THE USE OF SPECTACLE MOTIFS IN PRESENTING THE MARTYR AS THE REPRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE *MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thesis statement

This STL thesis will examine how the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (*Mart. Pol.*) uses motifs of the Roman *spectacula* to present Polycarp's death as an imitation of the passion narrative and the martyr as the representation of Christ. In the process, the thesis will discuss how spectacle motifs are used to emphasize and construct parallels to the gospels, interpret Polycarp's death and construct a theology of martyrdom.

Overview of the study

The thesis is divided into three chapters: an introduction, an analysis of gospel parallels and *spectacula* motifs in *Mart. Pol.*, and a conclusion.

The introduction provides an overview of the project, along with necessary background information. It offers general information on what is known about persecution of Christians before the edicts of Decius in the mid-third century. Christian approaches to martyrdom from the late first and early second centuries are also discussed, in order to locate *Mart. Pol.* within a larger context of Christian views on the topic. Textual issues related to *Mart. Pol.* (debates over the integrity of the text and various redaction theories, proposals for the date of Polycarp's martyrdom and the composition of *Mart. Pol.*) are also covered.

The second chapter examines how gospel parallels and the motifs of the Roman *spectacula* in *Mart. Pol.* are used in order to present Polycarp's martyrdom as a fatal charade of Christ's passion. It is divided into two main sections. The first section provides a detailed analysis of the text's use of gospel parallels and allusions, classifying various ways in which the

gospel narrative is evoked by the author(s) and how these are employed to present Polycarp's death as a "martyrdom according to the gospel" (τὸ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον μαρτύριον; *Mart. Pol.* 1.1; cf. 19.1). When the narrative techniques seen in *Mart. Pol.*'s use of the passion narratives are compared to those of the fatal charades, striking similarities become evident. The next section analyzes *Mart. Pol.*'s use of motifs of the *spectacula*. Particularly close attention is given to the ways in which the author(s) incorporate(s) events associated with the martyrdom into the context of the *spectaculum* that would not typically have occurred in that context. The most obvious instances are the fact that both Polycarp's trial and the disposal of his body take place in the stadium and occur during the *spectaculum*. There is also a peculiar chronological elision between the execution of Germanicus (*Mart. Pol.* 3) and Polycarp's entrance into the stadium (*Mart. Pol.* 9.1) implying that Germanicus and Polycarp are executed during the same *spectaculum*.[1] Thus, the authorities' pursuit of Polycarp, the bishop's flight, his betrayal, prophetic vision, and arrest are all narrated as though they also occurred during the *spectaculum*. This effort to portray all of the events related to Polycarp's martyrdom as part of a *spectaculum* is analyzed in light of the ancient understanding of the arena as a place where truth and reality are enacted and displayed. Attention is also given to the ways in which *Mart. Pol.* adapts the arena motifs, in the process inverting expected power dynamics and radically revising the values of the larger culture.[2]

The study concludes with an analysis of the interplay between the use of gospel parallels and the motifs of the *spectacula* in constructing Polycarp's death as a fatal charade of the Passion. Possible reasons for why second-century Christians might have chosen to use the model

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1. Whether the *spectaculum* is suspended for the time it takes to seek out and arrest Polycarp (clearly a span of several days, if not weeks) or it simply continues throughout this time is not clear.

2. This inversion and revision is often accomplished by means of employing the very *spectacula* motifs that would normally reinforce and maintain the values and powers structures of Roman society.

of the *spectacula* in developing an understanding of martyrdom will be discussed. I will also look ahead briefly to the later development of these motifs in *Acta Martyrum* and possible interactions between such dramatic reenactment and representation and developing Christian liturgical traditions.[3]

Pre-Decian persecution of Christians and early martyrdom narratives

While the possibility of persecution formed a significant element in the imagination and writings of early Christian communities, the actual experience of persecution and martyrdom was far more limited. There is no evidence for wide-spread, imperially sponsored persecution of Christians before those under Decius in the mid-third century.[4] Even in that case, there is no evidence that Decius' edict was specifically aimed at Christians. Rather, Rives suggests its aim was to promote traditional cults by requiring that all inhabitants of the empire honor the gods through sacrifice.[5] It was the Christian refusal to participate in such sacrificial cults that led to their executions. Of course, Christians experienced persecution and violence prior to the mid-third century. Rather that persecution consisted of scattered, localized instances of violence against Christians. Some of them were initiated by local Roman or provincial officials, while

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3. The thesis also includes appendices containing tables of gospel parallels and allusions, allusions to other biblical texts, and *spectacula* motifs, along with some brief analysis.

4. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, "Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?" *Past and Present*, no. 26 (1963 1963): 6–9; Timothy David Barnes, "Legislation Against the Christians," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 58 (1968): 32–50; A. N. Sherwin-White, "The Early Persecutions and Roman Law Again," *Journal of Theological Studies* 3 (1952): 199–213. Sherwin-White notes some of the limitations the Roman justice system would have imposed on even these localized persecutions, particularly the stipulation that capital cases could only be tried by the provincial governor (in most cases, the proconsul). Hence, any prosecution of Christians required access to the governor, which Sherwin-White suggests may be one of the reasons why most of the early martyrdoms occur in large provincial capitals (e.g. Smyrna, Lyons, Carthage, Antioch, Pergamum).

5. James B. Rives, "The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 89 (1999): 151–54.

others began as acts of mob violence, resulting in the intervention of magistrates and local authorities. In the majority of cases, Christian communities were too small and insignificant to come to the attention of the Roman authorities. It was only when the Christians' religious exclusivism and stubborn clinging to their own beliefs were perceived as a threat by local populations or Roman governors that Christians faced systematic persecution.[6]

When Christians were executed by the Roman authorities, this posed a significant challenge for followers of Jesus. This was particularly true when the sentence received was not the elite punishment of *damnatio ad gladium* (simple beheading), but the more degrading punishments of *damnatio ad bestias* (being thrown to the beasts), *crematio* (burning alive), or other aggravated executions in the arena. The public humiliation through displays of suffering involved in these sentences was essential to the punishment. The condemned were expected to display terror and pain before the Roman populace, thus enacting subjugation to Rome and the triumph of Roman authority.[7] Christian communities who witnessed the execution of fellow

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6. Sherwin-White, "The Early Persecutions and Roman Law Again". Sherwin-White suggests that the legal basis for the persecution of Christians before Decius' edict was initially the association of Christianity with the crimes of *flagitia* and *scelera*, resulting in the treatment of Christians as members of a forbidden cult (similar to the Druids). Over time, as Roman magistrates became more familiar with Christian practices the crimes with which Christianity was associated shifted from *flagitia* to *cohaerens scelus* and *contumacia*, which were viewed as equally worthy of punishment by execution. The association of Christianity with *contumacia* explains the consistent attempts by Roman officials to attempt to get Christians to recant and their willingness to release those who did so. While the association of Christianity with these crimes would have led Roman magistrates to view the cult as harmful to Roman society, there was no particular law against Christianity and governors could choose whether to apply their *extra ordinem* powers in order to condemn those accused of Christianity. Those who had doubts about how to proceed could write to the emperor, as Pliny did. The Princeps' rescript then became law in that province and might be invoked later to influence others to follow the same course, although the rescript was not binding on later governors unless it was include in the *mandata* issued to them (the sporadic nature of the persecutions would imply that this was not generally the case). The result was a complete absence of any consistent Roman response to Christianity, even in a particular location. Cf. Hugh Last, "The Study of the 'Persecutions'," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 27 (1937): 80–92.

7. Artistic representations of aggravated executions in the arena are relatively common,

Christians sought to understand these humiliating deaths in light of the death of Jesus and the promises contained in the scriptures. They also drew on the very imagery, motifs, and cultural symbols used to construct the problematic understanding that they sought to overcome: the *spectacula* of the Roman arena. Instead of the terrified and humiliated *noxii* subjected to the justice of Roman authority, the Christian narratives reverse the cultural expectations, so that it is the *damnati* who display the great Roman virtues of courage, self-control, and contempt for death. While the Roman magistrate nominally retains power over the proceedings, it is really the martyrs who are in control.[8] Instead of being passive victims, the martyrs are engaged in a cosmic battle, by means of which Satan is defeated. In this ἀγῶν, in which the Christian martyrs triumph over suffering and death itself through heroic endurance and courage.

This inversion is accomplished by a radical redefinition of the meaning of victory. Rather than seeking release, the martyr's goal is an unwavering confession of Christianity evidenced by steadfast endurance of suffering and death. While the heart of martyrdom is the verbal confession of Christ during the trial, the martyrs' subsequent behavior in facing death confirms

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in which *damnati* are typically portrayed as helpless, bound, nude or nearly nude, in the control of handlers or the grip of beasts. Mosaics showing *damnati* being exposed to big cats often show them tied to stakes on wheeled carts with long handles, allowing handlers to safely maneuver the victims toward the predators. Other handlers with whips to incite the animals are shown alongside. In other cases, unarmed and naked prisoners are shown being forced toward animals on foot by arena personnel. *Damnati* are also shown at the moment of the beast's attack, sometimes including graphic depictions of the cat clinging to its victim with its claws while biting down for the kill. In contrast to the helpless and bloody *damnati*, gladiators are shown as proud, glamorously armored and armed, and usually bloodless. Shelby Brown, "Death as Decoration: Scenes from the Arena on Roman Domestic Mosaics," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 194–96; Donald G. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 1998), 92.

8. Of course, it is God who is ultimately in control of all that occurs. The authority of the martyr derives from conformity with God's will. Some narratives are more explicit in pointing to God's control over events than others, but even those that speak most explicitly about God's authority still portray the martyr exercising a remarkable degree of control over the course of events.

the truth of their witness. The martyrs not only proclaimed their identity as Christians, but enacted it by imitating Christ's self-offering death. The authors of the early martyr stories found a model for this kind of reenactment in the "fatal charades" of the Roman arena.[9] Coleman has shown how fatal charades could employ iconographic props or specific narrative elements in order to identify the mythological narrative being enacted, rather than having to duplicate in detail every aspect of story. For example, dressing the *damnatus* in a lion skin and providing him with a club would be sufficient for the spectators to identify him as Heracles. Presenting a spectacle in which a woman was mounted by a bull would have been enough to bring to mind the story of Pasiphae.[10] These reenactments often involved ironic twists, in which deviations from the familiar narrative were used to add excitement and suspense to the event. *Naumachiae* (staged naval battles) appear to have been literally re-fought, rather than having a predetermined winner, since the outcome did not always correspond to the original historical event.[11] Some *naumachiae* do not seem to have had any historical precedent and involved purely hypothetical clashes between famous navies.[12] In addition to the presentation of *spectacula* in which the

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9. Coleman coined the term "fatal charades" to refer to the reenactment of mythological narratives and historical events by *damnati* in the context of *spectacula*. They served to make the executions more entertaining for the audience, through the addition of narrative, and enhanced the prestige and power of the sponsor (typically the emperor or a member of the imperial family), by demonstrating his power to make myth real and to bring to life events of the distant past. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments," *Journal of Roman Studies* 80 (1990): 44–73; Kathleen M. Coleman, "Launching Into History: Aquatic Displays in the Early Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993): 48–74.

10. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 60–61, 64–65. Lucillius describes what was most likely a fatal charade presented at a *spectaculum* under Nero and Martial refers to one involving Pasiphae (Lucillius, *Anth. Pal.* 11.184; Martial, *Liber Spect.* 6).

11. E.g. Dio 55.10.7, which implies that it was by chance that the "Athenians" triumphed in the *naumachia* held under Augustus in 2 BCE.

12. *Naumachiae* reenacting historical battles included Augustus' "Salamis" with an Athenian victory (historical) and Titus' staging of the Athenian attack on Syracuse, which ended in an Athenian victory (contrary to the historical outcome). Examples of pseudo-

excitement derived from an unpredictable outcome, some fatal charades added unexpected twists to mythological narratives, surprising the spectators and further humiliating the *damnati* in their assumed personae. For example, Martial describes a fatal charade in which Orpheus performs among the peaks of Rhodope, bewitching rocks, woods, and animals to approach him. However, this idyllic scene concludes with Orpheus being mauled by an "unappreciative bear."[13]

While fatal charades are unlikely to have been the common form of execution in the arena, the comment in *1 Clement* that some women had been martyred in the guise of the Danaids and Dircae implies that at least some Christians were killed in mythological reenactments.[14] Tacitus' description of Nero's execution of Christians suggests that this was also

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historical *naumachiae* include Claudius' staging of a battle between the Sicilians and Rhodians and Caesar's battle between Tyrians and Egyptians. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Launching Into History," 69.

13. Martial, *Spect.* 24:
Quidquid in Orpheo Rhodope spectasse theatro
dicitur, exhibuit, Caesar, herena tibi.
repserunt scopuli mirandaque silua cucurrit,
quale fuisse nemus creditur Hesperidum.
adfuit inmixtum pecori genus omne ferarum
et supra uatem multa pependit auis,
ipse sed ingrato iacuit laceratus ab urso.
haec tantum res est facta παρ' ἱστορίαν.
("Whatever Rhodope is said to have seen in one of Orpheus' stage-performances, Caesar, the amphitheater has displayed to you. Cliffs crawled and a wood ran forwards, a wonder to behold; the grove of the Hesperides is supposed to have been just like that. Every kind of wild beast was there, mixed with domestic animals, and above the minstrel there balanced many a bird; but he fell, torn apart by an unappreciative bear. This was the only thing that happened contrary to the story.") Text and translation from Kathleen M. Coleman, ed. and trans., *M. Valerii Martialis Liber Spectaculorum* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 174. The irony lies not only in the bear's failure to appreciate Orpheus' music, but also in the fact that it is a bear who tears Orpheus to pieces, rather than the Thracian women as in the traditional myth. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 62–63; Kathleen M. Coleman, *Liber Spectaculorum*, 174–81.

14. 1 Clement 6.2: διὰ ζῆλος διωχθεῖσαι γυναῖκες Δαναΐδες καὶ Δίρκαι, αἰκίσματα δεινὰ καὶ ἀνόσια παθοῦσαι, ἐπὶ τὸν τῆς πίστεως βέβαιον δρόμον κατήντησαν καὶ ἔλαβον γέρας γενναῖον αἱ ἀσθενεῖς τῷ σώματι. ("Women were persecuted as Danaids and Dircae and

a fatal charade, although Tacitus does not mention the obvious association with the story of Actaeon.[15] Even if Christians were only very rarely executed as part of a fatal charade, Tertullian's comments on these reenactments in his *Apologeticum* and *Ad Nationes* make it clear that such events were well known.[16] Reenactments of this sort are also described by Suetonius, Tacitus and Dio, and in other literary works.[17] Hence, it seems reasonable to assume that the authors of the *acta martyrum* would have associated such reenactments with executions during *spectacula*, even if they had never personally witnessed one.

The imagery and motifs of the *spectacula*, particularly the fatal charades, provided two primary tools to Christians seeking to interpret the executions of their fellow believers. First, the narrative techniques of the fatal charades provided a model for portraying martyrdom as a reenactment of Christ's death even when the actual circumstances were very different.[18] Second, while the *damnati* were meant to die painful and humiliating deaths, the *spectacula* were also the

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suffered terrifying and profane torments because of jealousy. But they confidently completed the race of faith, and though weak in body, they received a noble reward.") Bart D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 1.44–47. The passage is in the context of an account of the suffering and deaths of Peter and Paul, suggesting that these women may have also been executed under Nero. The reference to Danaids and Dircae has puzzled later scholars unfamiliar with fatal charades, resulting in the suggestion of several emendations of the text in order to eliminate it. The most popular of these is νεανίδες παιδίσκαι, resulting in a reading of "persecuted as women, maidens, and slave girls." However, the manuscripts overwhelmingly support the Δαναΐδες καὶ Δίρκαι reading.

15. Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44.4. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 64. The location for these executions was Nero's gardens rather than the Circus Maximus (as would have been more common for a *damnatio ad bestias*), but Tacitus presents this event as having functionally been a *spectaculum*, even if it did not necessarily have all of the formal characteristics.

16. Tertullian, *Apol.* 15.4-6; *Ad Nat.* 1.10.46-47.

17. E.g. Suetonius, *Nero* 12.2; *Claud.* 21.6; Tacitus, *Ann.* 12.56.1; Dio 61.33.3; Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 10.23, 29, 34.

18. E.g. the martyr was not crucified.

context for the display of gladiators, *venatores*, and *bestiarii*,[19] figures whose roles were far more ambiguous. Unlike those who suffered various kinds of aggravated execution in the arena, gladiators, *venatores*, and *bestiarii* were trained professionals who fought in the arena armed and had a reasonable chance of survival.[20] Gladiators were socially despised. Legal rulings consistently denied them the rights of citizenship, barring them from full participation in religious ritual and civic life. However, they were also associated with glory, discipline, valor, and eroticism. Gladiators and the *munera* in which they fought were used as examples of military virtues, while the fighters were honored for their willingness to face death with courage.[21] In fact, the paradox of the gladiator's status served to amplify the belief that the

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19. *Venatores* were professional hunters and animal handlers, frequently imported from Africa, who hunted with spears, arrows and other weapons that could be shot from a distance and hunting dogs. *Bestiarii* usually fought animals at close range with spears and knives (the term *bestiarius* originally referred to an individual condemned to fight the beasts with a knife or spear who had very little chance of surviving the encounter). As more *bestiarii* were given specialized training and obtained the same privileges as gladiators, they increasingly came to be equated with *venatores*. While under the Empire these men were still condemned criminals, they were sent to the Ludus Matutinus to receive special training in order to be able to give skillful, entertaining performances and (unlike those condemned to forms of aggravated execution) they had some possibility of survival Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 79–80.

20. Survival rates of elite gladiators seem to have been relatively high, with perhaps only 20 percent of fights resulting in the death of one of the combatants during the first century CE (although by the third century, the death rate had increased to 50 percent, perhaps because crowds desired to see more deaths and because Augustus' ban on *munera sine missione* had been revoked). Inscriptions of the records of individual gladiators indicate that bouts often ended in a tie and experienced gladiators might be spared even when they had lost (particularly when an experienced gladiator was defeated by a rookie, as spectators respected champion fighters) Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 86. Economic factors also favored a gladiator's survival, as *munerarii* who rented gladiators (as opposed to buying them outright) usually had to pay a penalty equal to fifty times the rental cost for each gladiator killed. David S. Potter, "Spectacle," in *A Companion to the Roman Empire*, ed. David S. Potter, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 391.

21. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 3–4, 80–84; Alison Futrell, *Blood in the Arena: The Spectacle of Roman Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 50–51. Cicero uses gladiators as examples of skilled artisans and military exemplars for citizens (e.g. *Phil.* 2.29.74; cf. Seneca, *Helv.* 17.1) but also describes them as desperate and savage (*aut perditi homines aut*

munera helped to promote Roman *virtus*, since Roman citizens who observed slaves and criminals fighting and dying with such courage would naturally be inspired to even greater feats of valor. The authors of *acta martyrum* use the positive image of the arena as a locus for the display of and instruction in virtue, portraying the martyrs as superior examples of manliness, courage, and endurance.

Yet, in utilizing the motifs of the fatal charades and of the gladiator, *venator*, and *bestiarius* as exemplars of Roman *virtus*, Christians also transformed them profoundly. The literary depiction of such a fatal charade in the *acta martyrum* not only reversed the expected power dynamics, transforming the condemned *noxii* into heroic examples of manliness, endurance, and courage, but also radically altered expectations of the very nature of heroic glory and the meaning of triumph.[22] The martyr manifested the reality of Christ's crucifixion and glorification to the Christian "audience" by demonstrating the power of Christ's indwelling presence to allow individuals to endure suffering with heroic *virtus* and the glorification of the martyr/Christ manifested precisely in suffering and death.[23]

Textual issues related to *Mart. Pol.*

There has been extensive debate among scholars as to whether the extant text of *Mart.*

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barbari; *Tusc.* 2.41; cf. Ps. Quint. *Decl. Maj.* 9.21). Tertullian exploits this paradox in his condemnation of the Romans for their fickle, confused and inconsistent attitude toward gladiators and gladiatorial combat (*De spect.* 22). However, it is this very inconsistency that provides the means for Christian authors (including Tertullian) to transform Christian *damnati* into exemplars of Roman virtues of courage, endurance, and contempt for death.

22. Cobb demonstrates the ways in which the *acta martyrum* consistently present martyrs as more masculine than their Roman persecutors. In the process, the authors of the martyr narratives present Christians as more virtuous, possessing greater self-control, and retaining more personal agency than the Roman officials (reversing expected dynamics of power and authority). L. Stephanie Cobb, *Dying to Be Men: Gender and Language in Early Christian Martyr Texts*, Gender, Theory, and Religion (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

23. Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 15–40, 104–23.

Pol. is what it claims to be: a letter from the Christian community in Smyrna to the Christian community in Philomelium. The debate has centered around two primary questions. First, to what degree has the text of *Mart. Pol.* preserved in the manuscripts been redacted since its original composition? Second, what is the date of Polycarp's martyrdom and when was *Mart. Pol.* composed?

Questions regarding the integrity of the text and possible redaction

In order to demonstrate that *Mart. Pol.* was constructed as a literary fatal charade, rather than this being an accident of later additions to and revisions of the text, it is necessary to be reasonably confident that the bulk of the gospel parallels belong to the second-century narrative.[24] Concerns regarding the integrity of the text of *Mart. Pol.* first arose because of differences between the text in the manuscripts and the version given by Eusebius.[25] Other elements of *Mart. Pol.* have also been questioned as inconsistent with a second century date, in particular the inclusion of the Holy Spirit in the doxology at the conclusion of Polycarp's prayer in *Mart. Pol.* 14.3 and the indications of an emerging cult in *Mart. Pol.* 17.2-18.3. Some aspects of the scholarly debate are crucial for this study, as a number of the passages whose second century date has been questioned include attempts to emphasize parallels between Polycarp's death and the passion narratives.[26]

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24. Of course, if these elements are the product of later redaction of the text, they may still have been added with the intent of presenting Polycarp's martyrdom as a fatal charade. The question then is when were these aspects interpolated into the narrative, as this would indicate whether the redactor is adapting the text so it conforms with an established model or using the *spectacula* to construct a particular theological understanding of martyrdom.

