the text, the homily was limited by the practicalities of the comprehension and attention span of the audience and the time given to preaching.[110] Indeed, the genre of the homily (*homilia*) in classical usage has the sense of spontaneous or extemporaneous style in contrast to the *sermo* or λόγος which refers to an ordered, public discourse.[111] Despite these ostensible limitations, Origen engages in detailed textual commentary that begins with the public reading of scripture to the congregation.

In his Homily on Luke 39, for instance, Origen notes that the "bit about the image of Caesar was added" (*Porro quod adjectum est de imagine Caesaris*), by which he means that the tribute pericope, in addition to the question of the Sadducees, was read out to the congregation.[112] From the outset of the sermon, then, a large swathe of scriptural text was the subject of both the speaker and the audience's attention.[113] Moreover, the extemporaneous style of the homily should not obscure the fact that Origen looked to clarify Jesus's sayings through bringing them into contact with the meaning of words and phrases from the passage, and scripture more broadly.

Significantly for our purposes, this detailed textual and philological work seems to arise from Origen having the text of scripture before him. Pierre Nautin has shown that in numerous places in his homilies, Origen mentions that he has in front of him either the entire biblical text, or at the very least the text of the writing in question.[114] This explains why Origen can state, in his second homily on Ezekiel, that

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[110] J. T. Lienhard, "Origen as Homilist", in D. G. Hunter (ed.), *Preaching in the Patristic Age: Studies in Honor of Walter J Burghardt* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989) 36–52.
[111] Lienhard, "Origen as Homilist", 36, 45. On Origen's extemporaneous style, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 188. See on *homilia* and λόγος, G. W. H. Lampe and H. Liddell, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961-8) 952; F. Danker, *et al.*, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd edn (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2000) 705.
[112] Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39 (SC 87: 454): *Porro quod adjectum est de imagine Caesaris, etiam super hoc debemus pauca perstringere*. For further examples, see also "as was read earlier" (*Hom. in. Luc.* 18); "this passage from the Gospel according to Luke was read to you today" (*Hom. in Luc.* 34).
[113] See Nautin, "Origène prédicateur", 100–191 on the variety of church services on different days of the week.
[114] Nautin, "Origène prédicateur", 112–13; Lienhard, *Homilies on Luke*, xx: "When Origen preached, he stood before the congregation and had the book of the Scriptures open before him".

"I who receive the holy book (*qui accipio librum sanctum*)…will try to explain it".[115] In his Homily on Jeremiah 20.1-7—a long lament of Jeremiah directed at God—Origen notes that since the first section has come to an end, he will now comment on the second passage.[116] Origen's awareness of a break in the text most likely arises from having a copy of Jeremiah in front of him. He then proceeds to cite a long stretch of text (Jer. 20.7-11) which, as Nautin notes, probably comes from a written text since it is likely to be too long for Origen to cite from memory.[117] So, having access to the larger passages of scriptural text certainly contributes to Origen's practice of intertextual reference when using Jesus's climactic sayings.

The commentary genre also helps to explain Tertullian's use of the co-text of Jesus's words. It is not the case, as scholars often remark, that Tertullian fails to engage in systematic biblical exegesis of an entire work, in the way that one typically finds in a commentary.[118] This is only true in *degree* rather than substance. In addition to his *De Oratione*, an exposition of the text of the Lord's Prayer, Tertullian's Book 4 of *Adversus Marcionem* greatly resembles the commentary genre, featuring a lemma of Marcion's Gospel text alongside detailed comments that draw on scripture as a perceived unity.[119] Tertullian's discussion of the divorce passage in *AM* 4.34.2-3 fully exhibits the role played by the commentary genre in his drive to contextualise Jesus's climactic sentences. Tertullian begins by chiding the Marcionites for failing to accept "that other gospel, of equal truth, and of the same Christ, in which while forbidding divorce he answers a particular question concerning it".[120] In other words, the Marcionite text conveniently avoids the context of the larger discussion in the texts of Matthew and Mark's gospels. For Tertullian, proper attention to parallel, Synoptic versions, rejected by the Marcionites, refutes the Marcionite reading since these parallel accounts show that the "asunder" saying was part of a larger discussion. The close treatment of the text expected in a commentary-like work such as *Adversus*

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[115] Nautin, "Origène prédicateur", 113.
[116] Origen, *Hom. in Jer.* 19.15 (SC 238: 240-241).
[117] Nautin, "Origène prédicateur", 114.
[118] Dunn, *Tertullian*, 13, 16 with the caveat that scripture forms Tertullian's primary source "in almost every chapter of every work"; P. J. Griffiths, *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 151; Waszink, "Tertullian's Principles", 18, 24: "Tertullian never considered composing a running commentary on one of the books of Holy Scripture". See also Jansen, "Tertullian and the New Testament", 207 who mentions that *De Oratione* is the only example of commentary in Tertullian's works, while neglecting Book 4 *Adversus Marcionem* and the treatment of texts from Matthew and John 21-5 in *Adversus Praxean*.
[119] Griffiths, *Religious Reading*, 151.
[120] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.2 (SC 456: 410-415).