25. In addition, the manuscripts themselves include two different versions of chapter 22 of *Mart. Pol.*, which provides a summary of the transmission of the text. However, as this is less critical to the current study, the issues regarding this final chapter of the text will not be treated in detail.

26. Eusebius' account of Polycarp's martyrdom (*Hist. eccl.* 4.15) does not contain several of the most distinctive and explicit parallels. The elements omitted by Eusebius include the statement that Polycarp's martyrdom is κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1), the comparison

The classical formulation of the argument in favor of redaction was advanced by von Campenhausen in 1963. He proposed four main layers in the text:

> 1 The original letter from the church in Smyrna to the church in Philomelium, written within a year or two of Polycarp's death in the third quarter of the second century.
>
> 2 An anti-rigorist, probably anti-Montanist, revision of the letter in the third century.
>
> 3 Various interpolations emphasizing the miracles, mainly before Eusebius, although a few (e.g. the dove in *Mart. Pol.* 16.1) after Eusebius.
>
> 4 A post-Eusebian redaction of the letter by the "Evangelion-Redaktor" in the fourth century, based on (2), which added the parallels to the passion narrative in order to demonstrate that Polycarp's death was a perfect "martyrdom according to the gospel" and which sought to portray it as reenacting the passion even in small details.[27]

These interpolations caused the loss of some of the original narrative, particularly the accounts of the other martyrs in *Mart. Pol.* 2.

While this has remained the primary proposal for redactional layers in the text, Conzelmann argued that *Mart. Pol.* is more thoroughly rewritten than von Campenhausen suggested. He hypothesizes that the original text was the story about the twelve martyrs, with Polycarp as the final climax. This original account was reworked in order to focus almost exclusively on Polycarp, who serves as the model-martyr "according to the gospel" -- revisions made in response to new persecutions. Indications of "disturbance" in the text are also found in *Mart. Pol.* 8.3-9.1, the miracles, and the passage on the veneration of the martyrs, all of which he argues must have been introduced secondarily to the text.[28]Both theories are based on the

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of the slave who betrayed Polycarp to Judas and the comment that Polycarp was betrayed by a member of his own household (*Mart. Pol.* 6.2), the fact that the police chief's name was Herod (*Mart. Pol.* 6.2), and the statement that his pursuers came after him "as against a robber (ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν)" (*Mart. Pol.* 7.1).

27. The Evangelion-Redaktor is also responsible for the addition of *Mart. Pol.* 21 and 22.2-3. Hans F. von Campenhausen, "Bearbeitungen und Iterpolationen des Polykarpmartyriums," in *Aus der Frühzeit des Christentums; Studien zur Kirchengeschichte des ersten und zweiten Jahrhunderts*, Hans F. von Campenhausen (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1963), 291–92.

28. Hans Conzelmann, *Bemerkungen zum Martyrium Polykarps*, Nachrichten der

assumption that the "original" text of *Mart. Pol.* was a straightforward, eye-witness account without any embellishment or theological interpretation. Hence, the miracles and gospel parallels present in both the received text of *Mart. Pol.* and in Eusebius' version must be pre-Eusebian interpolations.[29] There is also a general assumption that the identification of Quintus as a Phrygian, in connection with his having voluntarily put himself forward, must imply a connection with Montanism. Given that Montanism does not appear in Asia Minor before the early 170s, if *Mart. Pol.* 4 contains a polemic against adherents of the New Prophesy, either the text as a whole must be dated to the last quarter of the second century or *Mart. Pol.* 4 must be an interpolation. Scholars who assume that the text of *Mart. Pol.* is heavily redacted tend to privilege the version preserved by Eusebius over that in the manuscripts.

The classic defense of the authenticity of the text was advanced by Lightfoot in the late 19th century. It centered on the argument that comparisons with the gospels (particularly the passion narratives) were common in martyr accounts. Those in *Mart. Pol.* were too artificial and awkward to be the intentional constructions of a redactor.[30] Lightfoot also argued that miraculous elements are found in other second century martyr acts that are considered authentic (e.g. *Mart. Lugd.*) and that the chronological data found in *Mart. Pol.* 21 are in agreement with contemporary sources referring to the persons mentioned (Statius Quadratus, Philip of Tralles).[31]

Akademie der Wissenschaften in Gottingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1978).

29. This assumption is not always made explicit by either von Campenhausen or Conzelmann in their discussion of the text. However, it is implied by their universal rejection of such parallels as potentially "original" elements, even when they are also included by Eusebius and the only reason for their having been identified as interpolations is the fact that they do not fit the model of a plain, factual account.

30. Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers. a Revised Text with Introductions, Notes, Dissertations, and Translations*, 2nd ed. (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1889), 1.605–26.

31. Other scholars insisted that the chronological data in *Mart. Pol.* 21 is less consistent than Lightfoot had suggested, although without challenging the basic integrity of the text. E.g.

A number of Lightfoot's arguments are problematic. In particular, his assumption that it is the artificiality and awkwardness of the gospel parallels that are an indication of their originality. However, his observation that miraculous elements and gospel parallels are present in other second century martyr accounts has been utilized by a number of scholars who have argued for the basic integrity of the received text of *Mart. Pol.*

Barnard and Dehandschutter challenge von Campenhausen's uncritical trust in Eusebius as a source.[32] Barnard notes that von Campenhausen's argument is based on the evidence from Eusebius, but his interpolation theory claims at least one pre-Eusebian redactional layer.[33] He also notes that the theme of imitation is present in other early Christian martyr accounts.[34]

H. Gregoire and P. Orgels, "La veritable date du martyre de S. Polycarpe et le Corpus Polycarpianum," *Analecta Bollandiana* 69 (1951): 15–18.

32. Particularly, von Campenhausen's failure to note that Eusebius himself indicates that much of what he presents is a paraphrase of the text of *Mart. Pol*.

33. Particularly the third century anti-rigorist revision, as the substance of *Mart. Pol.* 4 is included by Eusebius. While Eusebius does not specifically state that Quintus persuaded others to come forward or that this was against the teaching of the gospel, he still presents it as a cautionary tale against excessive enthusiasm. Eusebius' account does not indicate any playing down of the fact that Quintus was a Phrygian, despite possible questions about condemning a recent arrival from Phrygia in letter addressed to Philomelium (which is in Phrygia). Barnard also notes that the extremes of rejecting martyrdom and having an unreasonable enthusiasm for it appear to be ongoing issues throughout the first several centuries and many Christian authors speak against both extremes. One would expect (assuming that the entire incident was not added by a later redactor) the Smyrnaean community to comment against the kind of enthusiasm displayed by Quintus, given that it led to his apostasy, even if it was not connected with an organized movement such as the New Prophesy. Leslie W. Barnard, "In Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," in *Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, ed. P. Granfield (Münster: Aschendorff, 1970), 197–99.

34. With respect to the gospel parallels, Barnard points out that the majority are also found in Eusebius' account (most exceptions are explainable by the fact that Eusebius is paraphrasing *Mart. Pol.* 1-7). While Eusebius leaves out the first reference to "a martyrdom according to the gospel," the reference to being an imitator of the Lord in *Mart. Pol.* 17 is retained. Hence, even the text found in Eusebius emphasizes that Polycarp imitates Christ through his death. Barnard also reiterates Lightfoot's argument that the gospel parallels (especially those not contained in Eusebius) are too awkward and poorly constructed to be the work of a later redactor with the freedom to rework the text as he/she wished. Barnard, "In

Dehandschutter follows Barnard's argument, adding comments on Eusebius' potential redaction of the text. He claims that Eusebius' epitomizing of portions of *Mart. Pol.* dropped the gospel parallels and made chronological additions.[35] The received text of *Mart. Pol.* not only narrates the events of Polycarp's death but also interprets them to highlight the attitude of the hero, Polycarp. Hence, *Mart. Pol.* illustrates what a "martyrdom according to the gospel" ought to be. Dehandschutter argues that it was von Campenhausen's presumption that *Mart. Pol.* was initially a "pure" story of a historical event without any interpretation that led to the need to see redactional layers in the text. Barnard strengthens his case with an overview of the development of the literary form of *Mart. Pol.*, stressing that it is a real letter written by a Smyrnean Christian (probably Evaristus, *Mart. Pol.* 20.2) on behalf of the church. The author can be assumed to be relying on Marcion (*Mart. Pol.* 20.1) for a narrative of the facts.[36]

A number of scholars have challenged claims by van Campenhausen and others that indications of cultic veneration of Polycarp rule out a second century date for the text. Saxer notes that the cultic veneration of martyrs did not develop in the same way in all places in the

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Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," 194–96, 199.

35. Eusebius is quite explicit that he is paraphrasing his source for *Mart. Pol.* 1-7 (*Hist. eccl.* 4.15.4-14). While Eusebius' quotations of his sources are generally held to be accurate, it is not impossible that he has made minor edits in order to increase the readability of the text or to conform more closely to the intent of his history. Grant notes that Eusebius does not simply report the information in his sources, but rather interprets and edits them. Robert McQueen Grant, "Eusebius and the Martyrs of Gaul," in *Martyrs de Lyon (177)* (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1978), 129–35; cf. Robert McQueen Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

36. Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "The Martyrium Polycarpi: A Century of Research," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* 2, no. 27.1 (1993): 495–96; cf. Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp and the Outbreak of Montanism," in *Polycarpiana: Studies on Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity*, ed. Johan Leemans (Louven: Peeters, 2007), 121–30; Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "The New Testament and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*," in *Trajectories Through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, eds Andrew F. Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 395–405.

Roman Empire so that it is quite likely that at any given time distinctions in practice existed in various places.[37] Rordorf examines what can be learned about the practices of veneration from *Mart. Pol.* 18. His conclusions suggest continuity between the memorial celebration envisioned by this passage and Roman memorials for the dead, as well as the language of the commemoration of the dead in 2 Macc 7:20. One may observe a continuity between the imagery of Polycarp's prayer in *Mart. Pol.* 14.2 and the prayers of the Christians gathered to commemorate his martyrdom as envisioned by *Mart. Pol.* 18.3.[38] In addition, Dehandschutter notes that the references to the veneration of Polycarp in *Mart. Pol.* 17.2-18.3 do not presume a developed cult. They simply point to the desire to establish one. There was still a need to justify any potential veneration of the saint by clearly distinguishing between the martyr and Christ. Dehandschutter argues that one would expect a greater degree of comfort with the principle of venerating a martyr in a text composed to promote an established cult.[39]

Robinson noted that the form of the doxology at the end of Polycarp's prayer (*Mart. Pol.* 14.3) is a strong indication against a second century date. However, rather than concluding that the doxology may have been redacted or "updated" at some later date, he concluded that *Mart. Pol.* as a whole must have been written sometime in the third century.[40] In response, Tyrer

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37. Victor Saxer, "L'authenticité du 'Martyre de Polycarpe': bilan de 25 ans de critque," *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome. Antiquité* 94, no. 2 (1982): 196–99.

38. Willy Rordorf, "Aux origines du culte des martyrs," in *Liturgie, Foi et Vie Des Premiers Chrétiens: Études Patristiques* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1986), 367–73 Interestingly, Rordorf proposes that one of the reasons for writing *Mart. Pol.* was to provide a narrative to be read during the celebration of Polycarp's *dies natalis*.

39. Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "The Martyrium Polycarpi: A Century of Research," in *Polycarpiana: Studies on Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity*, ed. Johan Leemans (Louven: Peeters, 2007), 61.

40. J. Armitage Robinson, "The 'Apostolic Anaphora' and the Prayer of St Polycarp," *Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (1920): 97–105 Cf. J. Armitage Robinson, "Liturgical Echoes in Polycarp's Prayer," *Expositor* 9 (5th series) (1899): 63–72; J. Armitage Robinson, "The Doxology in the Prayer of St Polycarp," *Journal of Theological Studies* 24 (1923): 141–46 (in which Robinson acknowledges Tyrer's position, although continues to question a second

pointed to a parallel in Justin Martyr (*1 Apol.* 65), as evidence that a second century date was not impossible.[41]

In general, scholars who have argued for the textual integrity of *Mart. Pol.* have not assumed that the "original" version of the text was an eye-witness account devoid of miracles or theological interpretation. They have also been less trusting of Eusebius, particularly in the early chapters of *Mart. Pol.* where Eusebius claims to be paraphrasing. However, these scholars also assume that the received text contains a factual discussion of what actually happened, even arguing that the prayer in *Mart. Pol.* 14 contains the actual words spoken by Polycarp before his death.[42]

I would agree with those scholars who argue for the basic integrity of the text of *Mart. Pol.* If the letter was composed sometime before the first anniversary of Polycarp's martyrdom, a gathering of his "family" (i.e. the church) at his tomb for a memorial meal on the day of his death would be a natural development of Roman traditions.[43] The tendency to portray the deaths of martyrs as imitating Christ's death is widespread and documented at an early date.[44] And the

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century date).

41. J. W. Tyrer, "The Prayer of St Polycarp and Its Concluding Doxology," *Journal of Theological Studies* 23 (1922): 390–92; cf. Barnard, "In Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," 199–203. Barnard also notes the presence of several elements in Polycarp's prayer which are consistent with what is known of the substance of early Christian eucharistic prayers. For further discussion of *Mart. Pol.* 14 and its possible relationship to early eucharistic prayers, see chapter 6.

42. E.g. Barnard, "In Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," 203.

43. The deceased's relatives were expected to gather at the tomb for a memorial meal on the day of the funeral, the ninth day after the funeral, on the deceased's birthday, and on the festivals of the dead (mostly in the spring and summer). Maureen Carroll, *Spirits of the Dead: Roman Funerary Commemoration in Western Europe*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 4. The Christian tradition of interpreting the *dies natalis* as the day of death is mentioned by Tertullian (*De cor.* 3.3).

44. It is present even as early as the account of Stephen's martyrdom in Acts 6:8-7:60,

tendency to treat miracles as the product of later redaction are predicated on a decision about genre, namely, that the "original" text was a purely factual narrative of the events surrounding Polycarp's death, as opposed to a hagiographical account designed to interpret this event and to emphasize the martyr's sanctity.

On the other hand, there is no clear evidence that *Mart. Pol.* was *not* edited and adapted over time to suit various liturgical and hagiographical needs. Non-canonical texts, especially liturgical texts (and *Mart. Pol.* certainly was used liturgically, even if it was not composed for that purpose), have notoriously unstable textual histories. There are a few places where the text itself suggests possible interpolations, particularly the awkward statement that police chief was named Herod (*Mart. Pol.* 6.2) and the grammatically awkward statement that both a dove and a vast flow of blood came out when Polycarp was stabbed (*Mart. Pol.* 16.1).[45] Barnard's proposal

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although this example is rarely mentioned in discussions of this question.

45. Except for the fact that Eusebius does not include the dove and does mention the great quantity of blood, there is no grammatical reason to choose the dove as the interpolation instead of the blood and its extinguishing of the fire (either works perfectly well with the singular ἐξῆλθεν, but the inclusion of both the nominative or accusative περιστερά and the genitive αἵματος is very awkward). The dove in many ways makes more narrative sense than the blood, since it removes the difficulty of how Polycarp was stabbed with a dagger while still being in the fire. The crowd's amazement would then be attributed to Polycarp's having survived the flames, rather than to the excessive flow of blood when his is stabbed (the source of the crowd's wonder is not made explicit in the text). While the absence of the dove in Eusebius' account is primarily responsible for the decision of the majority of scholars to identify it as the interpolation rather than the blood, the underlying assumption that the "original" text was mainly a "factual" account (a view held by many scholars on both sides of the debate over *Mart. Pol.*'s textual integrity) most likely contributes to this choice. The dove seems clearly non-factual, while the immense flow of blood could potentially contain some grain of truth. The narrative problem caused by the blood's extinguishing the fire tends to go unnoticed. In addition to the narrative difficulties presented by the blood flowing out and extinguishing the fire, there are clear theological motivations for the interpolation of the blood into the text of *Mart. Pol.* (e.g. it demonstrates the reality of Polycarp's salvation in extinguishing the eternal fires, cf. *Mart. Pol.* 11.2, and it represents the fact that Polycarp's death extinguishes the fires of persecution in Smyrna, cf. *Mart. Pol.* 1.1). Scholars have struggled to identify reasons for the interpolation of the dove in the fourth century, but it does reflect the imagery of the apotheosis of the emperor (beginning with the death of Augustus), in which an eagle soars up from the funeral pyre. The substitution of a dove for the traditional eagle is a logical Christian adaptation. While Eusebius' testimony is sufficient to indicate that

that aspects of Polycarp's martyrdom that suggested allusions to or parallels of Christ's death were emphasized is consistent with what is seen in other martyr acts. While Barnard uses this theory to claim that the gospel parallels *Mart. Pol.* are not the work of a redactor, it is equally possible that some of the parallels were further elaborated on and interpreted by later editors.[46] Conzelmann's proposal that more extensive accounts of the other martyrs have been lost due to interpolations emphasizing Polycarp is plausible, although far from proven.[47]

Both sides of the debate are highly speculative. The only places where there is clear evidence of interpolation are in *Mart. Pol.* 16.1 (either the dove or the blood extinguishing the fire) and 22 (where there are distinct manuscript traditions and the passage is explicitly identified in the text itself as an addition). To this might be added the explicit allusions to the passion

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the dove is still the more likely interpolation, on the basis of the received text itself, the great quantity of blood and its accompanying extinguishing of the flames should perhaps the more likely candidate.

46. E.g. the awkward emphasis given to stating that the police chief's name was Herod in *Mart. Pol.* 6.2, which could have initially been a simple statement of his name (the police chief is identified as being named Herod in Eusebius as well, although without comment and further on in the narrative, *Hist. eccl.* 4.15.15), and the explicit identification of the slave who betrayed Polycarp with Judas (*Mart. Pol.* 6.2).

47. Certainly adaption of the text for liturgical use might result in the emphasis of a single individual, particularly as Polycarp clearly did not die on the same day as the other martyrs. However, the identification of Polycarp as the twelfth martyr does not claim that all twelve were killed as part of the sequence of events described in *Mart. Pol.* (although clearly some others, including Germanicus, were killed at that time). *Mart. Pol.* 19.1 simply states that Polycarp was the twelfth martyr, including those from Philadelphia, to be executed in Smyrna (ὃς σὺν τοῖς ἀπὸ Φιλαδελφίας δωδέκατος ἐν Σμύρνῃ μαρτυρήσας). This could as easily mean that many of these had been killed during another period of local persecution. Rordorf suggests that Polycarp was singled out as the focus of veneration (and in the report of the martyrdoms) because of the miracles associated with his death. Rordorf, "Aux origines du culte des martyrs," 335–36. It is also likely that Polycarp's status as bishop would have led the community to focus on his martyrdom to a greater extent. The current text of *Mart. Pol.* does emphasize events that were seen as extraordinary or which would aid in training and encouraging others who might potentially face persecution in the future. Hence, Germanicus is singled out as an exemplar of particular valor and Quintus as a cautionary tale (*Mart. Pol.* 3.1; 4).

narrative in *Mart. Pol.* 6.2 (especially the awkward naming of Herod)[48] and the chronological statements in *Mart. Pol.* 21 (along with its liturgical conclusion), as Eusebius' dating of Polycarp's martyrdom does not agree with the information given here.[49] The later addition of the Holy Spirit to the doxology at the conclusion of Polycarp's prayer (*Mart. Pol.* 14.3) is also possible, as the wording is different in Eusebius and the manuscript traditions show other indications of editing (perhaps to bring the doxology into line with current liturgical practice).[50] *Mart. Pol.* 4, with its condemnation of Quintus, may be a later anti-Montanist addition, but there is nothing in what is presented here to suggest association with adherents to the New Prophesy and enthusiasm for martyrdom was hardly exclusive to the Montanist movement.[51] The praise for the behavior of Germanicus indicates that the criticism of Quintus more likely relates to his apostasy, as well as his endangerment of others in encouraging them to put themselves forward, than to any particular condemnation of Montanism. With the possible exception of the dove,

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48. Although it should be noted that awkwardness does not necessarily imply that the text has been redacted and Eusebius is clearly paraphrasing at this point.

49. Eusebius places Polycarp's martyrdom during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, while the chronological data in *Mart. Pol.* 21 more likely implies a date in the mid-late 150s (155/156 is generally suggested) under Antoninus Pius (for a more detailed discussion of the dating of Polycarp's martyrdom see the section on dating below). The phrase "as against a robber (ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν)" in *Mart. Pol.* 7.1 may also be an interpolation, as it is not included in Eusebius (although as he is clearly paraphrasing his source at this point, it is extremely difficult to tell).

50. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 14.15.35: δι' οὗ σοι σὺν αὐτῷ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ; *Mart. Pol.* 14.3 (g): μεθ' οὗ σοὶ σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ; (m, L): δι' οὗ σοὶ σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. See chapter 6 for a more extensive discussion of this passage.

51. Dehandschutter, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp and the Outbreak of Montanism," 126–27. One of the primary reasons for identifying Quintus as a Montanist has been the fact that he was from Phrygia. However, it is important to note that the letter itself is addressed to the church in Philomelium, which is in Phrygia, and there is nothing in the text that suggests any condemnation of the Christians there (as one might expect if *Mart. Pol.* was intended as an anti-Montanist polemic directed primarily at Montanists from Phrygia). Dehandschutter (along with others) has cautioned that not all Phrygians were Montanists.

none of these possible interpolations can be dated with any certainty.[52]

Therefore, I will treat the extant text as a unified whole. As noted by Barnard, most of the gospel parallels that have been identified in the text are also present in Eusebius. The majority of the arena motifs discussed below are also present in Eusebius, as are the narrative difficulties that suggest an intentional narrative focus on the arena context. While it is quite possible that Polycarp's prayer was edited in order to bring it into line with later liturgical practice, it seems unlikely that its images and themes have been changed substantially. Alterations are more likely to be minor tinkering, such as the possible addition of the Holy Spirit to the doxology in *Mart. Pol.* 14.3 or changes in the wording of the doxology.[53] As it is impossible to tell in most cases what changes may have been made and when any editing would have taken place, one should treat the text as a whole, while keeping in mind the possibility of such rewording.

Dating of Polycarp's martyrdom and *Mart. Pol.*

As *Mart. Pol.* 18.3 implies that the letter to the church in Philomelium was written before the first anniversary of Polycarp's death, the question of the date of *Mart. Pol.* is intimately connected to the date of Polycarp's martyrdom. One of the difficulties is that the chronological data provided by Eusebius indicates a date during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (*Hist. eccl.* 4.14.10-15.1; *Chronicon*), while the chronological date in *Mart. Pol.* 21 would seem to imply a

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52. As mentioned above, their absence in Eusebius is not necessarily an indication of a date in the fourth century or later. The dove is the only case that appears in a portion of the text that Eusebius seems to be quoting. The use of ἐν in Eusebius' version of the doxology at the end of Polycarp's prayer has been seen by Tyrer as potentially more archaic than the καί in *Mart. Pol.* and the equality of the glorification of the Spirit implied by the use of καί might indicate later fourth century concerns, but it is difficult to be certain. Tyrer, "The Prayer of St Polycarp and Its Concluding Doxology," 391.

53. The liturgical blessing at the end of *Mart. Pol.* 21 may also be a later interpolation (as is perhaps the entire chapter). Concluding blessings or prayers of this type may have been incorporated into the text as a product of its use in the liturgy.

date about a decade earlier under Antoninus Pius. Those who follow Eusebius (particularly the *Chronicon*, which places Polycarp's death in the seventh year of Marcus Aurelius' reign) generally date Polycarp's martyrdom to the year 167 CE. The chronological data in *Mart. Pol.* 21, on the other hand, would tend to suggest a date in the mid-150s (usually 155 or 156), based on Aelius Aristides mention of the proconsul Statius Quadratus.[54] Grégoire suggested instead a date of 177, based on his interpretation of *Mart. Pol.* 4 as an anti-Montanist polemic. Hence, it must have been composed after the rise of Montanism, which is dated around 170. Thus, Grégoire concludes, Eusebius correctly dates Polycarp's martyrdom to the *seventeenth* year of

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54. A Statius Quadratus held the consulship in 142 and he is most likely the same individual mentioned by Aelius Aristides as having been proconsul in 153/4, although this date is far from certain and it could as easily have been 154/5 (as Aristides himself states that his memory is uncertain). The difficulty is that there are no known examples of someone from this period holding a senior proconsulate only twelve years after his consulate year. There are a few attestations of a thirteen year period between the two offices and fourteen seems to be the usual minimum (with fifteen and sixteen years being more common). Hence, the Quadratus mentioned by Aristides may not in fact be the same person identified as having been consul in 142. In 155 the second of Xanithikos fell on a Sabbath, which led to the preference for that date. Timothy David Barnes, "A Note on Polycarp," *Journal of Theological Studies* 18 (1967): 434, 436; Timothy David Barnes, "Pre-Decian Acta Martyrum," *Journal of Theological Studies* 19 (1968): 512–14; Dehandschutter, "Martyrium Polycarpi," 56–57. Cf. Ronald Syme, review of *I Fasti Consolari dell' Impero Romano dal 30 Av anti Christo al 613 Dopo Christo*, *The Journal of Roman Studies* 43 (1953): 159. It is, however, best to keep in mind that the reference to Polycarp's having died on a "great Sabbath" may be a theological rather than a chronological assertion and does not inherently imply that his martyrdom occurred on a Saturday, let alone any particular feast (the Sabbath following Passover, Purim, the Roman feast of *Terminalia*, and the later Christian practice of referring to Sunday as the "great Sabbath" have all been suggested). Lawrence A. Hoffman, "The Jewish Lectionary, the Great Sabbath, and the Lenten Calendar: Liturgical Links Between Christians and Jews in the First Three Christian Centuries," in *Time and Community*, J. Neil Alexander (Washington, DC: Pastoral Press, 1990), 15–18; for various theories on the identity of the Great Sabbath see Michael W. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," in *Trajectories Through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 413; Willy Rordorf, "Zum Problem des 'grossen Sabbats' im Polykarp- und Pioniusmartyrium," in *Pietas: Festschrift für Bernhard Kötting*, ed. Ernst Dassmann and Karl Suso Frank (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1980), 245–49; Rordorf, "Aux origines du culte des martyrs," 316; P. Brind'amour, "La date du martyre de saint Polycarpe (le 23 février 167)," *Analecta Bollandiana* 98 (1980): 456–62.

Marcus Aurelius (a *lapsus calami* brought the seventh year into the text of the *Chronicon*).[55] However, as Dehandschutter has pointed out, there are sound reasons for concluding that *Mart. Pol.* was composed before the last quarter of the second century.[56]

While the vast majority of scholars date *Mart. Pol.* to the mid-late second century, a few have argued for a significantly later dating. Ronchey argued that *Mart. Pol.* could not have been written prior to the third century, due to a number of factors that she believed to be inconsistent with a second century date.[57] Robinson, as noted above, also proposes a third century date, based

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55. Gregoire and Orgels, "La veritable date du martyre de S. Polycarpe."

56. *Mart. Pol.* is also referred to by the *Acts of Carpus*, the Greek recension of which was most likely written during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, although this is still debated (Den Boeft and Bremmer date it to the reign of Septimius Severus, cf. Jan den Boeft and Jan N. Bremmer, "Notiunculae Martyrologicae II," *Vigiliae Christianae* 36, no. 4 [1982]: 384–85). *Mart. Lugd.* has some correspondences with *Mart. Pol.* which are best explained by the dependence of the former on the latter. As *Mart. Lugd.* is generally dated to 177, this would indicate a date earlier than this for *Mart. Pol.* In addition, the *Apocryphon of James* (NHC I,2), which is usually dated to the end of the second century, contains the words "... you will find that your life is one single day and your sufferings one single hour" (*Ap. Jas.* 5.25) in a vision James receives predicting his death. This is similar to the sentiment expressed in *Mart. Pol.* 2.3 and may suggest that *Ap. Jas.* knew *Mart. Pol.* This would also point to a mid-second century date. Dehandschutter, "Martyrium Polycarpi," 60–61; text of *Ap. Jas.* is from James McConkey Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, edition no. 3rd completely rev. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990), 32. Telfer (along with a number of other scholars) rejects Grégoire's argument that *Mart. Pol.* 4 is necessarily an anti-Montanist polemic, hence eliminating the primary reason for assuming a late second-century date. William Telfer, "Date of the Martyrdom of Polycarp," *Journal of Theological Studies* 3 (1952): 79–83; cf. Dehandschutter, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp and the Outbreak of Montanism," 126–27.

57. Silvia Ronchey, *Indagine sul Martirio di San Policarpo: Critica Storica e fortuna agiografica di un caso giudiziario in Asia Minore* (Rome: Ist storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1990). These include the veneration of the martyr, the conception of the *dies natalis*, the parallels with the passion narratives, the literary form as an encyclical letter to the Christians in Philomelium, the polemic against Montanism in *Mart. Pol.* 4 (which she identified as a response to the approach of Quintillianism in the third century), and the attitude toward the Roman authorities (which she believed would only have been possible in the context of a long period of peace, such as that following the edict of toleration of Gallienus in 260-261 and lasting until the time of Aurelianus and Probus in 275).

on the form of the doxology at the end of Polycarp's prayer (*Mart. Pol.* 14.3).[58] Although willing to accept a date for Polycarp's martyrdom in the mid-second century, Moss argues that *Mart. Pol.* was not written before the mid-third century and the Decian persecution.[59] While I do not find her arguments for a late dating of the text convincing, I would agree with Moss that there has been an overemphasis on *Mart. Pol.* as a "genre-creating text" and a tendency to assume that all later martyr acts conform to its theology of martyrdom. As she herself points out martyrdom narratives are very diverse and, particularly in this early period, individual communities shape these stories based on their own needs and theological approaches.

For the purposes of this study, it is sufficient to conclude that *Mart. Pol.* was written sometime in the mid-second century CE. Most scholars favor a date either in the mid-late 150s CE or the 160s CE for Polycarp's martyrdom and the initial version of the text (although, as

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58. J. Armitage Robinson, "The 'Apostolic Anaphora' and the Prayer of St Polycarp" Cf. J. Armitage Robinson, "Liturgical Echoes in Polycarp's Prayer"; J. Armitage Robinson, "The Doxology in the Prayer of St Polycarp".

59. Candida R. Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 196–97. In addition to elements that have led others to question the dating (e.g. miraculous elements and a concern with the veneration of saints), she sees identifies three other factors as inconsistent with a second century date. First, an extensive number of quotations from the canonical New Testament, including Revelation and Hebrews, and the almost complete exclusion of witnesses to non-canonical texts. Second, a sophisticated understanding of martyrdom and an awareness of the potential pitfalls arising from a misunderstanding of the martyr's imitation of Christ. Third, the lack of any literary influence of *Mart. Pol.* before the second half of the third century and the Decian *Passio Pionii* and *Passio Fructuosi*, something she suggests would be extremely unlikely if *Mart. Pol.* had actually been sent as a circular letter to all Christian communities as the prologue claims. While Moss raises some reasonable concerns, I do not find her argument especially persuasive. While *Mart. Pol.* does contain a few possible brief quotations of New Testament texts, its use of scriptural quotations is far less extensive than *Mart. Lugd.*, whose second century dating Moss does not question (Moss, *The Other Christs*, 189). The understanding of martyrdom presented in *Mart. Pol.*, with its focus on imitation of Christ's passion, does not seem to me to be a radical departure from that seen in Ignatius' letters or in the account of Stephen's death in Acts. And the concern for distinguishing the status of the martyr from that of Christ seems as likely to be the result of initial attempts to work out this relationship than as a sign of a relatively well-developed tradition.

discussed in the previous section, some scholars conclude that portions of *Mart. Pol.* were composed considerably later).[60]

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60. For concise and clear summaries of the scholarly discussion of the dating of *Mart. Pol.* see Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 361–62; Gary A. Bisbee, *Pre-Decian Acts of Martyrs and Commentarii*, in *Harvard Dissertations in Religion ; No. 22* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 119–21.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF *MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP*
SPECTACLE IMAGERY AND THE MARTYR AS THE REPRESENTATION OF CHRIST
THROUGH NARRATIVE PARALLELS

Introduction

The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (*Mart. Pol.*) consists of a letter sent by the church in Smyrna to the church of Philomelium, in Phrygia, with the intent of its being passed on to other communities.[1] The letter focuses on the death of Smyrna's elderly bishop, Polycarp, whose death is characterized as being τὸ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ("according to the gospel," *Mart. Pol.* 1.1). As part of the context for Polycarp's martyrdom, the text also honors a number of other Christians. Their heroic steadfastness in the face of torture and death so enraged the populace that they called for Polycarp's arrest and execution. In addition, it incorporates a cautionary tale of an individual who put himself forward as a potential martyr, but later recanted his faith out of fear. After these preliminary examples, a detailed account is given of Polycarp's initial flight (at the urging of his flock, rather than out of any personal desire to save himself), the betrayal by a

1. The opening salutation of *Mart. Pol.* announces the assumption that the letter will have a wider readership than just Christians in Philomelium, *Mart. Pol.* pr.: Ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ παροικοῦσα Σμύρναν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ παροικούσῃ ἐν Φιλομηλίῳ καὶ πάσαις ταῖς κατὰ πάντα τόπον τῆς ἁγίας καὶ καωολικῆς ἐκκλησίας παροικίαις ("The church of God who dwells in Smyrna to the church of God who dwells in Philomelium and to all those of the holy and catholic church dwelling throughout every place"). The use of the letter form, including this proclamation of a universal readership, may also be an effort to echo a set formula. A similarly universal salutation is used by Paul in 1 Cor 1:2: "to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours" (ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ ᾽Ιησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, σὺν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ᾽Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν·).

household slave (under torture), and Polycarp's vision of a burning pillow, which convinces the saint that his martyrdom is ordained by God. Following an account of Polycarp's arrest, trial, and execution, the letter closes with a description of the disposal of the martyr's remains and an expressed expectation of an ongoing celebration of "the birthday of his martyrdom" (ἡ τοῦ μαρτυρίου αὐτοῦ ἡμέρα γενέθλιος; *Mart. Pol.* 18.3) at the tomb. To encourage other Christian communities to commemorate that martyr's death, the letter takes care to specify the date of Polycarp's execution.[2]

The narrative elements (arrest, trial, execution, disposal of the body, and plans for cultic commemoration) of *Mart. Pol.* exhibit the characteristic traits of texts that have come to be called *acta martyrum* (martyr acts).[3] While the term μάρτυς in Christian texts increasingly comes to mean an individual who dies for his/her faith, the original meaning "witness" results in narratives which frequently devote more attention to the trials than the executions. The trial was the context in which the potential martyrs accomplished their most essential task: the confession

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2. A number of scholars view this as a later addition to the text (e.g. Campenhausen, "Bearbeitungen und Iterpolationen des Polykarpmartyriums," 291–92). For a discussion of this and other possible redactions of *Mart. Pol.*, see the section on textual issues in the previous chapter.

3. While Bremmer states that it is possible to speak of a "genre" of *Acta martyrum*, he notes that these texts in fact belong to a wide variety of genres (letters, diaries, novelistic accounts, sermons, etc.). Attempts to characterize various types of *acta martyrum* by literary form have not been particularly successful, in part because the underlying motive has been to establish whether a given text is "genuine" (i.e. whether the events described are "historical"). Another difficulty in characterizing these texts is their tendency to fluidly combine multiple genres within a given narrative (e.g. a diary and an account of a vision, written by two of the martyrs, linked with an apparently eye witness account of the martyrs' deaths, all encompassed within an almost homiletic frame, as in the case of *Passio Perp.*). For an insightful discussion of the various problems and underlying motivations in attempts to characterize *acta martyrum*, see Boudewijn Dehandschutter, "Hagiographie et histoire: à propos des actes et passions des martyrs," in *Martyrium in Multidisciplinary Perspective*, ed. Mathijs Lamberigts and Peter van Deun (Louvain: Peeters, 1995), 295–301. On the fluidity of the genres of *acta martyrum* see Jan N. Bremmer, "Perpetua and Her Diary: Authenticity, Family and Visions," in *Märtyrer und Märtyrerakten*, ed. Walter Ameling (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002), 78–80.

of faith.[4] This confession was often embodied in the increasingly ritualized declaration of Christian identity, *Christianus sum* (or in Greek, Χριστιανός εἰμι).[5] In addition to preserving and sharing with other Christian communities accounts of heroic faith and endurance, *acta martyrum* provide models for how others are to respond to persecution.[6] Emphasis is placed on the communal function of the martyrs in these texts, particularly the ways in which their example encourages and inspires others.[7]

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was executed in the stadium sometime in the third quarter of

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4. The importance of this confession of faith in situations of persecution is apparent in the weight given to it in Luke 21:12-19.

5. All of the *acta martyrum* for which there is a general agreement among scholars for a pre-Decian authorship have at least some of martyrs make this declaration prior to death (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 10.1; *Mart. Lugd.* 1.19-20; *Passio Scill.* 9-10, 13; *Passio Perp.* 6.4; cf. indirect declarations *Mart. Lugd.* 1.10, 26, 50). Hence, this declaration has already taken on a kind of ritualized significance in identifying the martyr with Christ and with a universal Christian identity. Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, in *Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 95, 108–09, 114–22; Judith M. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 82–83; cf. Bremmer, "Perpetua and Her Diary," 90.

6. *Mart. Pol.*, Polycarp, *Phil.*, and Ignatius, *Pol.* all indicate that there was an emerging view of martyrdom as a complex sacrificial liturgy, for which one trained in order to be able to perform well. Reading and listening to the *acta martyrum*, with their explicit models of how one ought to "perform" martyrdom, was one of the mechanisms by which one trained for martyrdom. Robin Darling Young, *In Procession Before the World: Martyrdom as Public Liturgy in Early Christianity*, in *The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology; 2001* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2001), 24.

7. E.g. the great courage and endurance of Germanicus, who rather than listening to the proconsul's attempts to renounce his faith, forcefully drags the wild beast onto himself, is said to have encouraged the other Christians allowing them to defeat the torments of the devil (*Mart. Pol.* 3.1). Even examples of negative behavior tend to focus on the way the individual's behavior effects others. E.g. the condemnation of Quintus' behavior is due not only to his having endangered his own soul in recanting (and the negative example this offered), but also to his having endangered others through encouraging them to come forward as well (despite the fact that the reader is not told whether they also chose to recant, *Mart. Pol.* 4).

the second century.[8] His death is described as being "a martyrdom according to the gospel" (τὸ κατὰ τὸ εὐγγέλιον μαρτύριον, *Mart. Pol.* 1.1) with the extant account clearly emphasizing a number of parallels between Polycarp's death and that of Christ.[9] There has been extensive debate over how to interpret what the author(s) of *Mart. Pol.* meant by "a martyrdom according to the gospel." In the late nineteenth century, Lightfoot commented on the awkwardness and artificiality of the gospel parallels in this text.[10] Holmes argues that rather than seeing the gospel parallels as the interpretive key to the entire narrative, they should be examined individually for how they function in each particular passage. He concludes that their overall effect is to emphasize the importance of God's ultimate rule over the events.[11] Dehandschutter sees the meaning of "according to the gospel" as rooted in discipleship and obedience rather than in strict imitation.[12] All of these interpretations struggle over how to interpret the presence of obvious gospel parallels, which emphasize the correspondences between Polycarp's death and that of

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8. For a discussion of the date of Polycarp's martyrdom, see the discussion of the date of *Mart. Pol.* in the previous chapter.

9. The most explicit examples are *Mart. Pol.* 1.2; 6.1-2; 7.1; and 8.1. The extensive use of gospel parallels in *Mart. Pol.* has long been acknowledged by scholars. For an overview of this discussion see Dehandschutter, "Martyrium Polycarpi," [check pages]. For a more complete listing of the gospel parallels in *Mart. Pol.*, along with analysis of these parallels, see the table in Appendix A [on gospel parallels]. For a further discussion of these parallels, see the section on gospel parallels in this chapter.

10. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers. a Revised Text with Introductions, Notes, Dissertations, and Translations*, 1.609–26. Lightfoot saw this awkwardness and artificiality as an indication of the authenticity of *Mart. Pol.* For a discussion of issues related to the integrity and authenticity of the text, please see the section on textual issues below.

11. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 421–26. A more detailed discussion of Holmes' analysis is found in the section on gospel parallels below.

12. Dehandschutter, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp and the Outbreak of Montanism," 128.

Christ in a narrative which does not create a literal reenactment of Jesus' death. Instead, these parallels serve to emphasize and draw attention to more general correspondences between the stories of Polycarp's and Jesus' deaths.

The fact that *Mart. Pol.* situates the martyrdom during a Roman *spectaculum* has received far less scholarly attention than the gospel parallels. There have been some attempts to sort out the legal basis for Polycarp's trial, given that the text places it within the context of the arena.[13] A few studies have commented generally on the ways in which the spectacle context would have effected the understanding of martyrdom.[14] However, no studies have examined the complex and artful use of the context of the *spectaculum* in *Mart. Pol.* The text shows significant familiarity with the vocabulary and procedures of the Roman arena, as well as with the social and cultural understanding of *spectacula*. However, there are a number of instances in which *Mart. Pol.* deviates from what one would expect in the description of an execution in the arena. The narrative of *Mart. Pol.* shifts events that occurred in other contexts (e.g. Polycarp's trial and the cremation of his body) into the arena, making them part of the *spectaculum*. In addition, by implying that Polycarp's execution took place during the same *spectaculum* as the martyrdoms in the early chapters, the games having been apparently suspended by the calls for the bishop's arrest, the events of his flight and arrest are also subtly incorporated into the spectacle context. Hence, *Mart. Pol.* constructs the narrative of Polycarp's martyrdom as part of a single large *spectaculum*.

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13. E.g. Bisbee, *Pre-Decian Acts of Martyrs and Commentarii*, 121–22; Leonard L. Thompson, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp: Death in the Roman Games," *Journal of Religion* 82, no. 1 (2002): 35–36. For a more detailed discussion of these questions, see the section on arena parallels below.

14. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 242–55; Young, *In Procession Before the World*; Thompson, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp"; Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Cobb, *Dying to Be Men*; Moss, *The Other Christs*.

If the gospel parallels are read within this *spectaculum* context, the correspondence between the narrative techniques of the fatal charades and the ways in which the passion narratives are employed in *Mart. Pol.* becomes clear. In the fatal charades, there was no attempt to have every detail of the arena presentation correspond to the mythic or historical narrative being enacted. Instead, significant details of the mythic narrative or characteristic props were used in order to provide the spectators with enough information to recognize the story being reenacted.[15] A number of fatal charades seem to have intentionally included significant deviations from the expected narrative, as these surprising and unexpected twists made the enactments more entertaining.[16] Thus, the gospel parallels in *Mart. Pol.* function to create a kind of literary fatal charade in which significant narrative details are emphasized in order to stress the parallels with the passion, without any need to present Polycarp's martyrdom as a literal reenactment of Christ's death. Just as the fatal charades imaged mythological and historical events for Roman arena spectators, *Mart. Pol.* presents Polycarp's death as a representation of the passion, an imaging of the gospel narrative.

"A martyrdom according to the gospel": Imitation of the passion narrative in *Mart. Pol.*

Mart. Pol. in its current form contains numerous allusions and narrative parallels to the gospel passion accounts. That Polycarp's death is intended to be seen as imitating or being modeled on Christ's death is clear from several passages stating that this is a "martyrdom according to the gospel (τὸ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον μαρτύριον)" (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1; cf. 19.1). However, despite these explicit statements, very few if any of the allusions point to the text of any of the gospels. Nor does *Mart. Pol.* present Polycarp's martyrdom as a straightforward, linear imitation

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15. As discussed in the previous chapter, only a very few key elements might be necessary for the audience to recognize whom the *damnatus(a)* was "playing." For example, a lion skin and a club would be sufficient to identify Hercules. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 60–61. For an introduction to the fatal charades, see the previous chapter.

16. E.g. Orpheus' being mauled by a bear (Martial, *Liber Spect.* 21).

of the passion narratives. In fact, even in the few places where *Mart. Pol.* explicitly identifies a parallel with Jesus' death, the actual correspondence between the two stories is quite loose.[17] Instead of using the passion narrative(s)[18] as a kind of "movie script" for Polycarp's death, *Mart. Pol.* draws attention to general correspondences between the stories of Polycarp's and Jesus' deaths. This accumulation of narrative allusions and parallels serves to regularly remind the audience that Polycarp's death corresponds with Christ's, particularly as they have already been told that these parallels are present by the claim that Polycarp's is a "martyrdom according to the gospel."