Marcionem, greatly helps to explain Tertullian's use of the anecdote to contextualise Jesus's climactic saying.[121]

Yet the commentary genre does not provide a completely satisfactory account, since there are examples in which Origen and Tertullian employ co-textual references in works that do not treat the text of the larger pronouncement story in question.[122] To be sure, there are occasions when Origen and Tertullian apply these reading strategies to a full text of scripture in a way that reflects the work of Homeric critics treating the text of Homer, or rabbis writing commentaries on works of scripture. In a number of the cases discussed in chapter 2, Tertullian and Origen's re-use of the co-text contains striking parallels to the Homeric commentaries since some version of the full text of the passage was before either Tertullian or Origen.[123] A large role can be apportioned to genre in such cases, since the attention to the text is a function of the conventions of the genre at hand. In such cases, one expects attention to the anecdote since the purpose of the work is close attention to a full text, much in the same way that a rabbi treats the text of scripture or a Homeric commentator provides a close reading of the *Iliad*.[124]

In a variety of other cases, however, both authors apply literary-critical principles to Jesus's words without having the text of the pronouncement story as the primary focus of their literary endeavours. Such cases divide into two categories: first, instances where Origen comments on another passage of scripture and yet still contextualises Jesus's saying.[125] And second, cases where Tertullian writes an occasional treatise so that the exegesis of the text of scripture, in general, and Jesus's words, in particular, is not his primary concern.[126] In the first set of cases, Origen contextualises Jesus's sayings in a number of works whose ostensible function is to comment on the text of scripture. While Origen's contextual reading of Jesus's sayings appears in works that treat the text of scripture—homilies and commentaries—it is still significant that he draws on details from the co-text of Jesus's saying when directly treating a different text entirely. So, for instance, when Origen employs a co-textual

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[121] Griffiths, *Religious Reading*, 151.
[122] These cases include Tertullian, *De Corona* 12; *De Fuga* 12, *De Monog.* 5.1; 9.1; Origen, *CommRom* 9.25; Origen, *CommMt* 13.10.
[123] Examples here, include: Origen, *Hom. In Luc.* 39, Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.3; Origen, *CommMt* 17.27-28; Tertullian *AM* 4.11.1; Origen, *CommMt* 14.16-17
[124] See chapter 4.1 for discussion. Even in Plutarch's case (*de aud. poet.*) one expects contextual reading practices since his purpose is ostensibly to provide a manual on how to read poetry.
[125] Origen, *CommRom* 9.25; Origen, *CommMt* 13.10.
[126] Tertullian, *De Corona* 12; *De Fuga* 12, *De Monog.* 5.1; 9.1.

reference like "denarius" from the tribute passage in his *Commentary on Romans*, this is a significant move because the work in question is a treatment of the Pauline text, and not the pronouncement story from the Gospels (Mt 22.15-22 and parallels).[127] In the second group of cases, Tertullian draws on the co-text in a number of works that do not have as their central purpose the exposition of scripture. For instance, when Tertullian employs the co-text of the "render" command in *De Fuga*, this is significant because his chief aim in this work is not to exegete or comment on the text of scripture; rather, his purpose is to argue against those defending flight from persecution. In both sets of cases, co-textual reference constitutes a significant and innovative phenemonon since the the context of Origen and Tertullian's work does not necessitate the contextual reading of Jesus's pronouncement. In view of these two sets of cases, generical conventions only provide *part* of the explanation for Tertullian and Origen's use of co-textual practices.

4. *Ideological Factors: The Changing Principles of Early Christian Debates*

While historical parallels and the commentary genre help to explain *the origins* of the hermeneutic, they cannot account for Tertullian and Origen's decision to adopt this set of reading strategies and apply them to Jesus's words. One approach to addressing this underlying question is to explore the assumptions early Christian writers held about Jesus's words and their relationship to a broader set of religious texts. It might be thought that Tertullian and Origen contextualise Jesus's words because they were thought to hold some kind of authoritative status. The validity of this explanation is reduced significantly, however, when one recalls that Tertullian and Origen appear to hold similar views to their predecessors about the significance of Jesus's words and their relationship to a larger corpus of authoritative writings. *2 Clement* famously refers to Jesus's words about calling the sinners to repentance as "another scripture".[128] Moreover, Justin and Irenaeus clearly hold Jesus's words in high esteem by placing them "on a level with the OT scriptures".[129] Justin, Irenaeus and Clement frequently quote Jesus's words alongside OT prophetic texts.[130] While conceiving of Jesus's

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[127] See chapter 2.2, section 3 above.
[128] *2 Clem.* 2.4 (Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 140-141).
[129] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108.
[130] See von Campenhausen, *Formation of the Christian Bible*, 269-326, esp. 297, 297n164. See also Clement's comment in his *Stromateis*, which demonstrates the importance of the Gospels texts. He

sayings as both authoritative and part of a scriptural corpus, these early Christian writers rarely progress from this view to then contextualise Jesus's sayings in the same way, and with the same intensity, that one finds in Tertullian and Origen's works. The high estimation of Jesus's words by no means necessarily entailed reading those words within their immediate literary context. *In fact, assumptions about the authority of Jesus's words could just as easily lead to the employment of his pronouncements as non-contextualised sayings*. Beliefs and ideas about the authority of Jesus's sayings, or their place within a scriptural corpus, do not, therefore, provide much of a satisfactory account for Tertullian and Origen's literary contextualisation of Jesus's words.

It is at this point that I would like to submit the following proposal. In my view, the most important factor in explaining the development of literary contextualisation of Jesus's words in Tertullian and Origen's works is the changing focus of the debates in which these authors were engaged. By the changing focus of debates, I refer to the fact that these two authors took up the task of disciplined exegesis of Jesus's words and methodical reflection upon the rules that guided the interpretation of his sayings. By contrast, the focus of Justin, Irenaeus and Clement, naturally concerned the more preliminary tasks of establishing the authority of Jesus's sayings and their written sources. In a very real sense, this laid the important groundwork for Tertullian and Origen to begin to articulate the way in which one should view Jesus's sayings and the principles by which one should interpret them. These initial stages require brief discussion.