The technique is strikingly similar to that employed by fatal charades, where there also was no attempt to have every detail of the arena presentation correspond to the narrative being reenacted. Instead, key details of the mythic narrative or characteristic props were used in order to provide the spectators with sufficient information to recognize the story being reenacted. A lion skin and a club were perfectly sufficient to identify the *damnatus* as Hercules or a lyre and a number of animals to indicate Orpheus.[19] An exact correspondence with the common version of

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17. E.g. *Mart. Pol.* 6.2, where the police chief's being named Herod is explicitly identified as a parallel to the passion narrative, although this Herod plays a very different role in Polycarp's death than Herod does in that of Jesus (cf. Luke 23:7-12).

18. It is not possible to be certain whether the author of *Mart. Pol.* was aware of or used more than one gospel or passion narrative due to the lack of explicit references to particular gospel texts. However, there are some hints that he/she may have known Luke's passion (e.g. the claim that Herod had a prominent role in Jesus' execution) and some allusions correspond more closely to particular gospel texts (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 6.1-2 is verbally closest to Matt 10:36). The use of "great Sabbath" (*Mart. Pol.* 8.1) would suggest that the author knew John (e.g. John 19:31).

19. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 62–63; Potter, "Spectacle," 401. This would have been particularly true in a cultural milieu where most people would have identified images of deities by their iconographic attributes and emperors were aligned with gods by being portrayed (e.g. on coins) with divine attributes, much as images of Christian saints are identified by their typical iconographic attributes (e.g. Peter with his keys, Paul with a sword, or Andrew with his distinctive cross).

the myth was not necessarily desirable, as it was the surprising and unexpected twists given to at least some of these fatal charades that made them entertaining.[20]

Hence, *Mart. Pol.* functions as a kind of literary fatal charade in which critical narrative details are emphasized in order to stress parallels with the gospels, without any attempt to present Polycarp's death as a literal reenactment of the death of Christ. All passages of *Mart. Pol.* which could be seen as narrative parallels or as alluding to the gospels in some way are given in the table in Appendix A. The various passages are categorized as belonging to one of the following types: declared narrative parallels, undeclared narrative parallels, narrative allusions, textual quotations, and textual or verbal allusions. Declared narrative parallels are those instances in which the text explicitly refers to the gospel narrative or to Christ (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 1.2), whereas undeclared narrative parallels include a narrative event that corresponds with a similar event in the gospels but without any explicit comparison in the text (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 13.2). Narrative allusions are differentiated from narrative parallels in that the text recalls or seems to reference a narrative element from the gospels, rather than following the same sequence of events (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 15.1). A textual quotation is, as one would suppose, a direct word for word quotation of the gospel text (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 7.1a).[21] A textual or verbal allusion is an instance in which a particular word or phrase is used in a way which corresponds to a similar usage of the word or phrase in the gospel text, without being a direct quotation (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 14.2). The following table gives an example of each type of gospel parallel/allusion.

***Mart. Pol.* text**	**Gospel text and/or analysis**	**Type**
Mart. Pol. 1.2: περιέμενεν γὰρ, ἵνα παραδοθῇ, ὡς καὶ ὁ κύριος, ἵνα μιμηταὶ καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοῦ γενώμεθα ("For he [i.e. Polycarp] waited, in	Matt 26:45: τότε ἔρχεται πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Καθεύδετε [τὸ] λοιπὸν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθε· ἰδοὺ ἤγγικεν ἡ ὥρα	Declared narrative parallel

20. E.g. Orpheus' being mauled by a bear (Martial, *Liber Spect.* 21).

21. Textual quotations will be categorized as being either possible or probable depending on the level of certainty that a given passage is intended to be a direct quotation of the gospel text (based on the length and specificity of the potential quotation).

order that he might be betrayed, as also the Lord did, in order that we might also be imitators of him.")	καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς χεῖρας ἁμαρτωλῶν. ("Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.") Cf. Matt 26:2; Mark 14:41; Luke 24:7.	
Mart. Pol. 13.2: ὅτε δὲ ἡ πυρκαϊὰ ἡτοιμάσθη, ἀποθέμενος ἑαυτῷ πάντα τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ λύσας τὴν ζώνην ἐπειρᾶτο καὶ ὑπολύειν ἑαυτόν, μὴ πρότερον τοῦτο ποιῶν διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ ἕκαστον τῶν πιστῶν σπουδάζειν, ὅστις τάχιον τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ ἅψηται ("And when the pyre was prepared, laying aside all of his clothes and loosening his belt, he also attempted to remove his shoes, he had not previously done this as each of the faithful was always eager to do it, [to see] who would grasp his skin most quickly")	The reference to Polycarp's difficulty in removing his shoes may be an allusion to John the Baptist's statement that he was not worthy to undo Jesus' sandals, although the language is significantly different.[22] However, the mention of baptism by fire in conjunction with this saying of John the Baptist in Matt and Luke may strengthen the potential allusion.[23] Mark 1:7: καὶ ἐκήρυσσεν λέγων, Ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς κύψας λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ. ("He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming	Possible undeclared narrative parallel (the slight narrative awkwardness of this comment in the text would seem to imply that this is an intentional allusion to the gospels, despite the verbal disparities)

22. The reference to sandals (ὑποδήματα, or the strap of the sandal, ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων, in Mark and John) is explicit in all four gospels, while it is only implied by the verb ὑπολύω in *Mart. Pol.* Matt does not refer to the removal/undoing of the sandals at all, but to carrying or holding them (βαστάσαι).

23. The baptismal fire in both cases has a purifying function, destroying the chaff while preserving the separated wheat (Matt 3:12: οὗ τὸ πτύον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ διακαθαριεῖ τὴν ἅλωνα αὐτοῦ καὶ συνάξει τὸν σῖτον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην, τὸ δὲ ἄχυρον κατακαύσει πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ. ["His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."] // Luke 3:17). The fire on which Polycarp is burned is described as having a similarly purifying function, refining the martyr without causing harm (*Mart. Pol.* 15.2). The theological link between baptism and martyrdom may also strengthen the link between *Mart. Pol.* and the gospel passages, despite the disparities in language. All four gospels refer to the special baptism Jesus will perform either immediately prior or following the comment about Jesus' sandals.

	after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.") Cf. Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:27.	
Mart. Pol. 15.1: μεγάλης δὲ ἐκλαμψάσης φλογός, θαῦμα εἴδομεν, οἷς ἰδεῖν ἐδόθη· οἳ καὶ ἐτηρήθημεν εἰς τὸ ἀναγγεῖλαι τοῖς λοιποῖς τὰ γενόμενα. ("And when a great flame blazed forth, we saw a marvel, which was given [to us] to see, we who also have been preserved to report the events to those remaining [*Or: to our descendants*].")	Possible reference to similar claim in John's passion narrative that the eyewitness was present and testified to what he had seen for a providential purpose (John 19:35: καὶ ὁ ἑωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύ[σ]ητε. ["He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth."])[24]	Possible narrative allusion - Although the sense of the two passages is significantly different.
Mart. Pol. 7.1a: Ἔχοντες οὖν τὸ παιδάριον, τῇ παρασκευῇ περὶ δείπνου ὥραν ἐξῆλθον διωγμῖται καὶ ἱππεῖς μετὰ τῶν συνήθων αὐτοῖς ὅπλων **ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστὴν** τρέχοντες. ("Then taking the young slave, on the day of preparation around the dinner hour, the mounted police and horsemen went out with their customary weapons as though running down a robber.")	The phrase ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν occurs in the synoptics in the account of Jesus' arrest (Matt 26:55 = Mark 14:48 = Luke 22:52: **ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστὴν** ἐξήλθατε μετὰ μαχαιρῶν καὶ ξύλων; ["Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit?"]). However, in the synoptic gospels, the phrase is spoken by Jesus (as part of a question addressed to the crowd), whereas in *Mart. Pol.*, it is used by the narrator to describe the behavior of those seeking Jesus. The verb used by the gospels is different from that used in *Mart. Pol.* (although *Mart. Pol.* uses ἐξέρχομαι elsewhere in the sentence, τρέχω is used in the "against a robber" phrase) and the weapons are specified in the gospels, while they are only referred to as those which are "customary" in *Mart. Pol.*	Possible textual quotation (ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν is an uncommon phrase, suggesting that *Mart. Pol.* is quoting the synoptic narrative[25]) or textual allusion[26]

24. Barnard, "In Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," 194–95.

25. Cf. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 401; Edouard Massaux, *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature Before Saint Irenaeus*, English ed., edited and with an introduction and addenda by

Mart. Pol. 14.2: εὐλογῶ σε, ὅτι ἠξίωσάς με τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ ὥρας ταύτης, τοῦ λαβεῖν με μέρος ἐν ἀριθμῷ τῶν μαρτύρων ἐν τῷ ποτηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ σου εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς αἰωνίου ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ πνεύματος ἁγίου· ("I bless you, because you have deemed me worthy of this day and hour, that I may receive a share in the number of the witnesses [*Or: martyrs*] in the cup of your Christ into resurrection of eternal life of both soul and body in immortality of Holy Spirit")	(1) "Cup of your Christ" is a possible allusion to Matt 20:22-23: ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Οὐκ οἴδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ μέλλω πίνειν; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ, Δυνάμεθα. λέγει αὐτοῖς, Τὸ μὲν ποτήριόν μου πίεσθε, τὸ δὲ καθίσαι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν [τοῦτο] δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου. ("But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' He said to them, 'You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.'") // Mark 10:38-39. (2) Cup may also possibly be an allusion to Christ's prayer in the garden that the cup be taken from him: Matt 26:39: καὶ προελθὼν μικρὸν ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ προσευχόμενος καὶ λέγων, Πάτερ μου, εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν, παρελθάτω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο· πλὴν οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλ' ὡς σύ. ("And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not	(1, 2) Possible textual allusion - (1) seems to be somewhat more likely than (2).[27] Although both use the concept of "cup" to refer to suffering and death, the context of Matt 20:22-23 // Mark 10:38-39 is closer to that of Polycarp in that it involves a desired imitation of Jesus' death. (3) Possible textual allusion - John does not mention a "day" (ἡμέρα), which may argue against this being an allusion. However, both *Mart. Pol.* and John use ὥρα in a similar way, which makes the allusion

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Arthur J. Bellinzoni, trans. Norman J. Belval and Suzanne Hecht, New Gospel Studies (Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 46–47.

26. While this is the closest thing to a verbal quotation in *Mart. Pol.*, a three word phrase (even a somewhat atypical one) is hardly conclusive evidence of an intentional quotation. Hence, in the analysis that follows, it is generally treated as a textual allusion instead of a quotation.

27. Trip sees this as a clear reference to Matt 20:22-23 // Mark 10:39-39, with a less direct allusion to the prayer at Gethsemane. David Tripp, "The Prayer of St Polycarp and the Development of Anaphoral Prayer," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 104 (1990): 101.

	what I want but what you want.’”) // Mark 14:36 // Luke 22:42 (3) Reference to “hour” as a way of referring to the time of one’s death may be an allusion to its use in John (John 12:27: Νῦν ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται, καὶ τί εἴπω; Πάτερ, σῶσόν με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης; ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον εἰς τὴν ὥραν ταύτην. [“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour?’ No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour.”] Cf. John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1)	more likely.[28]

The data in the table in Appendix A indicates just how few of the potential parallels are explicitly labeled as such in the text. There are only three passages classed as declared narrative parallels: *Mart. Pol.* 1.2 (Polycarp’s waiting to be betrayed); 6.1-2 (Polycarp’s betrayal by a member of his own household); and 6.2 (the police chief being named Herod). In addition, there are three passages which explicitly state that Polycarp’s martyrdom as a whole is “according to the gospels” (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1; 19.1; 22.1).[29] This is in contrast to seventeen reasonably likely

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28. Massaux, *Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, 2.49.

29. Of these three, *Mart. Pol.* 1.1 and 19.1 are essentially parallel statements, although the wording is slightly different. *Mart. Pol.* 22.1 makes the more general claim that those to whom the letter is being addressed conduct themselves κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, as did Polycarp. Hence, this last passage implies that the meaning of “according to the gospel” here must be more general than a simplistic, literal narrative correspondence. However, since it is likely that 22.1 is part of the postscript added along with the “genealogy” of the text (as it is not present in m or L), it is unclear whether this much broader meaning was also intended in 1.1 and 19.1. Dehandschutter has argued that κατά τὸ εὐαγγέλιον should not be taken as indicating any formal imitation of the gospel narratives, but rather as behaving in a way that is obedient to God’s will. Dehandschutter, “Martyrium Polycarpi,” 73–74; Dehandschutter, “The Martyrdom of Polycarp and the Outbreak of Montanism,” 128. Holmes similarly argues against understanding the phrase as indicating a simplistic, “movie script” imitation of the gospel narrative. Instead, he proposes that it implies the presence of three elements: the martyrdom must be in obedience to God, it must manifest concern and love for others (hence the praise of Germanicus, whose enthusiasm strengthens and encourages those suffering with him, and the condemnation of Quintus, whose enthusiasm puts others in danger, *Mart. Pol.* 3-4), and it

undeclared narrative parallels (*Mart. Pol.* 5.2; 7.1a; 7.1b; 8.1; 8.2-3; 9.3; 10.2; 11.1; 12.1; 12.2; 12.3; 13.1; 13.2; 16.1; 16.2; 17.2; 18.1). While there are no explicit quotations of biblical texts in *Mart. Pol.*,[30] there are a few cases in which there seems to be an allusion to the text of the gospels (*Mart. Pol.* 6.2, to Matt 10:36; *Mart. Pol.* 7.1a, to Matt 26:55 = Mark 14:48 = Luke 22:52; *Mart. Pol.* 8.1, to John 19:31; *Mart. Pol.* 14.2, "cup" to Matt 20:22-23 // Mark 10:38-39 or Matt 26:39 // Mark 14:36 // Luke 22:42, "day" to John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1; cf. *Mart. Pol.* 7.2, to Acts 21:14).

Clearly, the current text of *Mart. Pol.* does not present Polycarp's martyrdom as a simple, literal reenactment of Jesus' death. Still less does *Mart. Pol.* follow one particular gospel's passion narrative. In fact, in the vast majority of cases it is not even possible to tell whether the allusion is to a written text or to oral traditions of the passion.[31] Holmes suggests that rather than seeing the gospel parallels as an interpretive key for the text as a whole, each one should be

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involves steadfast endurance (ὑπομένω/ὑπομονή). Holmes does acknowledge that *Mart. Pol.* includes allusions and parallels to Jesus' passion, but he sees these as a feature of the narrative genre. In the context of *Mart. Pol.*, these gospel allusions mostly serve to establish the character of Polycarp as a charismatic and prophetic bishop and the embodiment of the heroic and/or athletic virtues and characteristics idealized by Greco-Roman culture. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 419–23.

30. There are two possible exceptions to this claim: *Mart. Pol.* 7.1 (ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστὴν = Matt 26:55 = Mark 14:48 = Luke 22:52) and *Mart. Pol.* 9.1 (ἴσχυε... καὶ ἀνδρίζου = Josh 1:6, 7, 9, 18; cf. Deut 31:6-7, 23; Dan 10:19; 1 Chr 22:13). However, in both cases the phrases are too short to be certain a quotation was intended. The lack of quotations may be a function of the date of *Mart. Pol.*, as the author may be relying mainly on oral traditions (particularly for the passion narrative). It may also be a function of the author's limited access to written biblical texts or simply a product of the literary choices of the writer.

31. The one exception to this may be *Mart. Pol.* 7.1a, although even in this case the correspondence is only the three word phrase ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν. The relative rarity of this phrase in other Greek literature implies that *Mart. Pol.* is taking it from a written text of the gospels (although as all three synoptic gospels contain the same phrase, it is not possible to tell which one), but it is hardly absolutely conclusive. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 411; Massaux, *Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, 46–47.

examined individually for how it is functioning in a particular passage.[32] He concludes that the cumulative effect of seemingly unrelated gospel parallels in the narrative of *Mart. Pol.* is to establish the theme of God's rule over the events, in which Polycarp similarly maintains control through his participation in God's will (similar to Jesus in John's gospel). For example:

- In 7.1, Polycarp's pursuers are able to capture him because he chooses to stop running, even though he could have avoided them.
- In 7.2, Polycarp sets a table for his newly arrived "guests," fulfilling the role of gracious host and establishing himself as their social superior.
- In 8.1, they depart for town only after Polycarp has finished praying and decides to leave (i.e. Polycarp and not his captors determines the timing of the events).
- In 8.2-3, Polycarp manifests self-control and dignity, while Herod and Nicetes (the representatives of Imperial power) embarrass themselves by exhibiting their passions in their questioning and failure to persuade Polycarp, and in their own lack of self-control.
- In 9.2-12.1, at the "trial" in the arena, it is the proconsul who behaves in a "womanish" manner by threatening, pleading and insisting. Polycarp demonstrates his own self-mastery and philosophical detachment, effectively controlling the outcome and direction of the hearing by his own steadfastness. It is Polycarp who delivers the closest thing to a verdict, by bringing the hearing to a close with his bold declaration of Χριστιανός εἰμι.
- In 13.2-15.1, it is Polycarp who calmly undresses himself before the stake; who instructs his executioners in proper procedure (insisting that he be bound rather than nailed); and who compels them to wait to light the fire until he has finished praying.

According to Holmes, all of this stresses the fact that it is Polycarp, and ultimately God, who is directing the events. This overarching divine control mocks Rome's belief in its own power and establishes a subversive counter narrative. In the context of the story, all of Rome's powerful

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32. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 421–22.

agents--the διωγμῖται, Herod, the proconsul--are directed by the will of the elderly bishop, who is himself perfectly obedient to the will of God. The cumulative effect of these seemingly otherwise unconnected narrative details is to create a parallel with John 19:11 and its insistence that earthly rulers have no power besides that given them by God.[33]

While I agree in general with Holmes' analysis, the fatal charades make it clear that it is not necessary (or even particularly common) to have a direct, literal correspondence between the arena presentation and the narrative being evoked. The essential thing is to provide either sufficient narrative correspondence or key details from the myth for the audience to recognize the story that is being recalled. For example, it is not necessary for there to be a literal retelling of every detail of the myth of Pasiphae for the audience to recognize that the condemned has been placed in that role. All that is necessary is for the woman to be penetrated by a bull. Neither the elaborate wooden heifer nor the woman's survival (let alone her resulting pregnancy with the minotaur) are necessary for the audience to recognize the mythic representation.[34] Hence, in the case of Polycarp's martyrdom, it is only necessary to ensure that sufficient details that evoke the narrative of Jesus' passion are highlighted in order for the audience to recognize the that Polycarp represents Jesus in his death.[35] These gospel parallels are essential in that they provide the narrative key the audience needs to be able to see the reality of the drama unfolding. *Mart. Pol.* is using the gospel allusions to point to the meaning of Polycarp's martyrdom and the identity of the martyr, as well as to the sacramental role of Polycarp's death.

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33. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 425–26.

34. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 60–66.

35. In saying that Polycarp represents Jesus, I mean that Polycarp images Christ for the Christian community in the same way that the *damnata* represents/images Pasiphae for the Roman audience in her death. By dying as a martyr, Polycarp demonstrates the reality of Jesus' death (including the saving power and glory of God that is manifested in Christ's passion) and makes that reality visible and present for the community (i.e. the Christian audience of *Mart. Pol.* who have the necessary understanding to see the "myth" being reenacted).

Arena parallels

Polycarp dies in the context of a Roman *spectaculum* according to *Mart. Pol.* which uses the arena context in sophisticated ways.[36] The public, spectacular nature of Polycarp's martyrdom is emphasized by placing the trial and cremation of the body in the context of the arena, two events that would normally have taken place in other contexts.[37] *Mart. Pol.* also uses the complex dynamic present in *spectacula* between the sponsors, the spectators, and the arena participants in order to emphasize Polycarp's heroism and dignity, primarily by reversing the expected behavior of these three groups of actors. In *Mart. Pol.* this reversal of expected roles is usually employed to emphasize the personal control and freedom of Polycarp and the other martyrs, contrary to the expectations of a Roman audience, who would expect the events to be directed by the sponsor of the *spectaculum* and, on occasion, the spectators, not by the *damnati* in the arena.

On the most basic level, *Mart. Pol.* shows a familiarity with the technical vocabulary of the arena (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 2.4: οἱ εἰς τὰ θηρία κατακριθέντες = *damnati ad bestias*; *Mart. Pol.* 3.1: θηριομάχομαι = the activity of a *bestiarius*; *Mart. Pol.* 12.2: κυνηγέσια = *venatio*; *Mart.*

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36. A table of passages of *Mart. Pol.* containing *spectacula* motifs, along with a brief analysis, is given in Appendix B.

37. It is possible, of course, that Polycarp's trial and the cremation of his body did historically take place in the stadium at Smyrna. Several scholars have attempted to offer historical explanations for holding Polycarp's trial in the stadium rather than before the tribunal (which would be the usual procedure). Bisbee suggests that the trial described in *Mart. Pol.* is a "mock trial" held to satisfy the mob and an earlier trial would have taken place *pro tribunalis*. Bisbee, *Pre-Decian Acts of Martyrs and Commentarii*, 121–22. Thompson argues that by the second century the governor or proconsul had considerable latitude in how criminal cases were handled in his province. Hence, the proconsul was perfectly at liberty to choose to conduct Polycarp's trial wherever he wished. The technical term for conducting trials according to such atypical procedures was *cognitio extra ordinem* or *cognitio extaordinaria* (see *Digest* 48.19.13). Thompson, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp," 35–36. I do not know of any scholars who have commented on *Mart. Pol.*'s placement of the final cremation of the body in the stadium, an event which would have been even more unusual than holding a trial there. There are, however, enough other issues with the chronology of events as narrated in *Mart. Pol.* to suggest that they have been intentionally located there by the author(s) of the text.

Pol. 16.1: κομφέκτωρ = *confector*;[38] *Mart. Pol.* 17.1: στέφανος = crown, βραβεῖον = a prize in the games, often a wand or baton). Some of these terms are simply used descriptively in the course of the narrative in the same contexts in which they might appear in non-Christian texts.[39] However, *Mart. Pol.* also uses the specialized vocabulary of *spectacula* in ways that reverse the Roman cultural expectations, to create an alternative view of the games. From this reversed perspective, the skilled *bestiarius* is the one who encourages the wild animal with whom he is fighting to kill him and the best prizes go to the executed *damnati*.[40]

The text also demonstrates familiarity with the procedures of *spectacula*. For example, Philip the Asiarch's response that it was not possible to expose Polycarp to a lion because the *venatio* has been concluded is consistent with various limits placed on the use of wild animals (*Mart. Pol.* 12.2). Fierce animals (such as lions) could only be used in *spectacula* with imperial permission and there were restrictions on the number of animals that could be used and the duration of the *venatio*.[41] The portrayal of Germanicus, who in his eagerness to escape from the

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38. Often appears as *confector ferarum* as a general synonym for *bestiarius* (e.g. Suetonius, *Aug.* 43.2; *Nero* 12.1).

39. E.g. *Mart. Pol.* 2.4: ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ εἰς τὰ θηρία κατακριθέντες ὑπέμειναν δεινὰς κολάσεις ("And similarly, those condemned to the beasts submitted to terrible punishments"); *Mart. Pol.* 12.2: ὁ δὲ ἔφη, μὴεἶναι ἐξὸν αὐτῷ, ἐπαιδὴ πεπληρώκει τὰ κυνηγέσια. ("But he said that it was not permitted for him to do so, since he had already concluded the *venatio*."); *Mart. Pol.* 16.1: ἐκέλευσαν προσελθόντα αὐτῷ κομφέκτορα παραβῦσαι ξιφίδιον ("they ordered an executioner going up to stick a dagger in him").

40. E.g. *Mart. Pol.* 3.1: ὃς καὶ ἐπισήμως ἐθηριομάχησεν. Βουλομένου γὰρ τοῦ ἀθρυπάτου πείθειν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγοντος, τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ κατοικτεῖραι, ἑαυτῷ ἐπεσπάσατο τὸ θηρίον προσβιασάμενος, τάχιον τοῦ ἀδίκου καὶ ἀνόμου βίου αὐτῶν ἀπαλλαγῆναι βουλόμενος. ("he also fought the beasts with skill. For when the proconsul wished to persuade him and said to have pity on his age, he dragged the beast on himself by force, wishing to be delivered quickly from their unrighteous and unlawful life."); *Mart. Pol.* 17.1: ἰδὼν τό τε μέγεθος αὐτοῦ τῆς μαρτυρίας καὶ τὴν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀνεπίληπτον πολιτείαν, ἐστεφανωμένον τε τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στέφανον καὶ βραβεῖον ἀναντίρρητον ἀπενηνεγμένον ("having seen the greatness of his [i.e. Polycarp's] witness [*Or: martyrdom*] and the blameless way of life from the beginning, both having been crowned with the crown of immortality and obtained an incontestable prize").

41. Potter, "Spectacle," 398; Louis Robert, *Les Gladiateurs dans l'Orient Grec*

unrighteousness of this world drags the beast onto himself, is consistent with some of the artistic representations of *spectacula* (*Mart. Pol.* 3.1). These sometimes portray animals in the process of leaping onto their intended victims or clinging to their bodies in the moment of attack. While *damnati ad bestias* are more typically portrayed as helpless in visual depictions (e.g. tied to a stake, bound or constrained by arena personnel), they are occasionally shown with their hands free (although usually in defensive postures), so there would be the potential of victims purposefully pulling beasts onto themselves.[42]

The importance of spectator acclamations is also stressed, particularly spectators' ability to influence the course of events by shouting out their wishes. Such acclamations, which might include demands for political or legal action, were one of the primary ways by which the populace interacted with Roman officials (including the emperor).[43] It is acclamations from the crowd, apparently an emotional response to the courageous performance of Germanicus and the other martyrs, which results in Polycarp's being arrested.

> ἐκ τούτου οὖν πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, θαυμάσαν τὴν γενναιότητα τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς καὶ θεοσεβοῦς γένους τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ἐπεβόησεν· αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους· ζητείσθω Πολύκαρπος. ("Because of this, the whole multitude, amazed by the nobility of the god-loving and god-fearing race of the Christians, called out, 'Away with the atheists! Let Polycarp be

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(Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1971), 274.

42. The expected response of *damnati* (as represented in visual and literary depictions) is helplessness and fear, not impassivity and courage combined with an active seeking of death. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 53–54, 92; Brown, "Death as Decoration," 194.

43. David S. Potter, "Performance, Power, and Justice in the High Empire," in *Roman Theatre and Society*, ed. William J. Slater (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 132–41; Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC-AD 337)* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 368–75. Many of these acclamations involved requests for gladiators to be spared or freedom to be granted to *damnati* (e.g. Suetonius, *Tib.* 47.1; *Claud.* 21.5; Dio 57.2.6; Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 5.14; Aelian, *De nat. anim.* 7.48). However, the *spectacula* were also the primary context for expressing popular discontent, as when the people complained to Augustus over the scarcity and high price of wine and demanded a promised cash-distribution (Suetonius, *Aug.* 42.1-2). These acclamations could also include demands for the execution of individuals, especially prominent officials (e.g. Suetonius, *Cal.* 30.2; *Galba* 15.2; Plutarch, *Galba* 17.5; Tacitus, *Hist.* .72-3 [cf. 3.74-5]), a clear parallel to the call for Polycarp's execution in *Mart. Pol.* 3.2.

sought!'") (*Mart. Pol.* 3.2)

The spectators' acclamations are also critical in determining the form of Polycarp's execution, as the crowd first asks the Asiarch to send out a lion against Polycarp and then, when this is denied, they call out for him to be burned alive.

> ταῦτα λέγοντες ἐπεβόων καὶ ἠρώτων τὸν Ἀσιάρχην Φίλιππον, ἵνα ἐπαφῇ τῷ Πολυκάρπῳ λέοντα. ὁ δὲ ἔφη, μὴ εἶναι ἐξὸν αὐτῷ, ἐπαιδὴ πεπληρώκει τὰ κυνηγέσια. τότε ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐπιβοῆσαι, ὥστε τὸν Πολύκαρπον ζῶντα κατακαῦσαι.
> ("Saying these things, they began calling out and asking the Asiarch Philip that he might let loose a lion against Polycarp. But he said that it was not permitted for him to do so, since he had already concluded the *venatio*. Then it was established by them to call out with one accord that Polycarp was to be burned alive.") (*Mart. Pol.* 12.2-3)

This general familiarity with *spectacula* (seen in the use of specialized vocabulary, awareness of limits on the use of wild animals, and the importance of spectator acclamations) implies that significant deviations from what one would expect in an account of an execution in the arena are not due to carelessness or lack of knowledge, but are intended to communicate truths about Polycarp's identity or the nature of his martyrdom.

Even the brief accounts of the martyrs whose behavior leads to Polycarp's being sought show carefully constructed divergences and reversals of what would be expected in a description of a *spectaculum* in order to emphasize the heroism and virtue of the martyrs. The torments endured are described with a wealth of visual detail, emphasizing the inhumanity of the torturers, which exceeds the toleration of the audience.

> τὸ γὰρ γενναῖον αὐτῶν καὶ ὑπομονητικὸν καὶ φιλοδέσποτον τὶς οὐκ ἂν θαυμάσειεν; οἳ μάστιξιν μὲν καταξανθέντες, ὥστε μέχρι τῶν ἔσω φλεβῶν καὶ ἀρτηριῶν τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς οἰκονομίαν θεωρεῖσθαι, ὑπέμειναν, ὡς καὶ τοὺς περιεστῶτας ἐλεεῖν καὶ ὀδύρεσθαι·
> ("For who would not be amazed by their nobility and endurance and love of the master? On the one hand, they submitted to being torn by whips, until the very organization of their flesh was revealed down to the veins and arteries, until even the bystanders felt pity and wailed.") (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2)

There are documented instances in which the organizers of *spectacula* fail to judge correctly how audiences will react, sometimes with devastating consequences.[44] However, *Mart. Pol.* does not

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44. One of the most famous examples is the unexpected sympathy for the elephants displayed by Pompey during the inaugural ceremonies of his theater in 55 BCE. The various accounts of the event do not agree on the cause of the spectators' sympathy, but they do agree

use the sympathetic reaction of the spectators to focus on the inhumanity of the martyrs' tormentors or to provide an apologetic for better treatment of Christians, but to stress the courage, impassivity and self-control of the martyrs themselves. While the bystanders wail, overcome by their emotions, the martyrs achieve such nobility that they are able to endure their tortures without so much as a whimper.

> τοὺς δὲ καὶ εἰς τοσοῦτον γενναιότητος ἐλθεῖν, ὥστε μήτε γρύξαι μήτε στενάξαι τινὰ αὐτῶν, ἐπιδεικνυμένους ἅπασιν ἡμῖν, ὅτι ἐκαίνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ βασανιζόμενοι τῆς σαρκὸς ἀπεδήμουν οἱ μάρτυρες τοῦ Χριστοῦ, μᾶλλον δέ, ὅτι παρεστὼς ὁ κύριος ὡμίλει αὐτοῖς. καὶ προσέχοντες τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ χάριτι τῶν κοσμικῶν κατεφρόνουν βασάνων, διὰ μιᾶς ὥρας τὴν αἰώνιον ζωὴν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι. καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἦν αὐτοῖς ψυχρὸν τὸ τῶν ἀπανθρώπων βασανιστῶν· πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν γὰρ εἶχον φυγεῖν τὸ αἰώνιον καὶ μηδέποτε φβεννύμενον, καὶ τοῖς τῆς καρδίας ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀνέβλεπον τὰ τηρούμενα τοῖς ὑπομείνασιν ἀγαθά, ἃ οὔτε οὖς ἤκουσεν οὔτε ὀφθαλμὸς εἶδεν οὔτε ἐτὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου ἀνέβη, ἐκείνοις δὲ ὑπεδείκνυτο ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, οἵπερ μηκέτι ἄνθρωποι, ἀλλ' ἤδη ἄγγελοι ἦσαν. ("On the other hand, they came to such nobility, so that none of them either grumbled or moaned, exhibiting to all of us that in that hour, while under torture, the martyrs of Christ had traveled away from the flesh, or rather, that the Lord was standing by consorting with them. And clinging to the grace of Christ they disdained the tortures of the world, purchasing by one hour eternal life. And the fire of their inhuman torturers was cold to them, for they held before their eyes that they fled the eternal and never extinguished [fire], and with the eyes of their hearts they looked up to the good things preserved for those who submitted, [the things] which neither ear has heard nor eye has seen nor has it come into the heart of human beings, but it has been revealed by the Lord to those who are no longer humans, but already angels.") (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2-3)

The result is a complete reversal of the normative roles of *spectacula*, in which the participants in the arena are meant to display uncontrolled emotions (e.g. fear, humiliation, rage), while the spectators in the *cavea* ideally maintain their human dignity and self-control.[45] Such a lack of

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that the result was to focus attention on the elephants and to create a certain amount of bad feeling toward Pompey (Cicero, *fam.* 7.1.3; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 8.21; Dio 39.2-5). Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 28–29; Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 58.

45. Of course, one of the most significant dangers of the *spectacula* is precisely the tendency to lose control of one's emotions in the face of such violence and excitement. It is this potential loss of emotional composure that prompts nearly all ancient critiques of Roman spectacles (e.g. Seneca, *Epist.* 7.3; Plutarch, *Moralia* 802D, 821F-823F; Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 17.12; Philostratus, *Soph.* 1.25.9; Horace, *Epist.* 1.18.19; *Sat.* 2.6.44; Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 33.2; Augustine, *Confessions* 6.8.13; cf. Plato, *Republic* 439E-440A). Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 3–4, 91; Thomas E. J. Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 140–43.

pathos is occasionally mentioned among the martial virtues displayed by gladiators, but is extremely atypical of literary descriptions of *damnati*.[46] In addition, the ἀπάθεια displayed by the martyrs as described in this passage does not exactly conform with Stoic ideals. The comment on the martyrs being away from the flesh is qualified (or perhaps even completely revised) as instead being the result of Christ's presence conversing with them (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2). They are able to despise earthly torments not so much through an act of intellect and will, but through their abiding personal relationship with the Lord. And it is not through reason that they can endure steadfast in their confession, but because they have already been given a foretaste of the angelic vision by God (*Mart. Pol.* 2.3).

One significant divergence from what would be typical of a *spectaculum* is *Mart. Pol.*'s locating all events from Polycarp's trial up to collecting the martyr's cremated remains for burial in the context of the arena. Trials would normally have been held before the tribunal, either in the proconsul's residence or in a civic building (such as a basilica) or other civic space (e.g. a forum). After being condemned, individuals might be held for a significant period of time (sometimes as much as a year) before being executed, particularly if they were sentenced to *damnatio ad bestias* or *crematio* as executions of these types required the *damnati* to be displayed in a *spectaculum*.[47] Instead, Polycarp is brought directly to the stadium and is tried there, apparently in the middle of an ongoing *spectaculum*, after which he is immediately executed. Similarly, following execution in the arena, bodies would typically be removed to another location, not cremated in the arena.[48]

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46. Stoic sources regularly praise gladiators for their willingness to die with integrity, their courage and fortitude, and their desire for glory: e.g. Seneca, *Dial.* 2.16.2, *Ep.* 30.8, *Helv.* 17.1; Cicero, *Phil.* 3.14.35, *Tusc.* 2.17.40-41. Cf. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 47–50.

47. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 92–93.

48. Cremation was an elite form of disposal of bodies in the Roman world, hence not a means of disposal typical for the corpses of *noxii*. There is a more extensive discussion on the disposal of arena corpses and the atypical cremation of Polycarp's body later in this section.

By locating the trial and the disposal of the saint's body in the arena, *Mart. Pol.* incorporates aspects of Polycarp's martyrdom that would not normally be part of the arena spectacle into this public, ritualized context. The arena was charged with complex and symbolic meanings which many scholars have seen as intimately entwined with the construction of Roman identity and the manifestation of imperial authority.[49] By locating Polycarp's trial in the stadium and by making it part of a *spectaculum*, *Mart. Pol.* is able to employ the symbolic aspects of the arena in order to reveal Polycarp's identity to the Christian audience. In this intensely public encounter before the assembled spectators in the stadium, who are there in order to see and participate in a manifestation of Roman power, it is Polycarp and not the Roman proconsul who manifests the virtues of courage and self-control. Polycarp is portrayed as directing the course and pacing of the trial, dismissing the crowd as "atheists" who are unworthy to hear an account of Christian belief.[50]

> προσαχθέντα οὖν αὐτὸν ἀνηρώτα ὁ ἀνθύπατος, εἰ αὐτὸς εἴη Πολύκαρπος. τοῦ δὲ ὁμολογοῦντος, ἔπειθεν ἀρνεῖσθαι λέγων· αἰδέσθητί σου τὴν ἡλικίαν, καὶ ἕτερα τούτοις ἀκόλουθα, ὧν ἔθος αὐτοῖς λέγειν· ὄμοσον τὴν καίσαρος τύχην, μετανόησον, εἶπον· αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος ἐμβριθεῖ τῷ προσώπῳ εἰς πάντα τὸν ὄχλον τὸν ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ ἀνόμων ἐθνῶν ἐμβλέψας καὶ ἐπισείσας αὐτοῖς τὴν χεῖρα, στενάξας τε καὶ ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν· αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους.
> ("Then, when he was brought forward, the proconsul asked if he was Polycarp. And when he had agreed, the proconsul began to persuade him saying, 'Have compassion for your age,' and other such related things, which they are accustomed to say: 'Swear by the fortune of Caesar, repent and say, "away with the atheists."' But Polycarp looking with a stern face at the whole crowd of lawless Gentiles in the stadium and shaking his hand at them, groaning and looking up to heaven he said, 'Away with the atheists.'") (*Mart. Pol.* 9.2)

> ἔφη ὁ ἀνθύπατος· πεῖσον τὸν δῆμον. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· σὲ μὲν καὶ λόγου ἠξίωκα· δεδιδάγμεθα γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τεταγμέναις τιμὴν κατὰ τὸ προσῆκον τὴν μὴ βλάπτουσαν ἡμᾶς ἀπονέμειν· ἐκείνους δὲ οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι ἀξίους τοῦ ἀπολογεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς.

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49. E.g. John C. Edmondson, "Dynamic Arenas: Gladiatorial Presentations in the City of Rome and the Construction of Roman Society During the Early Empire," in *Roman Theatre and Society*, ed. William J. Slater (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 77–78; Potter, "Spectacle," 388–89; Futrell, *Blood in the Arena*, 49, 212.

50. In the process Polycarp also effectively manipulates the crowd into ensuring that he receives the desired guilty verdict by intentionally aggravating them.

> ("The proconsul said, 'Persuade the people.' But Polycarp said, 'I consider you worthy of an account, for we are taught to impart honor to rulers and authorities appointed by God in so far as it does not harm us, but I do not think those people are worthy of my defending myself to them.'") (*Mart. Pol.* 10.2)

And it is Polycarp, not the proconsul, who decides when to conclude the trial.

> ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν... ἀλλὰ τί βραδύνεις; φέρε, ὃ βούλει.
> ("But Polycarp said... 'But what are you waiting for? Bring what you wish.'") (*Mart. Pol.* 11.2)

This display of the impotence of Roman authority continues after Polycarp is condemned, as he, rather than the Roman officials, determines that he will be bound and not nailed to the stake and then makes them wait until he has finished praying before lighting the fire (*Mart. Pol.* 13.3-15.1).[51] Throughout the narrative, it is Polycarp's authority, virtue, power, and dignity that is on display and performed in the arena, while the Roman officials and the spectators are merely instruments.

A similar bending of the expected sequence of events, but on a much smaller scale, is also seen in the description of Germanicus' heroic encounter with the beasts (*Mart. Pol.* 3). According to the usual procedures, the trial would occur in an entirely different setting from the *spectaculum* in which the execution would be carried out and might be separated from it by several months (as prisoners were held over until the next games were given). Once an individual was given a sentence of *damnatio ad bestias*, there was usually no opportunity for reprieve.[52] However, in this case, the proconsul continues to urge Germanicus to recant not just

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51. As was previously discussed, Holmes sees this series of events as the portrayal of God's ultimate authority over all things and Polycarp's ability to maintain control through his obedience to God's will. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 225–26. While I agree with Holmes' assessment of the theological meaning of these narrative elements, their performance in the context of the locus in which Roman power is displayed necessarily infuses them with a political as well as a spiritual meaning.

52. While stories do exist of *damnati* being rescued by the beasts sent out against them, such incidents are consistently presented as miraculous tales, not as common occurrences. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 93, 119n128. Crowds are known to have occasionally demanded that *damnati* were granted a reprieve, but such instances are extremely rare. Kyle, *Spectacles of*

after he has been led into the arena, but after the wild animal had been released against him (otherwise he would not have been able to pull the animal onto himself as a direct response to the proconsul's request).[53] While this does not necessarily imply that there was not a separate trial in which Germanicus was condemned, by including the proconsul's ongoing questioning the author brings certain aspects of Germanicus' trial into the context of the arena, allowing the martyr to literally perform his confession in his spectacular embrace of death.

By placing the trial within the context of the *spectaculum*, *Mart. Pol.* emphasizes the public, performative nature of the trial. The trial can be seen as the core of the majority of Christian martyr acts, since it is the context in which the martyrs formally witness by confessing their faith. The majority of trials in the Roman Empire were public events and Potter has shown that crowds appear to have had significant influence over the questioning, judgment and sentencing by magistrates at public trials. The spectators' desire for revenge or sympathy with the victim could radically effect the outcome of the legal proceedings.[54] Hence, it was not necessary for *Mart. Pol.* to place Polycarp's trial in the context of a *spectaculum* in order to portray it as a public event. However, by integrating the trial into the context of the arena *Mart. Pol.* is able to further emphasize the presence of spectators and to portray Polycarp's confession as a witnessing before the whole world.[55] In addition, the proconsul treats the crowd of

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Death, 84–85; Potter, "Spectacle," 385.

53. *Mart. Pol.* 3.1: Βουλομένου γὰρ τοῦ ἀθρυπάτου πείθειν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγοντος, τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ κατοικτεῖραι, ἑαυτῷ ἐπεσπάσατο τὸ θηρίον προσβιασάμενος, τάχιον τοῦ ἀδίκου καὶ ἀνόμου βίου αὐτῶν ἀπαλλαγῆναι βουλόμενος. ("For when the proconsul wished to persuade him and said to have pity on his age, he dragged the beast on himself by force, wishing to be delivered quickly from their unrighteous and unlawful life.")

54. Potter, "Performance, Power, and Justice in the High Empire," 150–52 It is exactly this aspect of public trials that *Mart. Pol.* 9.2 shows Polycarp using to antagonize the crowd when he aims his cry of "Away with the atheists" at them.

55. Lieu argues that the appearance of the Jews as significant actors in the narrative following the announcement of Polycarp's three-fold confession is a way of emphasizing the universality of the audience of his witness, as well as to fulfill the prophesy spoken by Jesus in

spectators in the stadium as the functional jury of Polycarp's trial by inviting Polycarp to defend himself to them directly and by allowing them to pass sentence against him (*Mart. Pol.* 10.1-2; 12.2-3).[56] The arena context also introduces a competitive or combative element into the trial itself, stressing the contest of wills between Polycarp and the proconsul, which is ultimately a contest between Polycarp and the devil.[57] This combative element is introduced by the heavenly acclamation which greets Polycarp on his entrance into the arena, in which God seems to take on the role of the trainer (*lanista*) encouraging Polycarp before the games begin.