The highest concentration of Jesus's sayings in Justin's works, appear in *1 Apology* 15-17 and his *Dialogue* 35.[131] Justin writes both works to defend and justify the rationality of the Christian faith in the face of non-Christian arguments (in the case of *1 Apology*) and Jewish counter-claims (in the case of the *Dialogue*).[132] In his *1 Apology*, Justin supplies the sayings of Jesus as proofs for a larger argument concerning the morality of Christians. The basis for the Christian philosophy is the

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writes, the "ecclesiastical canon at once of the law and the prophets, and the apostles along with the Gospel, and the harmony which obtained in each prophet, in the transitions of the persons" (*Strom*. 6.11.88.5; GCS 52: 476).

[131] See the introduction where I discuss Justin's 1 *Apol*. 15-17 and *Dial*. 35.3.

[132] See T. Rajak, "Talking at Trypho: Christian Apologetic as Anti-Judaism in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*" in M. Edwards, M. Goodman, and S. Price with C. Rowland (eds.), *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 59-80; F. Young, "Greek Apologists of the Second Century" in *ibid*. 81-104.

teaching of Christ, Justin argues. Christ's teachings show that Christian philosophy has ancient precedence and pedigree. In his *Dialogue*, Justin re-uses Jesus's sayings in a bid to show that they contain the same authority as the texts of the Old Testament. He also places Jesus's sayings alongside Old Testament texts not to contextualise them in such a way that might clarify or explicate the significance of Jesus's words. Rather, he does so to demonstrate that the Hebrew scriptures find their fulfilment in Christ. In both texts, therefore, Justin focusses on the authority of Jesus's sayings in relation to pagan and Jewish writings.

As with Justin, the context of Irenaeus's use of Jesus's words is polemical, only in his case the opponents are other Christians. Of urgent importance for Irenaeus was establishing the *text* of Jesus's individual sayings and, in particular, their textual sources. Thus, when discussing the saying, "No man knows the Son, but the Father; and no one knows the Father, except the Son, and the one to whom the Son reveals him", Irenaeus points his Marcionite opponents back to the textual sources of the saying. "Thus has Matthew set it down, and Luke similarly, and Mark in the same way; but John omits this passage".[133] The sources of Jesus's words were of chief importance to Irenaeus precisely because his Marcionite opponents were supposed to have inverted the meaning of this saying to reflect the arrival of the true God in Christ who was not known prior to Jesus's advent.[134] Because other Christians were appealing to alternative versions of Jesus's saying, Irenaeus sensed the need to clarify the authoritative sources for that saying. Graham Stanton is therefore right to emphasise that Irenaeus does not think of Jesus's words apart from the text of the gospels.[135] Yet, as I have suggested, awareness of and insistence on the textual sources of Jesus's words is different *from employing the literary context found in those textual sources to interpret Jesus's sayings*. This latter task is rarely a part of Irenaeus's aim when using Jesus's words. Rather, he more often seeks to confirm the textual source of Jesus's words over and against the Marcionite attempt to punctuate the saying. That Irenaeus is concerned with reading Jesus's words as sayings is clear from his statement at the beginning of book 4 of his work: "as we promised, we will establish by the words of the Lord what we have said" (*quemadmodum promisimus, per domini*

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[133] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.6.1 (SC 100: 438-439).
[134] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4.6.1 (SC 100: 438-439). The Marcionite version, according to Irenaeus, reads, "No man knew the Father, but the Son; nor the Son, but the Father, and the one to whom the Son has willed to reveal him".
[135] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108. See also Bingham, *Irenaeus's Use of Matthew*, 302.

sermons ea quae pradiximus confirmabimus).[136] Or to take another example, when he employs the "render" command, Irenaeus does not call his opponents back to the literary context of Jesus's saying. Instead, he simply advocates that "God" and "Caesar" be read in their plain-sense and not in any other way.[137] To the extent that Irenaeus has a textual context in view here, it is the grander plot of scripture. When Jesus talks about God and Caesar, Irenaeus states, he does not mean the God of some other economy or plot, but the one God revealed throughout scripture. While Irenaeus, as Stanton has observed, attaches special importance to Jesus's words, it is important to consider the hermeneutical implications of such a move for Irenaeus's re-use of Jesus's words.[138] We should, in other words, distinguish between Irenaeus's explicit statements and explicit practice. As far as the extant evidence is concerned, Irenaeus does not consider that the status of Jesus's words as textually embedded sayings entails or requires reading those pronouncements within their immediate literary contexts. His argumentative context did not require such a move.

In turning to examine Clement's re-use of Jesus's words, one witnesses a more overtly moral use of Jesus tradition. In his *Paedagogus*, Clement clearly states that his aim is to compile scriptural texts under various headings.[139] There is no need, within this anthological framework, to provide any interpretation, not to mention literary contextualisation, since the main aim is to instruct through "bare injunctions" (γυμνὰς τὰς παραγγελίας).[140] At the same time, Clement also takes steps towards the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words and this takes place, tellingly, within polemical disputes.[141] The use of Jesus's words about the eunuch and divorce, in particular, required urgent discussion. Whereas his opponents focus solely on the words of Jesus about the eunuch, Clement at one point makes appeal to the broader context of the dispute about divorce. There, the disciples discuss remarriage after a divorce caused by adultery. As Francis Watson notes, his disciples refer not to the prohibition of divorce but to the Matthean exception to the prohibition.[142] It seems that at this point,

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[136] Irenaeus, *haer.* 4. praef. 1 (SC 100: 382-383).
[137] Irenaeus, *haer.* 3.8.1. (SC 211: 88-89).
[138] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus", 108.
[139] Clement, *Paed.* 3.12.87 uses the terminology of κεφάλαιος or headings (GCS 12/3: 296).
[140] Clement, *Paed.* 3.12.87. See Stählin and Treu, *Paedagogus* 296.
[141] See my discussion at 2.1. as well as the treatment of Clement's Stromateis book 3 in J. L. Kovacs "Was Paul an Antinomian", 186-202.
[142] Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 422. Were the textual sources of those sayings debated? Francis Watson notes that Clement makes no note of the sources of his citations, yet he seems to cite both from a text

the authority of Jesus's sayings was an established working assumption for both Clement and his opponents.[143] Hence, the next logical step in treating these sayings was to interpret them and probe their literary contexts.