> Τῷ δὲ Πολυκάρπῳ εἰσιόντι εἰς τὸ στάδιον φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐγένετο· ἴσχυε, Πολύκαρπε, καὶ ἀνδρίζου. καὶ τὸν μὲν εἰπόντα οὐδεὶς εἶδεν, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν. καὶ λοιπὸν προσαχθέντος αὐτοῦ, θόρυβος ἦν μέγας ἀκουσάντων, ὅτι Πολύκαρπος συνείληπται.
> ("But on entering the stadium a voice came to Polycarp from heaven, 'Be strong, Polycarp, and be courageous *[Or: be manly]*.' And no one saw the one who had spoken, but those of our people who were present heard the voice. Finally, when he was brought forward, there was a great clamor among those who heard that Polycarp had been apprehended.") (*Mart. Pol.* 9.1)[58]

Matt 10:17-18. Judith Lieu, "Accusations of Jewish Persecution in Early Christian Sources, with Particular Reference to Justin Martyr and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Graham N. Stanton and Guy C. Stroumsa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 286–87. For a further discussion of this question, see the analysis of *Mart. Pol.* 12.2 in Appendix A.

56. This explicitly civic function of the assembled people and perhaps even their official function as a popular assembly is implied by the use of the term δῆμος in *Mart. Pol.* 10.2: ἔφη ὁ ἀνθύπατος· πεῖσον τὸν δῆμον. ("The proconsul said, 'Persuade the people.'"). Elsewhere in the text they are referred to as περιεστῶτες (2.2), τὸ πλῆθος (3.2; 12.2), ὄχλος (9.2; 13.1; 16.1), οἱ ἄνομοι (16.1, although it is not clear whether this is the spectators as a whole or just the Roman officials).

57. This is not to imply that the proconsul represents Satan in *Mart. Pol.* Martyr acts are remarkably careful to differentiate between Roman officials and the cosmic enemy who is the real opponent of the Christian martyrs. Martyrs often show a certain sympathy for or indifference toward the magistrates conducting their trials, while identifying Satan or the devil as their true persecutor and enemy. While the devil occasionally acts through their human torturers (e.g. *Mart. Pol.* 3.1), the primary struggle is the martyrs' internal battle against their passions and the cosmic struggle of Christ against Satan.

58. Cf. Tertullian, *Ad martyras* 3: *Bonum agonem subituri estis in quo agonothetes Deus vivus est, xystarches Spiritus Sanctus.* ("You are going to undergo a good contest, in

The trial that follows contains elements of a rhetorical contest, in which Polycarp regularly twists the meaning of the proconsul's words in replying to his questions.

> ὁ δὲ πάλιν πρὸς αὐτόν· πυρί σε ποιήσω δαπανηθῆναι, εἰ τῶν θηρίων καταφρονεῖς, ἐὰν μὴ μετανοήσῃς. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· πῦρ ἀπειλεῖς τὸ πρὸς ὥραν καιόμενον καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον σβεννύμενον· ἀγνοεῖς γὰρ τὸ τῆς μελλούσης κρίσεως καὶ αἰωνίου κολάσεως τοῖς ἀσεβέσι τηρούμενον πῦρ. ἀλλὰ τί βραδύνεις; φέρε, ὃ βούλει.
> ("And again [he said] to him, 'I will cause you to be consumed by fire, if you despise the beasts, unless you repent.' But Polycarp said, 'You threaten fire that burns for an hour and is quenched after a short time, for you are ignorant of the fire of the coming judgment and eternal retribution that is kept for the ungodly. But what are you waiting for? Bring what you wish.'") (*Mart. Pol.* 11.2)[59]

It is a contest that Polycarp clearly wins, through his steadfastness in professing Christ, and he, rather than the proconsul, receives the prize he desires.

The importance of the confessional aspect of the martyr's trial makes it easy to see why *Mart. Pol.* might seek to place it before the crowd in the stadium. The reasons for locating the cremation of Polycarp's body in the arena are less obvious. While there is little specific information regarding the disposal of arena corpses, especially in the provinces (for which we have fewer detailed descriptions of *spectacula*), what sources we do have suggest that the bodies of *noxii* were dragged from the arena and disposed of elsewhere (generally after having their throats cut to ensure they are dead).[60] It seems highly unlikely that either the pagan Nicetas or

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which the living God is the umpire, the Holy Spirit the trainer.") Tertullian is drawing more on the imagery of the athletic contest than that of the Roman *spectacula*, but the concept is similar. Cf. Nicole Kelley, "Philosophy as Training for Death: Reading the Ancient Christian Martyr Acts as Spiritual Exercises," *Church History* 75, no. 4 (2006): 726–27; Thompson, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp," 42.

59. Cf. *Mart. Pol.* 9.2, in which Polycarp obeys the proconsul's command to curse the atheists, but directs it at the non-Christian spectators rather than the Christians; *Mart. Pol.* 10.1-2, in which Polycarp offers to give a speech defending Christianity to the proconsul, but not to the crowd, and in the process honors the "rulers and authorities" just as the proconsul had requested in asking him to swear by the Fortune of Caesar; *Mart. Pol.* 11.1, in which Polycarp gives a philosophical response to the proconsul's simple threat.

60. Kyle argues convincingly that at least the majority of *damnati* killed in the arena in Rome were dumped into the Tiber, but the data is less clear outside of Rome. Eusebius indicates that water disposal may have been common in Caesarea, perhaps because of its

the Jews would have been particularly concerned about whether the Christians chose to abandon Jesus to worship Polycarp instead.[61] And if the primary purpose of cremating Polycarp's body was to prevent the Christians from venerating or worshipping the martyr, it is surprising that more effort was not made to prevent them from collecting the cremated remains.[62]

Even if it was common practice in Smyrna to dispose of arena corpses by burning in the second century CE, it seems extremely unlikely that this lengthy, messy, and non-spectacular process would have been carried out in the middle of the stadium, apparently as part of the ongoing *spectaculum*.[63] There is also the practical question of the need for large quantities of wood for the cremation, assuming that all of the previously gathered firewood had been used in the attempted *crematio*.[64] Rather than attempting to resolve all of the practical issues regarding

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location near the sea. Burning seems to have been a particularly unusual method for disposing of bodies of arena victims, as it was expensive, time consuming, and required specialized skills. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 169–71, 214–24, 251–52. Smyrna's location would presumably have made disposal by water a convenient option as well.

61. It is more likely that these concerns are placed in Nicetas' mouth in order to provide a context for the justification of Polycarp's veneration (*Mart. Pol.* 17.2-3).

62. While the centurion guards the body during the cremation, there is no indication that any effort was made to keep the Christians from claiming the remains afterwards (*Mart. Pol.* 18.1-3).

63. The narrative sequence is a bit awkward at this point in the text, as it is unclear whether Nicetas' petition to deny the release of Polycarp's body was made while populace was still gathered in the stadium or at some later point. The presence of the Jews (who are presumably those from amongst the spectators) would indicate that this took place before the crowd dispersed, particularly as the fire referred to here must be the one extinguished by Polycarp's blood (*Mart. Pol.* 17.2). Yet, the need for the centurion to place Polycarp's body in the middle of the stadium in order to burn it (*Mart. Pol.* 18.1) would imply that it had previously been removed to some other location.

64. All of which must have either been consumed or would have been ruined in the process of the fire's being extinguished by Polycarp's blood (*Mart. Pol.* 16.1). Even if extra wood was available, the complete consumption of a human body by fire requires a very high temperature flame. Funeral pyres were usually stuffed with papyrus in order to achieve the necessary high temperatures, but even with the specialized skills of Roman funeral directors accidents are recorded (e.g. Plutarch, *Ti. Gracch.* 13.5; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 7.53). Kyle, *Spectacles*

this claim, it is perhaps more useful to explore why it may have seemed important to incorporate the final disposal of the body into the context of the *spectaculum*. The narrative of the final disposal of the saint's remains is concerned with the ongoing veneration of the martyr and the ability for the Christian community in Smyrna to "have a share in his holy flesh (κοινωνῆσαι τῷ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ σαρκίῳ)" (*Mart. Pol.* 17.1). By narrating the events surrounding the contest over the body, its cremation, and the Christians' careful collecting of the bones as part of the larger contest between Polycarp and the display of Roman power, the final defeat of imperial power and triumph of Christ in the person of the saint is made evident. Nicetas participated with Herod in the arrest of Polycarp and the initial interrogation on the way to Smyrna, hence he is associated with the exercise of power and authority that brought about the martyr's death. And, as in the case of Polycarp's arrest, trial, and execution, Nicetas initially seems to have succeeded by preventing the Christians from claiming the body for burial. However, despite his apparent triumph, Nicetas' attempt ultimately fails, as the Christians are not prevented from gathering Polycarp's cremated remains and are in fact able to "have a share in his holy flesh" through the ongoing veneration of the martyr (*Mart. Pol.* 18.2-3). There may even be a way in which the saint's remains, bestowed upon the Christian community at the end of the contest, serve as the church's στέφανος and βραβεῖον, prizes won because of its steadfastness, just as Polycarp could claim the fruits of his victory.

By locating all of the events associated with Polycarp's martyrdom from his trial through to the cremation and collection of his remains in the stadium and, thus, incorporating them into the *spectaculum*, *Mart. Pol.* emphasizes the performative and representational nature of his death. The arena, as much as the stage, was a place where myths and historical events were reenacted and displayed for the audience. Unlike performances on the stage, however, which were often viewed with suspicion and derision by Roman authors because they displayed mere fictions, the representations in the arena were <u>real</u>. The battles reenacted in the *naumachia* were

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of Death, 169–71. On the use of papyrus in funeral pyres, Martial, *Epig.* 8.44.14; 10.97.1.

really fought, with real ships, real danger, and actual casualties. *Venationes* involved real wild animals, amongst scenery meant to evoke actual wild landscapes. Gladiatorial battles were fought with real weapons and the gladiators were truly fighting for their lives, not merely putting on mock displays of skill. And in the fatal charades *damnati* actualized mythic narratives, making real through their actual deaths such stories as the immolation of Hercules, the union of Pasiphae and the bull, and the death of Dirce.[65] Yet, despite the focus on the reality of what was represented in the fatal charades, ancient descriptions suggest that it was not necessary to include every detail or to conform precisely to a traditional form of the mythic narrative nor was it required to have elaborate costumes and staging. As discussed above, all the audience needed to be able to see the reality of myth unfolding on the sands before them were enough narrative clues and/or distinctive props or costumes to identify the mythic story being reenacted. On a basic level, a group of female prisoners could become Danaids simply by being sent into the arena carrying jugs.[66] In fact, divergence from the expected version of a myth seems to have been common when the condemned was placed in the role of a character who would not have traditionally been the victim (e.g. Orpheus or Daedalus). In these cases, the story was generally given an ironic twist, humiliating the victims in their dramatic *personae*, as well as resulting in physical suffering and/or death.[67]

Both the tendency to view the arena as the setting in which mythic reenactments are made real and the fact that it was not necessary for these representations to conform precisely to traditional forms of the story, as long as there were sufficient clues for the audience to identify

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65. This tendency to emphasize the reality of arena spectacles has been noted by a number of scholars. For example, see Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 67–68, 73; Kathleen M. Coleman, "Launching Into History," 71–73; Kathleen M. Coleman, *Liber Spectaculorum*, 82–84; Magnus Wistrand, *Entertainment and Violence in Ancient Rome: The Attitudes of Roman Writers of the First Century A.D.* (Göteburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1992), 20–21, 69.

66. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 61, 65–66.

67. Kathleen M. Coleman, "Fatal Charades," 67.

the myth being portrayed, have interesting implications for the analysis of *Mart. Pol.* A number of less prominent aspects that would not normally have occurred in the arena, such as Polycarp's removing his clothes prior to being bound to the stake (*Mart. Pol.* 13.2), are brought into the context of the *spectaculum*, thus taking on an added significance due to this performative environment.[68] While it was standard procedure for *damnati* to be stripped prior to execution, this was normally done before they were led into the arena. However, since Polycarp is tried in the stadium and then immediately executed, the removal of his clothing becomes part of the spectacle. This also means that any potential allusions to Christ's passion are amplified because they are narrated as taking place in a context in which representation and reenactment are made real. Hence, what might otherwise be dismissed as the inclusion of a practical detail (e.g. the removal of Polycarp's clothing) must be given greater weight as a potential allusion to the passion narrative because it occurs in the context of the *spectaculum*. The presence of often significant narrative disparities between Polycarp's martyrdom and the passion accounts in the gospels should not be taken automatically as an indication that *Mart. Pol.* does not portray Polycarp's death as an imitation of Christ's. And if Polycarp's martyrdom is narrated as a reenactment of Jesus' death, in the context of the arena such a reenactment should be understood as making Christ's passion real for the audience of the spectacle (in this case, the audience of the text as much as, if not more than, the spectators in the stadium).

There are also a number of smaller narrative divergences that are more difficult to interpret and that might indicate an attempt to stretch the context of the *spectaculum* to include as much of the narrative of *Mart. Pol.* as possible. Assuming that the other martyrs discussed in *Mart. Pol.* 2-3 are executed during a *spectaculum* (which is strongly suggested by the fact that at least a few of them are sentenced to *damnatio ad bestias*), these games would have had a to be

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68. These elements are generally shifted into the arena context as a result of the inclusion of the trial and cremation there.

extraordinarily lengthy for them to still be in progress at the time of Polycarp's arrest.[69] However, if the *spectaculum* during which Germanicus and the others were executed had concluded prior to Polycarp's arrest and trial, why was there such a vast crowd gathered in the stadium when Polycarp was brought in? Is it simply that news traveled ahead to Smyrna that Polycarp has been arrested?[70] But in that case, why hold the trial in the stadium if the proconsul and the populace were not gathered there already for the games? Would it not have been easier to hold the trial at or near the proconsul's residence?[71]

Several other aspects of the narrative seem a bit strained. First, it seems rather unlikely that the spectators would leave their seats in order to go and gather wood for the pyre (*Mart. Pol.* 13.1). Even if Polycarp's execution took place during the games, except for a few elite

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69. While the great imperial *spectacula* in Rome occasionally lasted for weeks or very rarely even months (as in the case of the spectacles sponsored by Titus to celebrate the inauguration of the Flavian amphitheater), advertisements for local games preserved at Pompeii and inscriptions commemorating *spectacula* from other parts of the empire indicate that the majority of provincial spectacles lasted for at most a couple of days. The longest *spectaculum* advertised at Pompeii lasted for five days, but the majority are for only a single day or perhaps two. Mary Beard, *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 264–65. A calendar from Ostia that describes Trajan's monumental shows, lasting 123 days, held to celebrate his conquest of Dacia indicates that this multi-day *spectaculum* was not held in one continuous stretch, but broken into smaller segments (blocks of twelve to thirteen days for the preliminary games in 107 and 108 CE, with the main show of 117 days held in small segments between June 108 and November 109). Keith Hopkins and Mary Beard, *The Colosseum*, Wonders of the World (London: Profile Books, 2005), 51. While it is possible that there may have been a "gap" of several days in the middle of a two or three day *spectaculum*, this seems highly unlikely, particularly as this kind of spacing out of shorter *spectacula* is not seen in the advertisements from Pompeii.

70. The account of the riot of the silversmiths in Acts 19: 23-41 indicates that crowds might gather in such locations in response to a crisis. Hence, it is quite possible that the crowd gathered for Polycarp's trial and execution may have also been a spontaneous gathering.

71. It is possible of course that the trial may have been held in the stadium in order to accommodate the large number of spectators. However, the crowd's demand that Polycarp be exposed to a lion and Philip the Asiarch's response that this was not possible because the *venatio* had already been concluded (*Mart. Pol.* 12.2) implies that the *spectaculum* was still in progress (otherwise the crowd would have been aware that it was necessary to hold Polycarp until the next *spectaculum* or to execute him by some other means).

individuals (such as magistrates), there was no reserved seating. Hence, one would hardly expect the majority of the crowd to relinquish their seats in order to gather firewood. Not to mention the time it would take for large numbers of people to get in and out of the stadium.[72] Stadia adapted for *spectacula* had significant barriers designed to prevent animals from attacking spectators or the accidental injury of audience members by battling gladiators, which also would have prevented the crowd from easily accessing the arena in order to assist in constructing the pyre. In addition, the chronology given in *Mart. Pol.* 15-16 is unclear. The usual procedure would have been to remove the victims from the arena after the sentence had been carried out, after which their throats would have been slit in order to ensure they were dead.[73] There do seem to have been instances where the crowd insisted on being able to see the final death blow (e.g. *Passio Perp.* 21.7), but there is no indication that this was the case in *Mart. Pol*. Regardless, unless the fire had died down significantly, it would have been difficult for the *confector* to stab Polycarp with a dagger without removing him from the fire or extinguishing the flames. That neither occurred seems to be implied by the "miracle" of the fire being extinguished by Polycarp's blood.[74]

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72. Stadia did not usually have *vomitoria* or other architectural elements that allowed for efficient traffic flow into and out of the seating areas. Even in the great monumental stadia with permanent stone seating, like that at Aphrodisias, the seats were constructed on earthen banks around the track. For a description of the stadium at Aphrodisias, see Katherine Elizabeth Welch, "The Stadium at Aphrodisias," *American Journal of Archaeology* 102, no. 3 (1998): 547–69.

73. This seems to have often taken place outside the arena in the *spoliarium*. The use of the *spoliarium* for this purpose is clear both from comments made by Seneca (*Ep.* 93.12) and in SHA *Comm.* 18.3, 5; 19.1, 3. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 158–59.

74. The "miracle" of the fire being extinguished by Polycarp's blood clearly has strong symbolic meaning for *Mart. Pol.*'s Christian audience and should perhaps be read less as a historical event and more as an indication of the meaning of his death. Read symbolically, it represents Polycarp's victory over the devil, whose eternal flames the martyr has escaped (*Mart. Pol.* 11.2), and perhaps also the end of the persecution in Smyrna, which is brought about by Polycarp's execution (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1). The extinguishing of the fire could also be seen as the fulfillment of prophesy, especially given the declaration which follows claiming that all of

> πέρας γοῦν ἰδόντες οἱ ἄνομοι μὴ δυνάμενον αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα ὑπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς δαπανηθῆναι, ἐκέλευσαν προσελθόντα αὐτῷ κομφέκτορα παραβῦσαι ξιφίδιον. καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσαντος, ἐξῆλθεν περιστερὰ καὶ πλῆθος αἵματος, ὥστε κατασβέσαι τὸ πῦρ καὶ θαυμάσαι πάντα τὸν ὄχλον, εἰ τοσαύτη τις διαφορὰ μεταξὺ τῶν τε ἀπίστων καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν·
> ("At last then, the lawless ones seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, they ordered an executioner going up to stick a dagger in him. And when he had done this, a dove and a great quantity of blood came out, so that the fire was quenched and the whole crowd marveled that there could be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect") (*Mart. Pol.* 16.1)

Yet, if the fire had died down enough to make it possible for the *confector* to stab Polycarp easily, there would be no justification for the crowd's astonishment.[75] Also, at some point the body must have been moved, since it is brought back into the middle of the stadium to be cremated (*Mart. Pol.* 18.1), even though there is no indication in the narrative that this was the case.

Conclusions

Having examined in detail the use of spectacle motifs and gospel parallels in *Mart. Pol.* it is possible to draw a number of conclusions. First, the author has a basic knowledge of the customs and typical vocabulary of the *spectacula*. Hence, any deviations from the expected sequence of events or locations of various elements are almost certainly intentional, rather than resulting from ignorance. Second, the narrative of *Mart. Pol.* contains both departures from the expected chronology of a provincial *spectaculum* and shifts of events from their usual location into the arena.[76] These alterations of the expected chronology and location of events are usually

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Polycarp's statements have been or will be fulfilled (*Mart. Pol.* 16.2, the prophesy being Polycarp's statement to the proconsul in 11.2).

75. In its current form *Mart. Pol.* implies that the crowd was astonished by the vast flow of blood. However, it is equally likely that they would have been amazed by Polycarp's ability to withstand the fire for so long. What immediately follows (*Mart. Pol.* 16.2) suggests that the crowd's amazement was tied to the extinguishing of the fire in order to draw attention to Polycarp's new redeemed state and his elevated status as a martyr and prophet.

76. E.g. chronological departures: the apparent extension of the *spectaculum* over several days in order to allow time for Polycarp's arrest, the implied pause to allow the spectators to gather wood for Polycarp's pyre; location shifts: Polycarp's trial (from the tribune

made in order to incorporate all of the events related to Polycarp's martyrdom into the context of the arena. Hence, these events take on aspects of the meanings and ideology of the *spectacula* and should be read through this lens. Third, the expected power and authority of the Roman officials is consistently transferred to the martyrs, who are portrayed as being entirely in control of the events as they unfold. It is the Christian *damnati*, rather than the Roman magistrates and spectators, who demonstrate the Roman virtues of courage and self-control. Rather than experiencing the humiliation and loss of dignity which would normally be associated with executions in the arena, the martyrs are portrayed as noble, dignified, and unafraid. Fourth, there are no indications that the author(s) sought to portray Polycarp's death as a literal, "movie script-like" reenactment of the passion narrative. Instead, attention is drawn to narrative elements that allude to similar elements in the stories of Christ's death or imply similarities between Jesus and Polycarp. This is very similar to the use of key narrative details and characteristic props in the fatal charades.

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in the forum or the proconsul's residence), the cremation of the martyr's body (from near the site of the tomb or some other suitable location outside the city).

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS

A literary "fatal charade"

Polycarp was executed in the arena, in the context of a *spectaculum*. Hence, those who witnessed his death would naturally interpret it through the lens of the *spectacula*. This is certainly true of the author(s) of *Mart. Pol.* who sought to record and interpret the event for the larger Christian community. By reading the gospel parallels within the context of the *spectaculum*, the use of the narrative techniques of the fatal charades becomes clear. Just as the fatal charades employ characteristic props and narrative elements without attempting to develop a linear, "movie-script" reenactment of the mythological narrative, *Mart. Pol.* uses gospel parallels to construct a literary fatal charade. Significant narrative details are emphasized in order to stress the parallels with the passion, without presenting Polycarp's martyrdom as a literal reenactment of Christ's death. Instead, the parallels point to Polycarp's identity as a representation of Christ. Just as the fatal charades imaged mythological and historical events for Roman arena spectators, *Mart. Pol.* presents Polycarp's death as a representation of the passion, an image of the gospel narrative.