It is important to note that each of these three authors holds Jesus's sayings in high esteem. Moreover, that they were aware of the textual sources of Jesus's words is virtually beyond doubt. And yet, this awareness does not result, with the exception of Clement, in a concerted effort to contextualise Jesus's words via their literary contexts. Even in Clement's case, when he attends to the literary context of Jesus's words, he does not follow this up with any theorisation or explicit reflection upon the rules or principles one should use to clarify Jesus's saying. The lack of established rules for interpreting Jesus's sayings before Tertullian and Origen, aligns well with what Christoph Markschies has called the "laboratory" conditions in which the Christian communities of the first two centuries lived.[144] Within such a setting, the rules of scriptural interpretation required articulation. And yet before this could even begin, the first task, and one to which Justin, Irenaeus and Clement committed themselves, was to establish what they perceived to be the authority of Jesus's sayings, and their textual sources. With Clement, we begin to see the urgency of the task of interpreting these sayings rise to the fore, particularly as other rival Christian groups (followers of Basilides, Valentinians, and so on) accepted the authority of Jesus's words. The fact that early Christian authors turn to the task of interpreting Jesus's words, in some ways demonstrates the success of Irenaeus and Justin's earlier endeavours.

While earlier examples of the re-use of Jesus's words very rarely provoked hermeneutical reflection, the same cannot be said of the instances recorded in the works of Origen and Tertullian. For these earlier authors, it was perfectly reasonable to interpret Jesus's sayings without taking account of the larger co-text, or by reading the pronouncement against the context of other scriptural texts. At a certain point, this

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of Matthew and the *Gospel according to the Egyptians*. His concern, as that of his opponents, is not the source of Jesus's saying, but its interpretation.

[143] Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 422.

[144] C. Markschies, "Kerinth: Wer war er and was lehrte er?" *JbAC* 41 (1998) 48–76; *idem.*, *Kaiserzeitliche christliche Theologie und ihre Institutionen: Prolegomena zu einer Geschichte der antiken christlichen Theologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 380-1. For an assessment of the benefits and shortcomings of this metaphor, see J. Lieu, "Modelling the Second Century as the Age of the Laboratory" in J. Lieu and J. Carleton Paget (eds.), *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2017) 294-308.

became a problem for our two authors. Consequently, there arose an urgent sense that more systematic rules were required.

That a new stage in the use of Jesus's words is beginning to emerge with Tertullian and Origen can be seen from the focus of Tertullian and Origen's exegetical debates with their opponents. In each of their debates with opponents and interlocutors, Tertullian and Origen are not so much concerned with the failure to view Jesus's words as *authoritative*. Or at least, this is not explicitly made the centre of the disputes. For instance, in Tertullian's dispute with Marcionites over Jesus's statement about divorce, the nub of the debate is not a set of opposing views on the authority of Jesus's words.[145] Rather, this seems to be an *an already established* assumption shared by both sides of the dispute. Instead, at the centrepoint of the debate is the interpretation of Jesus's words and the appropriate literary contexts in which to read them. For the Marcionites, at least as Tertullian presents them, there is no immediate literary context for Jesus's divorce saying; Jesus's words stand on their own. Tertullian insists that if his opponents were to read Jesus's statement about divorce in Matthew—that gospel, of equal authority, as Tertullian claims—they would come to an interpretation diametrically opposed to their own. To the extent that the dispute concerns the *sources* of Jesus's words, it is striking that this concern is now made subservient to the interpretation of those words. That is, Tertullian's goal in appealing to the text of Matthew is to clarify the meaning and sense of the words of Jesus, not simply to prove their authority or establish their textual sources *per se*.

Further evidence of this shift is witnessed in Tertullian's decision to take up the text of the Marcionite gospel, after he recognises that the Marcionites do not accept the text of Matthew.[146] Tertullian's choice to debate the Marcionites "on their own terms" demonstrates that he is willing, at least for rhetorical purposes, to move beyond the differences in source text to issues of hermeneutics and interpretation.[147] This shows that the plane of debate has shifted from centering on the authority of Jesus's words, to the rules associated with their interpretation.