By incorporating all of the events related to Polycarp's martyrdom into the context of the arena, the ancient audience's interpretation of them would have been shaped by the cultural meanings and ideologies of the *spectacula*. The various narrative parallels and allusions to the passion narratives serve to present the text as a literary fatal charade. By locating events that would not normally have taken place in the arena (such as the trial and disposal of the corpse) within the context of the *spectaculum*, these events take on new meanings. The entire narrative, from the call for Polycarp's arrest to the gathering of his bodily remains, becomes a "performance" in the arena, the place where reality is enacted and made manifest. In addition, by

embedding all of the critical aspects of the events surrounding Polycarp's death in the *spectaculum*, *Mart. Pol.* emphasizes the parallels with the passion narrative, which also includes a trial and the disposal (in this case entombment) of the body. Hence, while the cremation of Polycarp's body does not itself contain any specific narrative parallels to the gospels, it does function as a structural parallel to the passion narrative.[1] By locating this event in the arena, its identity as part of the fatal charade is made manifest.

At the same time, *Mart. Pol.* uses the cultural understanding of the *spectacula* to subvert Roman expectations regarding executions in the arena. The emphasis on Polycarp's dignity and authority reverses the audience's perception of the *damnatus* "playing" the leading role in the charade. A significant purpose of the fatal charades was to increase the humiliation and suffering of the *damnati* and to emphasize the power and authority of Rome. However, *Mart. Pol.* portrays the Christian *damnati* not as humiliated and dishonored, but as meriting ever greater dignity and honor through their reenactment of Christ's death. Polycarp and his fellow martyrs are victorious by means of the performance of their confessions of Christianity.[2] And it is God, in union with Christ, who is ultimately in control of the unfolding spectacle.

The overall result is that Polycarp's martyrdom is presented as a representation of the death of Christ performed before the Christian "audience" of the text. Just as the fatal charades in the Roman arena were designed to make mythological and historical events real and present for the spectators and to proclaim the power of the emperor who sponsored the event, Polycarp's reenactment of the passion makes the saving acts of Christ real and concrete for the Christian audience and proclaims the power and authority of God. Polycarp becomes "sacrament" of the crucified Christ (at least as presented in *Mart. Pol.*), by becoming a corporeal representation of

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1. The explicit statement that the martyrs are "disciples and imitators of the Lord" (*Mart. Pol.* 17.3: μαθητὰς καὶ μιμητὰς τοῦ κυρίου) immediately prior to Polycarp's cremation may be a way of drawing attention to the structural parallel with the passion.

2. Germanicus' death is perhaps the most obvious example of a performed confession (*Mart. Pol.* 3.1).

the passion and a concrete manifestation of the saving promises of God. Hence, the ongoing veneration of Polycarp, through the community's having a share in his holy flesh (*Mart. Pol.* 17.1) and reading the narrative of his martyrdom,[3] becomes a means of sharing in this "sacrament." Through experiencing the reality of Christ's triumph over death in Polycarp's martyrdom, others are strengthened and prepared to undergo similar contests (*Mart. Pol.* 18.3).

Questions for future study

The complex interaction between the *spectaculum* context of Polycarp's martyrdom and the use of gospel parallels seen in *Mart. Pol.* raises a number of questions. Do other early *acta martyrum* employ a similar use of the motifs of the *spectacula* and/or also present martyrdom as a fatal charade of the passion? If so, are these motifs seen only in *acta martyrum* that narrate deaths in the arena or are they also seen in accounts of simple beheading? If they are only found in stories of martyrs executed during *spectacula*, this may provide clues to the origin of this understanding of martyrdom. Examining later *acta martyrum* from the third and fourth centuries could provide further insights in the development of this model, particularly if stories of those executed outside of the arena come to be presented as fatal charades.

Mart. Pol.'s presentation of Polycarp's death as a reenactment of the passion narrative raises questions regarding how the literary fatal charade might be interacting with liturgical celebrations. This is particularly true for those liturgical celebrations that are increasingly coming to be understood as representations or reenactments of the passion during the first three centuries, particularly baptism and eucharist.[4] The theological link between baptism and

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3. Rordorf proposes that *Mart. Pol.* may have been composed at least partially for the purpose of being read during the anniversary celebration of Polycarp's *dies natalis*. Rordorf, "Aux origines du culte des martyrs," 368–72. That *Mart. Pol.* would have been read during the commemoration of Polycarp's martyrdom is certainly plausible. However, it is also possible that the memorial involved a less formal recollection and narration of these events.

4. A theological connection between Christ's death and the celebrations of baptism and eucharist is already clear in the Pauline epistles (e.g. Rom 6:3-11; 1 Cor 10:16; 11:23-29; Col 2:12). It is the understanding of these sacraments as representations of the passion that makes

martyrdom is well known. Tertullian speaks of martyrdom as a second baptism in blood, capable of cleansing post-baptismal sin and able to serve in place of water baptism.[5] Cyprian speaks of martyrdom as a baptism that is richer in grace and more sublime in power than that of water.[6] As early as the beginning of the second century, Ignatius seems to link baptism and martyrdom when he speaks of "living water" calling within for him to come to the Father.[7] The close association

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the eucharistic and baptismal imagery of the *acta martyrum* so effective.

5. Tertullian, *De baptismo* 16: *Est quidem nobis etiam secundum lavacrum, unum et ipsum, sanguinis scilicet, de quo dominos Habeo, inquit, baptismo tingui, cum iam tinctus fuisset. venerat enim per aquam et sanguinem, sicut Ioannes scripsit, ut aqua tingueretur sanguine glorificaretur. proinde nos faceret aqua vocatos sanguine electos hos duos baptismos de vulnere percussi lateris emisit, quia qui in sanguinem eius crederent aqua lavarentur, qui aqua lavissent et sanguine oporterent. hic est baptismus qui lavacrum et non acceptum repraesentat et perditum reddit.* ("Indeed, we also have a second washing, it too a single one, namely that of blood, about which the Lord said, 'I have a baptism with which I will be bathed, when he had already been bathed. For he had come through water and blood, just as John wrote, so as to be bathed with water and to be glorified with blood. Likewise, that he might make our calling by water and our election by blood, he sent these two baptisms from the wound of his pierced side, because those who believed in his blood are washed in water, those who washed in water also ought [to be washed] in blood. This is the baptism which both stands in place of [*Or: represents*] the washing that was not received and restores that which was lost.") It is striking that Tertullian speaks of martyrdom as serving as representing (*repraesentare*) baptism, as though it is was its ability to image the sacrament that produces its efficacy. Given the explicit connection to Christ's death, one wonders if in fact it is the ability of both martyrdom and baptism to "represent" the passion that gives both the ability to effect salvation.

6. Cyprian, *Epist.* 73.22.2: *Sciant igitur... catecuminos illos primo integram fidem et ecclesiae ueritatem tenere et ad debellandum diabolum de diuinis castris cum plena et sincera dei patris et Christi et spiritus sancti cognitione procedere, deinde nec priuari baptismi sacramento, utpote qui baptizentur gloriosissimo et maximo sanguinis baptismo* ("Know, therefore, first that catechumens who hold the pure faith and the truth of the Church and march forward from the divine camp to vanquish the devil with full and sincere knowledge of God the Father and Christ and the Holy Spirit, then that they are not deprived of the sacrament of baptism, since they are baptized with the most glorious and greatest baptism of blood").

7. Ignatius, *Rom.* 7.2: ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοι πῦρ φιλόϋλον· ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν καὶ λαλοῦν ἐν ἐμοί, ἔσωθέν μοι λέγον· δεῦρο πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. ("My passion has been crucified and there is no burning love within me for material things; instead there is living water, which also is speaking in me, saying to me from within: 'Come to the Father.'")

of baptism and martyrdom is likely to have effected both the development of the baptismal rite and how stories of martyrdom were told.

While less explicit than the link with baptism, martyrdom also came to be associated with the eucharist. Rather than being a "second eucharist," however, the link between the two was instead due to common sacrificial themes and an understanding of the eucharist as Christ's self-offering for the community. In a similar way, martyrs also offered themselves for the community, giving their very lives in order to make Christ manifest for others. These sacrificial themes are apparent in the parallels that have been noted between Polycarp's prayer in the arena and the eucharistic anaphora (*Mart. Pol.* 14).[8] Polycarp is also described as a sacrificial offering, further emphasizing the eucharistic associations of Polycarp's prayer.[9] Similar associations between the martyr and the eucharistic offering are seen in other Christian texts. For example, Ignatius longs to be transformed into the eucharistic bread and to become a sacrifice through his martyrdom.[10] Cyprian speaks of the eucharistic celebration as a preparation for martyrdom, training Christians to offer themselves in imitation of Christ.[11] This understanding of the martyr

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Translation from Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 1.279.

8. J. Armitage Robinson, "Liturgical Echoes in Polycarp's Prayer"; J. Armitage Robinson, "The 'Apostolic Anaphora' and the Prayer of St Polycarp"; Tyrer, "The Prayer of St Polycarp and Its Concluding Doxology"; Tripp, "Prayer of St Polycarp."

9. *Mart. Pol.* 14.1: ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω τὰς χεῖρας ποιήσας καὶ προσδεθείς, ὥσπερ κριὸς ἐπίσημος ἐκ μεγάλου ποιμνίου εἰς προσφοράν, ὁλοκαύτωμα δεκτὸν τῷ θεῷ ἡτοιμασμένον, ("And having placed his hands behind him and having been tied, just as a remarkable ram from a great flock for an offering, prepared as a burnt offering acceptable to God").

10. Ignatius, *Rom.* 4.1-2: ἄφετέ με θηρίων εἶναι βοράν, δι' ὧν ἔνεστιν θεοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν. σῖτός εἰμι θεοῦ καὶ δι' ὀδόντων θηρίων ἀλήθομαι, ἵνα καθαρὸς ἄρτος εὑρεθῶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ... λιτανεύσατε τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπὲρ ἐμοῦ, ἵνα διὰ τῶν ὀργάνων τούτων θεοῦ θυσία εὑρεθῶ. ("Allow me to be bread for the wild beasts; through them I am able to attain to God. I am the wheat of God and am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found to be the pure bread of Christ... Petition Christ on my behalf, that I may be found a sacrifice through these instruments of God.") Translation from Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 1.275.

11. Cyprian, *Epist.* 63.15: *Sic ergo incipit et a passione Christi in persecutionibus*

as embodying the eucharistic sacrifice seems to be related to the presentation of martyrdom as a reenactment of Jesus' death, in which the martyr represents or images Christ. Hence, the martyr's role is similar to that of eucharist: making the crucified Christ present to the community. Given this complex symbolic interaction between martyrdom and the eucharist, is there some interaction between the use of the motifs of the *spectacula* in these texts and the development of the eucharistic liturgy?[12] The celebration of the eucharist was increasingly understood as a reenactment of the passion between the first and the fourth centuries. Is there some interplay between the conception of martyrdom as a fatal charade and the increasing tendency to see the eucharist as a dramatic reenactment?

Transformation and joy

Modern readers of these texts are often startled by the martyrs' consistent expression of

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fraternitas retardari, dum in oblationibus discit de sanguine eius et cruore confundi. Porro autem dominus in euangelio dicit: qui confusus me fuerit, confundetur eum filius hominis. Et apostolus quoque loquitur dicens: si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem. Quomodo autem possumus propter Christum sanguinem fundere, qui sanguinem Christi erubescimus bibere? ("So therefore, the brotherhood begins to be held back even from the passion of Christ in persecution, while in oblations they learn to be disturbed [*Or: disconcerted*] by his [i.e. Christ's] blood and bloodshed. Moreover, the Lord says in the gospel, 'The one who will be disturbed [*Or: disconcerted*] on account of me, of him will the Son of Man be disturbed [*Or: disconcerted*].' And the apostle also speaks saying, 'If I was approved by people, I would not be a servant *[Or: slave]* of Christ.' In what manner then can we shed blood on account of Christ, we who blush to drink Christ's blood?") Cf. John D. Laurance, *Priest as Type of Christ: The Leader of the Eucharist in Salvation History According to Cyprian of Carthage* (New York: P. Lang, 1984), 185–88.

12. There is evidence that the *acta martyrum* were read in the context of eucharistic celebrations held to commemorate the martyrs by the end of the fourth century (at least in North Africa), as the Council of Carthage (397 CE) explicitly permitted the reading of *acta martyrum* as part of the celebration of the anniversaries of the martyrs. It is likely that this practice was well established prior to the council's declaration. Bremmer, "Perpetua and Her Diary," 80. Rordorf suggests that one of the reasons for *Mart. Pol.*'s composition may have been in preparation for its being read (or at least portions of it) in the context of the celebration of the anniversary of Polycarp's death. Rordorf, "Aux origines du culte des martyrs," 368–72.

joy. However, the martyrs' joy is not the result of a love for suffering for its own sake or a rejection of the material world through a love for death. Rather, it is a product of the need to transform the meaning of their death from a Roman narrative of the execution of a justly condemned criminal to the Christian one of a heroic martyrdom. The martyr's joy is a concrete expression of courage and fearlessness in the face of death, as well as of enduring confidence in God's promises. By performing this fatal charade, the martyrs are not humiliated, but exalted. The might of Rome is subjected to the power of God, in the very context designed to proclaim Rome's authority. The martyrs' joy also displays the sacramental and communal nature of martyrdom by acknowledging their privilege to image Christ for the community and to make concrete the saving mystery of the cross. Their fatal charade continues the work of the incarnation by making Christ manifest in becoming "imitators of the Lord" (μιμητὰς τοῦ κυρίου; *Mart. Pol.* 17.3). Through their witness, the martyrs draw others to follow them in living "according to the gospel of Christ" (κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ) and imitating their martyrdom (*Mart. Pol.* 19.1).

When the Christians in Smyrna responded to the church in Philomelium's request for an account of their bishop's execution, they interpreted Polycarp's death through the lens of the *spectacula* and the model of the gospels. The result is a literary fatal charade, Christ's crucifixion made real and manifest in their midst. Just as the myth of Pasiphae must be believed because it is seen, reading *Mart. Pol.* will lead others to imitate the one who

> διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καταγωνισάμενος τὸν ἄδικον ἄρχοντα καὶ οὕτως τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στέφανον ἀπολαβών, σὺν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ πᾶσιν δικαίοις ἀγαλλιώμενος δοξάζει τὸν θεὸν καὶ πατέρα καὶ εὐλογεῖ τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν σωτῆρα τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν καὶ κυβερνήτην τῶν σωμάτων ἡμῶν καὶ ποιμένα τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας.
> ("Through endurance having prevailed against the unjust ruler and thus received the crown of immortality, rejoicing with the apostles and all the righteous he magnifies God the Father and he blesses our Lord Jesus Christ, the savior of our souls and pilot of our bodies and shepherd of the universal church throughout the world.") (*Mart. Pol.* 19.2)

Supplementary Material

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Gospel parallels and allusions

Table of passages of *Mart. Pol.* containing gospel parallels or allusions, the corresponding gospel texts, and a categorization of the gospel reference (with a brief analysis):

***Mart. Pol.* text**	**Gospel text**	**parallel type**
Mart. Pol. 1.2: περιέμενεν γάρ, ἵνα παραδοθῇ, ὡς καὶ ὁ κύριος, ἵνα μιμηταὶ καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοῦ γενώμεθα ("For he [i.e. Polycarp] waited, in order that he might be betrayed, as also the Lord did, in order that we might also be imitators of him.")[1]	Matthew 26:2: Οἴδατε ὅτι μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας τὸ πάσχα γίνεται, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς τὸ σταυρωθῆναι. ("You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.")[2] Matthew 26:45: τότε ἔρχεται πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Καθεύδετε [τὸ] λοιπὸν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθε· ἰδοὺ ἤγγικεν ἡ ὥρα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς χεῖρας ἁμαρτωλῶν. ("Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.'") Cf. Mark 14:41. Luke 24:7: λέγων τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὅτι δεῖ παραδοθῆναι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ	Declared narrative parallel

1. Text of *Mart. Pol.* is from Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 1.366–400. Translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

2. Translations of biblical passages are taken from the NRSV unless otherwise noted.

	σταυρωθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστῆναι. ("saying that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again")	
Mart. Pol. 5.1: καὶ ὑπεξῆλθεν εἰς ἀγρίδιον οὐ μακρὰν ἀπέχον ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως καὶ διέτριβεν μετ᾽ ὀλίγων, νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐδὲν ἕτερον ποιῶν ἢ προσευχόμενος περὶ πάντων καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐκκλησίων, ὅπερ ἦν σύνηθες αὐτῷ. ("And he went out to a small country house not far from the city and he waited with a few others, night and day doing nothing other than praying on behalf of all people and the churches throughout the world, just as was customary for him.")	Possible parallel to Jesus' going out to the garden of Gethsemane prior to his arrest (cf. Matt 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46; John 18:1). However, the language is significantly different (Matt and Mark refer to the place as a χωρίον; John calls it a κῆπος; Luke only says that they went out to the Mount of Olives, εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν). The content of Polycarp's intercessory prayer is significantly different from the struggle and anguish of Jesus' prayer in the synoptics (John does not mention Jesus praying at Gethsemane at all). Only John gives any indication of the location of the garden with respect to the city (πέραν τοῦ Κεδρὼν τοῦ χειμάρρου), although in order to know that it was "not far from the city" one would have to know the relative locations of Jerusalem and the Kedron Valley. Polycarp moves on to a second country house before his arrest (*Mart. Pol.* 6.1), further decreasing the parallel.	Possible, but unlikely, narrative allusion
Mart. Pol. 5.2: καὶ προσευχόμενος ἐν ὀπτασίᾳ γέγονεν πρὸ τριῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ συλληφθῆναι αὐτόν, καὶ εἶδεν τὸ προσκεφάλαιον αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ πυρὸς κατακαιόμενον· καὶ στραφεὶς εἶπεν πρὸς τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ· δεῖ με ζῶντα καυθῆναι. ("And while praying three days before he was seized, he had a vision and he saw his pillow being burned up by fire. And turning to those with him, he said, 'It is necessary for me to be burned alive.'")	Narrative parallel to Jesus' passion predictions. Matthew 20:19: καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι καὶ μαστιγῶσαι καὶ σταυρῶσαι, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθήσεται. ("Then they will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised.") Matthew 26:2 Οἴδατε ὅτι μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας τὸ πάσχα γίνεται, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς τὸ σταυρωθῆναι. ("You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.")	Undeclared narrative parallel; no clear linguistic parallels; the temporal indication (*Mart. Pol.* 5.2: πρὸ τριῶν ἡμερῶν; Matt 26:2: μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας τὸ πάσχα) is given by the narrator in *Mart. Pol.* and by Jesus in Matt

	Cf. Luke 24:7. Matt 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22 all use δεῖ in relation to the passion prediction, but do not give a means of death.	
Mart. Pol. 6.1-2: καὶ μὴ εὑρόντες συνελάβοντο παιδάρια δύο, ὧν τὸ ἕτερον βασανιζόμενον ὡμολόγησεν. ἦν γὰρ καὶ ἀδύνατον λαθεῖν αὐτόν, ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ προδιδόντες αὐτὸν οἰκεῖοι ὑπῆρχον. ... οἱ δὲ προδόντες αὐτὸν τὴν αὐτοῦ τοῦ Ἰούδα ὑπόσχοιεν τιμωρίαν. ("And not finding [him] they seized two young slaves, one of whom, having been tortured, confessed. For it was impossible for him to escape notice, since even those handing him over were members of his household. ... and those who handed him over might undergo the punishment of Judas himself.")	(1) Judas is referred to as εἷς τῶν δώδεκα (Matt 26:14; Mark 14:10, 43; Luke 22:47), ὄντα ἐκ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ τῶν δώδεκα (Luke 22:3), εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα (John 6:71), εἷς [ἐκ] τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ (John 12:4), hence he could be considered an οἰκεῖος of Jesus. However, the confession of a young slave under torture could only be considered to be loosely equivalent to Judas' intentional and uncoerced betrayal of Jesus (especially given the expectation in the ancient world that slaves would confess under torture). The narrative allusion is only made clear by the explicit comparison of οἱ προδόντες and Judas in the following sentence, which claims that those who betrayed Polycarp would suffer Judas' punishment. However, as the fate of the slave is not mentioned in *Mart. Pol.*, it is not possible to tell which version of Judas' fate is meant (Matt 27:3-10; Acts 1:18-19; or some other tradition). (2) Another possibility would be to see "ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ προδιδόντες αὐτὸν οἰκεῖοι ὑπῆρχον" as the fulfillment of Jesus' prophesy in Matt 10:36, "καὶ ἐχθροὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οἱ οἰκιακοὶ αὐτοῦ. [and one's foes will be members of one's own household]" (Cf. Mic 7:6: διότι υἱὸς ἀτιμάζει πατέρα, θυγάτηρ ἐπαναστήσεται ἐπὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτῆς, νύμφη ἐπὶ τὴν πενθερὰν αὐτῆς, ἐχθροὶ ἀνδρὸς πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες οἱ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ. ["for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; your enemies are members of your own household"])	(1) Declared narrative parallel (2) Possible secondary textual allusion (The use of οἰκεῖοι by *Mart. Pol.* rather than Matt's οἰκιακοί does not negate the possibility of this being a textual allusion, especially as οἰκεῖοι is by far the more common term. The even greater textual difference between the LXX version of Mic 7:6 and Matt 10:36, despite the fact that it seems quite likely that Matt is referencing Mic here, would imply that the concept was more important than the particular phrasing. The same thing is clearly true in the case of *Mart. Pol.* 6.2, especially as the primary allusion is to Judas.)