Similarly, in two other debates with the Marcionites (on the Question of the Sadduccees passage and the anecdote about Jesus's family), Tertullian recognises that

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[145] See 1.2, section 4. The discussion is from *AM* 4.34.1-5 (SC 456: 410-415).
[146] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.3-4 (SC 456: 410-415).
[147] Tertullian, *AM* 4.34.3 (SC 456:414-415): *Sed quatenus ex his revincendus es quae recepisti, sic tibi occuram ac si meus Christus*.

the text of his opponents reflects an interpretive position. On the Sadducees' question, the Marcionite text supposedly supports their position on celibacy, while Jesus's statement about his family establishes that Jesus had no human origins.[148] In each case, Tertullian seems to assume that the Marcionites are aware of the entire passage but do not use it. He therefore develops a rule, or *praescriptio*, whereby the words of Jesus must be read according to their immediate literary context: "it is a just and creditable rule (*iusta et digne praescriptio*) that whenever a question is asked the meaning of the reply must be pertinent to the purpose of the inquiry".[149] In his treatment of the mother and brother saying, he insists that instead of reading Jesus's words on their own, "the background of that remark must be taken into consideration" (*considerandam scilicet materiam pronuntiationis istius*).[150] Tertullian's use of the co-text is, I suggest, linked to problems associated with the manner in which one interpreted Jesus's words, and the ways in which one defended those interpretations. By employing textual details to support his exegesis, Tertullian implicitly suggests that one must not draw on the text of scripture in an "arbitrary" or baseless fashion.[151] The same is true of his use of Jesus's words outside of his *Adversus Marcionem*. When interacting with opponents— both real and imaginary—in his *De Fuga* and *De Idololatria*, Tertullian clarifies the meaning of the "render" saying by employing multiple words from the tribute passage.[152] In particular, Tertullian defines the "things of Caesar" as the tribute coin (*tributarius*) paid as a tax to Caesar rather than money used to extort Roman soldiers and thus avoid persecution.[153] The implication that Tertullian draws is that if one cites Jesus's climactic saying, one must be prepared to attend to the larger story in which it was recorded and, more precisely, the cause in the narrative that precipitated the pronouncement. In each of these examples, Tertullian explicitly addresses the hermeneutical rules of engagement. The authority of Jesus's words is assumed by both sides of the debate and therefore remains unaddressed. By contrast, the principles by which one was to interpret his sayings require reflection and discussion.

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[148] See 1.2, section 2 and 3 above for discussion.
[149] *Tertullian, AM* 4.38.5 (SC 456: 414-415).
[150] Tertullian, *De Carne* 7.1 (SC 217: 240-241).
[151] The interest in avoiding arbitrariness probably owes something to Tertullian's legal background on which see further, my discussion above (4.2, section 1). See further, J. H. Waszink, "Tertullian's Principles", 19.
[152] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153).
[153] Tertullian, *De Fuga* 12.10 (CCSL 2:1153).

In much the same way, Origen in his encounters with other Christians employing the words of Jesus is not concerned with his interlocutors's assumptions about the authority of Jesus's words. Instead, he focusses on their methods of interpreting them. In his *Homily* on the tribute passage, Origen does not criticise members of his congregation for having failed to deem Jesus's words as important. Rather, their error, in Origen's eyes, is to have read his words *as a non-contextualised saying*. The debate now centres on hermeneutical principles, methods and assumptions. Origen's solution is to lay out hermeneutical rules whereby Jesus's words are to be read, chief among which is to examine the entire passage which, in turn, unlocks the deeper, spiritual significance of Jesus's saying. In his discussion of the tribute passage in his commentary (*CommMt* 17.26), Origen notes that the problem with revolutionary readings of the "render" saying is not that they have failed to locate the source of Jesus's words, or that they somehow deem Jesus's words as insignificant. Rather, the difficulty Origen perceives is an interpretive and hermeneutical one. Origen's frustration is that this interpretation fails to locate the meaning of Jesus's words within both their historical and literary contexts. To conclude that the saying commands "not paying one's taxes" is to read Jesus's words in a hasty manner without careful examination of the narratival sequence.[154] Origen then introduces a mini-lesson in grammatical theory, the components of which establish the significance of Jesus's words within the literary context of the anecdote.

For both Tertullian and Origen, then, the plane of debate has shifted from the authority of Jesus's words, to their interpretive significance. To be sure, one catches glimpses of this interpretive concern in the writings of their predecessors—most frequently with Clement. In Clement, one finds examples where he seeks to clarify Jesus's words with reference to their immediate literary context. In contrast to Tertullian and Origen, there is little reflection on the principles required for interpreting Jesus's climactic sayings. Where Clement does engage in hermeneutical reflection, it is often in the form of comparatively *ad hoc* and unsystematic statements. Yet the achievement of Justin, Irenaeus and Clement should also be recognised. That Tertullian and Origen could turn to the question of the interpretive significance of Jesus's words reflects the success of their predecessors's attempts to establish the authority of those words.

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[154] Origen, *CommMt* 17.26 (GCS 40: 658).

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have sought to account for the hermeneutic of literary contextualisation that Tertullian and Origen apply to the words of Jesus. In explaining this development, I have explored a variety of literary, historical and ideological factors. I argued that the commentary/commentary-like genre and the existence of co-textual reading practices within contemporaneous reading cultures and literary-critical theory provide partial explanations to the question of the origins of the hermeneutic. They do not explain *why* Tertullian and Origen took up these strategies, however. If they were common to Jewish and non-Christian reading cultures, one would expect Justin, Irenaeus, Clement and other early Christian authors to demonstrate awareness of these practices, and yet they often do not. Other explanations, including the assumptions about the authority of Jesus's sayings, are also inadequate. I have suggested that Tertullian and Origen mostly shared the perspective of their predecessors concerning the authoritative status of Jesus's sayings.

Instead, the most important factor, I contend, is the changing principles of the debates in which Tertullian and Origen, on the one hand, and their predecessors, on the other, were engaged. Whereas their predecessors naturally dispute the sources and authority of Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen begin to reflect on the hermeneutical principles according to which they should be read. It was only natural that the first stage in using Jesus's words was to prove their authority and textual sources. Questions of "why" (authority) and "where" (source) perhaps unsurprisingly preceded those of "how" (method). Only once the authority of Jesus's words had been established could the next stage of determining the principles of interpretation begin in earnest. Tertullian and Origen are among the first early Christian authors to begin to formulate and enact principles whereby Jesus's words were to be read. The main reason for this is also perhaps the most obvious one—the success of their predecessors in establishing the textual authority and sources of Jesus's words.

Concluding Reflections

If, in concluding, I may be allowed a modern analogy, then I would suggest that the early Christian use of Jesus's words might be fruitfully compared to the recent phenomenon of red-letter bibles—printed versions of the biblical text in which Jesus's words are set apart from the surrounding narrative and highlighted in unmistakable, red lettering.[1] While the urge to compare early Christian uses of Jesus's words to modern ones might seem passé, I cannot help but note the many similarities in the reading practices of the editors of red-letter bibles and those of early Christians before Tertullian and Origen. Most obviously, both sets of readers assume, whether unwittingly or not, that the significance of Jesus's words rests in the content of his words, even if they are aware of the larger literary context surrounding those words.

My principal aim in this study has been to trace the gradual development among early Christian writers of hermeneutical reflection and exegetical rules for reading and interpreting Jesus's words. More specifically, I have documented the role that the *immediate literary context*—the co-text surrounding Jesus's words—gradually began to play in the early Christian interpretation of those selfsame words. I attributed this "literary turn" to two Roman-era authors—Tertullian of Carthage and Origen of Alexandria—while recognising that there were important, albeit undeveloped, precedents in the works of Justin, Irenaeus and Clement. On the basis of a wide assessment of Tertullian and Origen's writings, I have argued that this hermeneutical shift from "saying", or literary fragment, to "text" is witnessed in Tertullian and Origen's interpretive use of the literary context of Jesus's words. That is, both authors use the immediate context of Jesus's pronouncements to clarify the significance of his words. Crucially, the assumption that undergirds Tertullian and Origen's practice of literary contextualisation is that the the significance of Jesus's words does not lie in

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[1] The red-letter bible was the brainchild of Louis Klopsch (1852-1910) who at the turn of the twentieth century printed his Red Letter New Testament (ca. 1899): *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: (Authorized Version) With All the Words Recorded Therein, as Having Been Spoken by Our Lord, Printed in Color* (New York, NY: Christian Herald; Bible House, 1903). Klopsch took inspiration for this practice from the words attributed to Jesus in Lk 20.22: "This cup is the new testament in my blood". See P. Sellew, "Red Letter Bible", in B. M. Metzger and M. D. Coogan (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 619 who also notes that medieval biblical manuscripts contained multi-coloured lettering. Moreover, Sellew notes that red letters were used by the Jesus Seminar to determine the authenticity of Jesus's words. See R. W. Funk with M. H. Smith, *The Gospel of Mark: Red Letter Edition* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1991).

those words themselves, but is tied to, and mediated by, their immediate literary context.

I substantiated this case by presenting three, significant reading strategies that comprise this focussed examination of the literary context of Jesus's sayings—a method that I have called the "hermeneutic of literary contextualisation": first, anecdote reproduction, or the recapitulation of the entire narrative concluding with Jesus's final pronouncement as a way of countering perceived non-contextualisation of Jesus's words (chapter 1); second, co-textualisation, or the use of textual details from the immediate context of the anecdote as a way of clarifying the meaning of Jesus's words (chapter 2); and third, intertextual reference, the practice of drawing on scriptural texts connected to the co-text of Jesus's words by verbal catchword with the goal of explicating Jesus's sayings (chapter 3). Taken together, these practices reflect the importance of the co-text of Jesus's words in discerning the significance of those words. As such, these methods mark a significant hermeneutical shift away from reading Jesus's words as *self-sufficient sayings* to interpreting them as *textually embedded words*.

Finally, I sought to explain the rise of this hermeneutic through a multi-faceted account that considered a variety of literary, ideological and historical factors (chapter 4). I first discussed considerations that might help to explain *where* this hermeneutic emerged from—the use of the commentary and homily genre and the use of literary-critical methods in Homeric and biblical commentaries. To be sure, these factors provide a crucial context for understanding Tertullian and Origen's practices and demonstrate that these did not arise *ex nihilo*. They do not explain, however, *why* Tertullian and Origen took them up, especially when so many of their contemporaries clearly chose not to do so despite being aware of the commentary genre and the gamut of literary-critical methods. I therefore argued that the most important factor that accounts for "literary contextualisation" is the changing principles of the debates in which early Christians were engaged. An examination of the contexts in which Tertullian and Origen employ Jesus's words demonstrates that they were far less preoccupied with *proving the authority of, and sources for, Jesus's words*. Rather, they were *more concerned with the task of explicitly interpreting them*. Beginning with Justin, and continuing with Irenaeus and Clement, the words of Jesus appear in polemical disputes while continuing to form part of the moral teaching of early Christian communities. To the extent that these three authors contextualise Jesus's

sayings, such contextualisation takes the form of asserting the textual sources of those sayings to ensure the inviolability of their meaning. The pressing concern remained the authority of Jesus's words, in isolation from their literary contexts. The interpretation of Jesus's words, or at least sustained reflection on the principles of the interpretive task, could only follow once this initial challenge was met. It was with Tertullian and Origen that this task began in earnest. In the course of their disputes, Tertullian, and later Origen, seek to establish the ground-rules for appropriately using and interpreting Jesus's words. The fact they could begin to do so owes a great deal to the success of their predecessors who had largely overcome the challenge of proving the importance and authority of Jesus's words.

With the results of this study now summarised, it remains to comment on the implications of these conclusions for the study of early Christian hermeneutics.

Early Christian Hermeneutics

In this study, I have sought to initiate a new research programme that prioritises the hermeneutics associated with the early Christian use of Jesus's words. By hermeneutics, I refer to the methods used to interpret Jesus tradition as well as the assumptions early Christians held about the nature and significance of Jesus's words. The scholarship on this topic has tended to pre-occupy itself with three questions, each of which examines the sources, the text and the results of early Christian citations of Jesus tradition. First, scholars have sought to locate the precise sources that early Christian authors drew on when using Jesus's words—the gospel of Matthew, Luke, Thomas or the Gospel according to the Egyptians. The goal here has been to trace the development of gospel traditions in early Christianity. Second, text-critics have attempted to determine the state of the text of early Christian gospel literature through citations of Jesus's words. Here, the aim has been to reconstruct the early text of Christian gospel literature. And third, with the recent interest in the history of biblical exegesis, scholars have been increasingly examining the results of patristic interpretation of Jesus's words. All the while, a larger set of *hermeneutical* questions have largely been neglected, and to a large extent, have gone unasked. Such questions include, How did early Christian authors perceive Jesus's words? What methods were they employing to cite and interpret them? To what extent were early Christian authors employing the literary context when drawing on Jesus's sayings?

By allowing these questions to guide the study of citations of Jesus tradition, I have highlighted the centrality of literary contextualisation to the understanding of early Christian hermeneutics. The lack of attention that has been given to literary contextualisation is partly the result of the terms scholars have used when discussing textual re-use. I have distinguished between "the awareness of literary sources" behind Jesus's words and "use of those sources for contextual purposes". Stanton, and particularly Aland, have discussed "textual consciousness" (Textbewusstein) in terms of explicit and named citations (for instance, "as it says in the Gospel of Matthew").[2] Yet, as I have shown, we must now distinguish between such "textual consciousness" and the practice of literary contextualisation, which constitutes explicit engagement both with the text of Jesus's words and their surrounding context. This is a significant distinction since, as we have seen, an early Christian author might refer to the text of a gospel when using Jesus's words while not attending to their literary context as found in that gospel. Tertullian and Origen are certainly not the first early Christian authors to *possess* gospel "texts", and yet they are among the first to reflect on the hermeneutical implications that Jesus's words belong to a literary corpus, and, more particularly, to literary units. In other words, they not only *make reference* to those textual sources but begin to use them for interpretive ends and, indeed, on several occasions to explicitly raise the literary context to the level of a normative principle. By distinguishing between "textual consciousness" and "literary contextualisation", then, I hope to have shifted the conversation beyond discussions of an author's *textual awareness* and towards considerations of an author's *textual use*. As this study shows, by examining the use of the literary context, one can establish hermeneutical patterns and assumptions as well as track hermeneutical shifts diachronically.

This thesis therefore contributes a significant chapter to the understanding of literary contextualisation in early Christianity, and in antiquity more generally. Classical philologist René Nünlist has recently noted that the state of scholarly research on ancient literary contextualisation is still in its infancy.[3] Nünlist studies the contextual reading practices of the Homeric critic Aristarchus and offers parallels to

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[2] Stanton, "Justin and Irenaeus"; Aland, "Die Rezeption", 5-7; see also Hurtado, "New Testament in Second Century", 16.

[3] Nünlist, "Kontext", 101: "wobei gleich zu Beginn klarzustellen ist, dass das Thema 'Kontext' in der einschlägigen Forschung bisher kaum untersucht wurde". See the other essays in U. Tischer, A. Frost and U. Gärtner, *Text, Kontext, Kontextualisierung: Moderne Kontextkonzepte und antike Literatur* (Spudasmata 179; Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2018) which treat the modern concept of literary context as well the strategies in the works of ancient authors such as Cicero, Callimachus and Pliny.

the strategies and standard analytic tools employed by modern literary critics.[4] In this thesis, I have contributed to the body of data for literary contextualisation through close examination of Tertullian and Origen's hermeneutical strategies applied to Jesus's words. By adding to the work of Nünlist, I hope to have provoked greater interest among scholars of early Christianity in literary contextualisation as an ancient hermeneutical method. The majority of modern, Western readers perhaps take it for granted that the literary context has some normative value for the interpretation of a wise figure's words. Indeed, literary criticism is a staple of contemporary historical-critical research of the bible, reaching back at least as far as the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834).[5] Schleiermacher raised the study of an author's time, place and the literary context of his/her works to the level of a hermeneutical principle. He also distinguished between a proverbial utterance which has significance in and of itself and an epigram which requires a story for its sense to become clear. The epigram obtains its significance "in the context of which it arose, and it is only via this context that it is comprehensible".[6] My research shows that this strategy of literary contextualisation in fact contains a fascinating but neglected pre-history. Even more significantly, I have shown that Tertullian and Origen's use of the literary contexts surrounding Jesus's words was by no means an inevitability. The popularity of Jesus's words as stand-alone sayings demonstrates that the literary contextualisation practiced by Tertullian and Origen was but one choice among a variety of others.

A significant component of my contribution to the study of early Christian hermeneutics has been conceptual. I have identified and rigorously defined three practices that comprise the literary contextualisation of Jesus's sayings. In my discussion of each of these practices, I have sought to define the precise contours of literary contextualisation and distinguish it from similar practices which, while appearing to serve similar, contextualising ends, on closer inspection do not have the same goal. I differentiated the practice of anecdote reproduction, for instance, from cases where an early Christian author re-tells a pronouncement story that concludes

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[4] Nünlist, "Kontext" 101-118.

[5] See, R.E. Palmer, H*ermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1969), 43-71. See also F. Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts* (ed. H. Kimmerle, trans. J. Duke and J. Frostman; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 104-5.

[6] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics*, 117.

with Jesus's words.[7] Whereas various early Christian authors recounted pronouncement stories to provide a proof or for aesthetic purposes, Tertullian and Origen's practices of reproducing the co-text represent far more explicit attempts to contextualise Jesus's words for interpretive purposes. Both authors explicitly cite the larger story to clarify the significance of Jesus's climactic saying. In identifying co-textual reference as a key component of the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words, I did not so much distinguish this from other practices, as recognise it as a subtler, but by no means less purposeful technique of contextualising Jesus's sayings. Finally, with intertextual reference, I built on the work of the scholar of rabbinics, Alexander Samely, to distinguish between different types of intertextual reference. I showed that early Christian authors before Tertullian conventionally derive networks of scriptural texts through the wording of Jesus's sayings. By contrast, Tertullian and Origen relate scriptural texts to words and lexemes found in the pericope surrounding Jesus's words. By deriving intertexts through the co-text, and not through Jesus's words, Tertullian and Origen again demonstrate that the meaning and significance of those words is mediated through the co-text, and scriptural texts associated with it. The typology I have developed in this study can be used in future research that examines ancient literary contextualisation, in general, and patristic reading strategies applied to both classical and biblical texts, in particular.

Finally, I have argued that Tertullian and Origen make three concrete contributions to early Christian hermeneutics, each of which I have discussed throughout the thesis. First they develop a fresh *perception* of Jesus's words as textually embedded lines rather than fragmented sayings. I have shown that Tertullian and Origen are the first to theorise and reflect upon the relationship between Jesus's concluding statements and their narrative frame. Tertullian and Origen perceive Jesus's words not as fragmented sayings, as did their peers, but as climactic sayings whose significance derives from their immediate literary context. Second, they develop a set of *principles* and methods which prioritise the literary context of Jesus's words. These are discussed at length above.

Third, they *produce* a new kind of textual boundedness that both expands the interpretations of Jesus's words even as it anchors them in the literary context framing

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[7] Compare Justin's reproduction of the tribute passage (*1 Apol*. 17.1-3, see introduction) in which he does *not* explicitly seek to contextualise Jesus's words with the purposefully contextualisation witnessed in Tertullian and Origen (see the cases discussed in chapter 1.2).

Jesus's climactic statements. I have sought to demonstrate and document the hermeneutical impact of literary contextualisation on the interpretation of Jesus's words. In doing so, it should be noted that the impact differs quite markedly between the two authors. Tertullian's use of the literary context of Jesus's words *largely* serves to circumscribe the interpretation of those words. The constraining force of the co-text is witnessed most clearly when Tertullian reproduces the anecdote. When engaging in this practice, which without exception both authors do in distinctly polemical scenarios, Tertullian insists that the narrative frame of the story limits the application of Jesus's words. Co-textual references frequently function in a similarly conservative and polemical fashion for Tertullian, although one also witnesses his use of co-textual details to draw on scriptural passages, as well. For Origen, by contrast, the co-text does not simply refute rival readings of opponents; more importantly, it evokes additional scriptural texts which enlarge the frame of reference for Jesus's words. In Origen's case, the result is to increase the number of applications of the final pronouncement, often in rather surprising directions. Both authors converge in their use of intertexts when interpreting Jesus's words since both employ scriptural texts to unlock meaning in Jesus's words that might not be apparent from their immediate textual context. Tertullian and Origen's practice of intertextual reference paradoxically both *expands* the significance of Jesus's pronouncements, even as it anchors it in the text of the co-text. With every added intertext, the applications of Jesus's sayings increase exponentially. Yet, as I have argued, Tertullian and Origen do not draw on these intertexts in a fanciful or arbitrary fashion. Rather, they connect scriptural texts with the co-text on the basis of verbal and thematic connections. The hermeneutic of textual contextualisation therefore produces a new kind of *textually-bounded variety* of interpretations for Jesus's words.

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In this study, I hope to have encouraged scholars of Christian origins to begin to probe the hermeneutical assumptions and principles underlying the early Christian re-use of Jesus's words. My aim has been to provoke further discussion and debate for students of early Christian hermeneutics, particularly as this relates to the words of Jesus. One fruitful avenue that might be taken up in future study is the effect of this hermeneutical development on the subsequent re-use of Jesus tradition. To what extent do Tertullian

and Origen's successors follow the patterns established by Tertullian and Origen when interpreting the words of wise figures, in general, and of Jesus, in particular? There might be an especially important chapter to be written, for instance, on Augustine, in this regard.[8] Further diachronic study of later examples might also shed better light on the motives that drove early Christian authors to read Jesus's words according to their literary context, or as stand-alone sayings. Future research might also begin to examine the hermeneutics associated with the use of *other* scriptural texts, work on which has already begun.[9] To what extent do patristic authors contextualise Old Testament texts, for example? To what extent do they apply these techniques to the words of Paul? Does the paradigm of "saying" prevail in the use of these texts? In this study, I have made an initial but important start on the task of discussing the literary contextualisation of Jesus's words. I have sought to provide the conceptual and methodological basis for those scholars interested in literary contextualisation to turn to the larger body of scriptural texts employed in the patristic age. There are more hermeneutical discoveries to be made. It is my hope that this study will provide the impetus for scholars to begin that task of discovery.

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[8] See T. Toom, "*Augustine in Context* and Augustine on Context" in T. Toom (ed.), *Augustine in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) 1-10 (8) on this point.
[9] See now E. Murphy, *The Bishop and the Apostle: Cyprian's Pastoral Exegesis of Paul* (SBR; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018) 32, 90-92.

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