Mart. Pol. 6.2: καὶ ὁ εἰρήναρχος, ὁ κεκληρωμένος τὸ αὐτὸ ὄνομα, Ἡρώδης ἐπιλεγόμενος, ἔσπευδεν εἰς τὸ στάδιον αὐτὸν εἰσαγαγεῖν, ἵνα ἐκεῖνος μὲν τὸν ἴδιον κλῆρον ἀπαρτίσῃ, Χριστοῦ κοινωνὸς γενόμενος... ("And the police chief, who was assigned the same name, being named Herod, was eager to lead him [i.e. Polycarp] into the stadium, so that he might complete his own destiny, becoming a partner with Christ...")	Only in Luke is Herod implicated in Jesus' death. In addition to Pilate's sending Jesus to Herod for interrogation after his arrest (Luke 23:6-12), some of the Pharisees come to Jesus to warn him that Herod wishes to kill him, although Jesus makes it clear that he must die in Jerusalem and not under Herod's power (Luke 13:31-33: Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ προσῆλθάν τινες Φαρισαῖοι λέγοντες αὐτῷ, Ἔξελθε καὶ πορεύου ἐντεῦθεν, ὅτι Ἡρῴδης θέλει σε ἀποκτεῖναι. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Πορευθέντες εἴπατε τῇ ἀλώπεκι ταύτῃ, Ἰδοὺ ἐκβάλλω δαιμόνια καὶ ἰάσεις ἀποτελῶ σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ τελειοῦμαι. πλὴν δεῖ με σήμερον καὶ αὔριον καὶ τῇ ἐχομένῃ πορεύεσθαι, ὅτι οὐκ ἐνδέχεται προφήτην ἀπολέσθαι ἔξω Ἰερουσαλήμ. ["At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem."'"]). In Mark, the Herodians are among those who conspire to bring about Jesus' death and occasionally debate with him (Mark 3:6; 12:13).	Declared narrative parallel (without corresponding in details with the canonical narratives)
Mart. Pol. 7.1a: Ἔχοντες οὖν τὸ παιδάριον, τῇ παρασκευῇ περὶ δείπνου ὥραν ἐξῆλθον διωγμῖται καὶ ἱππεῖς μετὰ τῶν συνήθων αὐτοῖς ὅπλων **ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστὴν** τρέχοντες. ("Then taking the young slave, on the day of preparation around the dinner hour, the mounted police and horsemen went out with their customary weapons as though running down a robber.")	(1) In all the canonical gospels, Jesus dies on the day of preparation (cf. Matt 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14, 31, 42), rather than being arrested on that day. (2) The betrayer comes with those seeking Polycarp, just as Judas accompanies the crowd that seeks Jesus (Matt 26:47; Mark 14:43; Luke 22:47; John 18:3), although the mounted police and horsemen bring the young slave with them, whereas Judas is actively leading the crowd to Jesus.	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel (although with significant disparities) (2) Undeclared narrative parallel (3) Direct verbal allusion (ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν is an uncommon phrase,

	(3) The phrase ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστήν occurs in the synoptics in the account of Jesus' arrest (Matt 26:55 = Mark 14:48 = Luke 22:52: **ὡς ἐπὶ λῃστὴν** ἐξήλθατε μετὰ μαχαιρῶν καὶ ξύλων; ["Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit?"]). However, in the synoptic gospels, the phrase is spoken by Jesus (as part of a question addressed to the crowd), whereas in *Mart. Pol.*, it is used by the narrator to describe the behavior of those seeking Jesus. The verb used by the gospels is different from that used in *Mart. Pol.* (although *Mart. Pol.* uses ἐξέρχομαι elsewhere in the sentence, τρέχω is used in the "against a robber" phrase) and the weapons are specified in the gospels, while they are only referred to as those which are "customary" in *Mart. Pol.*	suggesting that *Mart. Pol.* is quoting the synoptic narrative[3])
Mart. Pol. 7.1b: κἀκεῖθεν δὲ ἠδύνατο εἰς ἕτερον χωρίον ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἠβουλήθη εἰπών· τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ γενέσθω. ("And he could have departed from there to another place, but he did not wish it, saying, 'May God's will be done.'")	Possible parallels include: (1) Christ's prayer of submission to God's will in the garden Matt 26:39: Πάτερ μου, εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν, παρελθάτω ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο· πλὴν οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλ᾽ ὡς σύ ("My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.") Matt 26:42: Πάτερ μου, εἰ οὐ δύναται τοῦτο παρελθεῖν ἐὰν μὴ αὐτὸ πίω, γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου ("My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.") Cf. Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42 (2) Invocation of the Father's will in the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:10: ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς· ["Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."]). (3) Paul's companion's response to Paul's insisting on going to Jerusalem,	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - the language does not correspond in any of the canonical versions, but there is a general narrative correspondence (in that Jesus could also have fled); statement is addressed by Polycarp to his companions, rather than a prayer directed to God (2) The second person language of the Lord's prayer can easily be shifted to the

3. Cf. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 401; Massaux, *Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, 46–47.

	despite Agabus' prophesy that he would be arrested if he went there: Acts 21:14: μὴ πειθομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ ἡσυχάσαμεν εἰπόντες, Τοῦ κυρίου τὸ θέλημα γινέσθω. ("Since he would not be persuaded, we remained silent except to say, 'The Lord's will be done.'")	third person in the context of narrative (e.g. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 4.8.66.1; Origen, *De oratione* 26). (3) Possible verbal allusion and undeclared narrative parallel - context in *Mart. Pol.* is quite close to that in Acts; references to "the will of God" far outnumber those to "the will of the Lord," hence the shift from τοῦ κυρίου to τοῦ θεοῦ might be inadvertent; use of the aorist γενέσθω rather than the present γινέσθω is unlikely to be significant, particularly as Chrysostom uses the aorist when quoting Acts 21:14 (Chrysostom, *In Acta apostolorum* 45.1, 3 [PG 60.315, 317]);[4] narrative difference in that this statement is made by Polycarp to justify himself to his companions, rather than a

4. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 411–12.

		declaration of acceptance by his companions, as in Acts.
Mart. Pol. 7.2-8.1: ἐξῃτήσατο δὲ αὐτούς, ἵνα δῶσιν αὐτῷ ὥραν πρὸς τὸ προσεύξασθαι ἀδεῶς. τῶν δὲ ἐπιτρεψάντων, σταθεὶς προσηύξατο πλήρης ὢν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ οὕτως, ὡς ἐπὶ δύο ὥρας μὴ δύνασθαι σιωπῆσαι καὶ ἐκπλήττεσθαι τοὺς ἀκούοντας, πολλούς τε μετανοεῖν ἐπὶ τῷ ἐληλυθέναι ἐπὶ τοιοῦτον θεοπρεπῆ πρεσβύτην. Ἐπεὶ δέ ποτε κατέπαυσεν τὴν προσευχήν, μνημονεύσας ἁπάντων καὶ τῶν πώποτε συμβεβληκότων αὐτῷ, μικρῶν τε καὶ μεγάλων, ἐνδόξων τε καὶ ἀδόξων, καὶ πάσης τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας... ("And he begged them that they might grant him an hour to pray undisturbed. And when they permitted it, standing he prayed, being so full of the grace of God as to be unable to be silent for two hours and those who heard him were astounded, and many repented having come out for such a prophetic old man. And when he finished the prayer, having remembered everyone who had met with him at any time, both small and great, both those of high esteem and those of low esteem, and the whole universal church throughout the world...")	(1) Saxer (following Camelot) sees Polycarp's extended prayer before his arrest as a parallel to Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane prior to his arrest in the synoptics (Matt 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46, in John there is no mention of Jesus praying in Gethsemane).[5] However, Polycarp's intercessory prayer in *Mart. Pol.* does not contain any of the struggle of Jesus' prayer in the garden. Polycarp's request for an hour to pray might be an allusion to Jesus' rebuke of the disciples for being unable to keep watch with him for an hour (Matt 26:40; Mark 14:37). However, Polycarp uses the indeterminate "an hour" (ὥραν) rather than the more specific "one hour" (μίαν ὥραν) in Matt and Mark (and Polycarp actually prays for two hours, not one). (2) A closer parallel, at least in terms of the content of the prayer and perhaps also the setting, would be Jesus' extended prayer at the Last Supper in John (17:1-26), which is also primarily intercessory. Polycarp's prayer is also delivered in the context of a meal, albeit not one in which he himself shares (*Mart. Pol.* 7.2), and this meal could easily be	(1) Possible, but unlikely, narrative allusion (2) Possible narrative allusion It seems more likely that this is part of the general cultural understanding of what it means to be a good bishop (attention to hospitality, care and diligence in praying for his flock, etc.) than any attempt to allude to the passion narrative.[6]

5. Victor Saxer, "The Influence of the Bible in Early Christian Martyrology," in *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*, ed. and trans. Paul M. Blowers (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 356.

6. Holmes notes that by offering his future captors hospitality by providing them with food and drink, Polycarp fulfills the role of a good host, establishing himself as their social superior and shaming his persecutors (who come to regret having come after such a "godly old man," *Mart. Pol.* 7.3). Holmes suggests that if there is any gospel parallel here, it would be the centurion's declaration of Jesus as the son of God following the crucifixion (Matt 27:54 // Mark 15:39 // Luke 23:47). However, in the narrative of *Mart. Pol.*, its primary role is to characterize Polycarp as fulfilling the ideals of Greco-Roman culture. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 424–25.

	seen as a fulfillment of Jesus' statement that "The one who ate my bread has lifted his heal against me." (John 13:18: Ὁ τρώγων μου τὸν ἄρτον ἐπῆρεν ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ τὴν πτέρναν αὐτοῦ.), particularly as the young slave who betrayed Polycarp would almost certainly have been present (cf. *Mart. Pol.* 7.1).	
Mart. Pol. 8.1: ... τῆς ὥρας ἐλθούσης τοῦ ἐξιέναι, ὄνῳ καθίσαντες αὐτὸν ἤγαγον εἰς τὴν πόλιν, ὄντος σαββάτου μεγάλου. ("... when the hour came to depart, having seated him on a donkey they led him into the city, it being a great Sabbath.")	(1) Triumphal entry into Jerusalem: Matt 21:7: ἤγαγον τὴν ὄνον καὶ τὸν πῶλον καὶ ἐπέθηκαν ἐπ᾽ αὐτῶν τὰ ἱμάτια, καὶ ἐπεκάθισεν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν. ("they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them") John 12:14-15: εὑρὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὀνάριον ἐκάθισεν ἐπ᾽ αὐτό, καθώς ἐστιν γεγραμμένον, Μὴ φοβοῦ, θυγάτηρ Σιών· ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεύς σου ἔρχεται, καθήμενος ἐπὶ πῶλον ὄνου. ("Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: 'Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!'") The triumphal entry in Mark and Luke does not include a donkey, but only a foal (πῶλον) (Mark 11:2-10; Luke 19:30-40). (2) John refers to the Sabbath following Jesus' death as a "great day" (John 19:31: ἦν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου ["for that Sabbath was a great day"][7]). Hence, John seems to be referring to the Sabbath during Passover as the "great Sabbath" or, perhaps, that it was a "great Sabbath" because the first day of the feast fell on a Sabbath. John also uses the term "great day" to refer to the last day of Sukkot (John 7:37: Ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ μεγάλῃ τῆς ἑορτῆς ["On the last day of the festival, the great day"]). Hoffman has suggested that John has	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel (although the donkey could just be a practical means of transportation) (2) Probable textual/narrative allusion to John 19:31 (the use of the term "great Sabbath" is very unusual before the 4th century (John, *Mart. Pol.*, and *Mart. Pionius*), but the narrative chronology doesn't match that of John (where the "great Sabbath" follows Jesus' death))

7. The translation here is my own.

	transformed the Jewish term "great Sabbath" into a theological rather than a strictly calendrical designation, a use of the term that was followed by *Mart. Pol.* (as a calendrical reference to the Passover is unlikely, given that the date of Polycarp's martyrdom is February 23; *Mart. Pol.* 21: μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος μηνὸς Ξανθικοῦ δευτέρᾳ ἱσταμένου, πρὸ ἑπτὰ καλανδῶν Μαρτίων, σαββάτῳ μεγάλῳ ["But the blessed Polycarp bore witness [*Or: was martyred*] on the second day of the beginning of the month of Xanthikos, February 23, on a great Sabbath"]).[8]	
Mart. Pol. 8.2-3: καὶ ὑπήντα αὐτῷ ὁ εἰρήναρχος Ἡρώδης καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ Νικήτης, οἳ καὶ μεταθέντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν καροῦχαν ἔπειθον παρακαθεζόμενοι καὶ λέγοντες· τί γὰρ κακόν ἐστιν εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Καῖσαρ, καὶ ἐπιθῦσαι καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἀκόλουθα καὶ διασώζεσθαι; ὁ δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτοῖς, ἐπιμενόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἔφη· οὐ μέλλω ποιεῖν, ὃ συμβουλεύετέ μοι. οἱ δὲ ἀποτυχόντες τοῦ πεῖσαι αὐτὸν δεινὰ ῥήματα ἔλεγον καὶ μετὰ σπουδῆς καθῄρουν αὐτόν, ὡς κατιόντα ἀπὸ τῆς καρούχας ἀποσῦραι τὸ ἀντικνήμιον. ("And the police chief Herod and his father Nicetas met	(1) Interrogation of Polycarp by Herod corresponds with Jesus' interrogation by Herod in Luke (23:6-12). Jesus refuses to answer Herod, just as Polycarp does at first (Luke 23:9: ἐπηρώτα δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν λόγοις ἱκανοῖς, αὐτὸς δὲ οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτῷ ["He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer."]). The "fearful words" (δεινὰ ῥήματα) spoken to Polycarp could be seen as a parallel to the contempt and mocking meted out to Jesus by Herod and his soldiers (Luke 23:11: ἐξουθενήσας δὲ αὐτὸν [καὶ] ὁ Ἡρῴδης σὺν τοῖς στρατεύμασιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐμπαίξας	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel (2) Possible, but unlikely, narrative parallel

8. Hoffman, "The Jewish Lectionary, the Great Sabbath, and the Lenten Calendar," 15–18. Hoffman assumes that the great Sabbath was already celebrated by Jews on the Sabbath before Passover in the second century. Yuval notes that Jewish literature before the year 1000 does not mention the term (except for a few possible references censuring the term as linked to apostasy to Christianity; e.g. *Pesikta d'Rav Kahana*, end of "this month shall be fore you") and concludes that the Jewish celebration of *Shabbat Hagadol* grew out of later developments of the Passover festival in order to create a counter-narrative to the Christian "Great Week" in the middle ages. Yuval also notes that John uses the term "great day" in clearly messianic contexts and that Sukkot is linked to messianic expectation in Zech 14. Yuval concludes that "great day" was a term used for any festival day, which John layers with messianic meaning (although he points out that it is not known whether John is drawing on a larger messianic tradition here and applying it to Jesus or developing the idea on his own). Israel J. Yuval, "Passover in the Middle Ages," in *Passover and Easter: Origen and History to Modern Times*, ed. Paul F. Bradshaw and Lawrence A. Hoffman (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 128–40.

him [i.e. Polycarp], and transferring him to the carriage, they began to persuade him, sitting beside him and saying, 'Why is it bad to say, "Caesar is Lord" and to offer incense and such analogous things and to save yourself?' At first he did not answer them, but when they persisted he said, 'I am not going to do what you advise me.' And having failed to persuade him, they began saying fearful words and they put him down with such haste as to scrape his shin coming down from the carriage.")	περιβαλὼν ἐσθῆτα λαμπρὰν ἀνέπεμψεν αὐτὸν τῷ Πιλάτῳ ["Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate."]). Following his questioning by Herod, Polycarp is sent on to his trial by the proconsul, as Jesus was sent back to Pilate for formal trial. The questioning of Polycarp by Herod mirrors his actual trial before the proconsul, just as Jesus' encounter with Herod mirrors the trial before Pilate. It is also likely that Herod, as the εἰρήναρχος, was a local official, whereas the proconsul would have been sent from Rome. In a similar way, Herod, as the τετράρχης, was a local official, whereas Pilate was the governor appointed and sent from Rome.[9] (2) Mention of Herod's father Nicetas may be meant to recall the questioning of Jesus by Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas (John 18:13-24). However, Annas and Caiaphas are not present together in John, nor is it clear that Nicetas had previously held the office of police chief, as Annas had been high priest (Annas is referred to as ἀρχιερεύς four times in this passage).	
Mart. Pol. 9.1: Τῷ δὲ Πολυκάρπῳ εἰσιόντι εἰς τὸ στάδιον φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐγένετο· ἴσχυε, Πολύκαρπε, καὶ ἀνδρίζου. καὶ τὸν μὲν εἰπόντα οὐδεὶς εἶδεν, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν. ("But on entering the stadium a voice came to Polycarp from heaven, 'Be strong, Polycarp, and be courageous	Possible parallel to the voice from heaven at a moment of crisis in Jesus' life (John 12:28: πάτερ, δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα. ἦλθεν οὖν φωνὴ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, Καὶ ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω. ["Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.'"]).[10] The voice in John	Possible undeclared narrative parallel (See table of other biblical parallels in Appendix C for a discussion of a

9. While only Luke includes an encounter between Herod and Jesus, all of the gospels contain at least two trials of Jesus -- one before the Sanhedrin and one before Pilate (Matt 26:57-69; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54, 63-71; John 18:13-14, 19-24), with the additional trial before Herod in Luke (Luke 23:8-16). The interrogation of Polycarp by Herod and his father in the carriage provides a similar double trial.

10. Barnard, "In Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," 194–95.

[Or: be manly].’ And no one saw the one who had spoken, but those of our people who were present heard the voice.”)	similarly offers encouragement and reassurance and there are similar indications of distinctions between those who could and could not hear it clearly.	textual allusion to Josh 1:6, 7, 9, 18.)
Mart. Pol. 9.3: ἐγκειμένου δὲ τοῦ ἀνθυπάτου καὶ λέγοντος· ὄμοσον, καὶ ἀπολύω σε, λοιδόρησον τὸν Χριστόν, ἔφη ὁ Πολύκαρπος· ὀγδοήκοντα καὶ ἓξ ἔτη δουλεύω αὐτῷ, καὶ οὐδέν με ἠδίκησεν. καὶ πῶς δύναμαι βλασφημῆσαι τὸν βασιλέα μου τὸν σώσαντά με; (“But since the proconsul was insistent and said, ‘Swear and I will release you, curse Christ,’ Polycarp said, ‘I have served him [i.e. Christ] for eighty-six years and he has done nothing wrong to me. And how can I blaspheme my king who saved me?’”)	Contrast between Christ and Caesar is similar to that in John and Luke: John 18:33-37: Εἰσῆλθεν οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ Πιλᾶτος καὶ ἐφώνησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς, Ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ σὺ τοῦτο λέγεις ἢ ἄλλοι εἶπόν σοι περὶ ἐμοῦ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλᾶτος, Μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι; τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί· τί ἐποίησας; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς, Ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου· εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμή, οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο [ἄν], ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· νῦν δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν. εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλᾶτος, Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεύς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς. (“Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ Jesus answered, ‘Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?’ Pilate replied, ‘I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?’ Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.’ Pilate asked him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king.	Possible undeclared narrative parallel - Although it seems more likely that the reference to Christ as king (βασιλεύς) is simply standard Christian language and the contrast between Christ and Caesar is inherent to Polycarp’s own situation.[11] The themes may be drawn from the passion narratives, but there is no indication of any intentional allusion to them.

11. Clement refers to God as king (βασιλεύς) (*1 Clement* 61.2), as does Justin Martyr (e.g. *Dial. Tryph.* 34.2; 36-37; 38.3-5; 135.1; 137.2).

	For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’”) Cf. John 19:12-15 Luke 23:2-3: ἤρξαντο δὲ κατηγορεῖν αὐτοῦ λέγοντες, Τοῦτον εὕραμεν διαστρέφοντα τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν καὶ κωλύοντα φόρους Καίσαρι διδόναι καὶ λέγοντα ἑαυτὸν Χριστὸν βασιλέα εἶναι. ὁ δὲ Πιλᾶτος ἠρώτησεν αὐτὸν λέγων, Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτῷ ἔφη, Σὺ λέγεις. (“They began to accuse him, saying, ‘We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.’ Then Pilate asked him, ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ He answered, ‘You say so.’”)	
Mart. Pol. 10.2: ἔφη ὁ ἀνθύπατος· πεῖσον τὸν δῆμον. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· σὲ μὲν καὶ λόγου ἠξίωκα· δεδιδάγμεθα γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τεταγμέναις τιμὴν κατὰ τὸ προσῆκον τὴν μὴ βλάπτουσαν ἡμᾶς ἀπονέμειν· ἐκείνους δὲ οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι ἀξίους τοῦ ἀπολογεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς. (“The proconsul said, ‘Persuade the people.’ But Polycarp said, ‘I consider you worthy of an account, for we are taught to impart honor to rulers and authorities appointed by God in so far as it does not harm us, but I do not think those people are worthy of my defending myself to them.’”)	John 19:11: ἀπεκρίθη [αὐτῷ] Ἰησοῦς, Οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ᾽ ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν· διὰ τοῦτο ὁ παραδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει. (“Jesus answered him, ‘You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.’”) (Cf. Rom 13:1 and 1 Pet 2:13 discussed in chart of other biblical parallels in Appendix C.)	Possible undeclared narrative parallel (wording is closer to that of Rom 13:1 and 1 Pet 2:13, but the context is closer to that of John) [see table of other biblical parallels in Appendix C]
Mart. Pol. 11.1: Ὁ δὲ ἀνθύπατος εἶπεν· θηρία ἔχω, τούτοις σε παραβαλῶ, ἐὰν μὴ μετανοήσῃς. (“But the proconsul said, ‘I have beasts, I will throw you to them, unless you repent.’”)	John 19:10 λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλᾶτος, Ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς; οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολῦσαί σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε; (“Pilate therefore said to him, ‘Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?’”)	Possible undeclared narrative parallel (although this is also just a natural question to ask in the course of the proceedings)[12]

12. It is interesting that the narrative order in *Mart. Pol.* 9.3-11.1 (comparison between

Mart. Pol. 12.1: Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ἕτερα πλείονα λέγων θάρσους καὶ χαρᾶς ἐνεπίμπλατο, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ χάριτος ἐπληροῦτα ὥστε οὐ μόνον μὴ συμπεσεῖν ταραχθέντα ὑπὸ τῶν λεγομένων πρὸς αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ τοὐναντίον τὸν ἀνθύπατον ἐκστῆναι... ("And saying these and many other things, he was filled with courage and joy, and his face was full of grace, so that not only did he not fall down from being troubled by the things said to him, but on the contrary the proconsul was confounded...")	Proconsul is confounded at Polycarp's lack of fear and his ability to face potential execution with courage and joy, just as Pilate is amazed that Jesus does not attempt to defend himself: Matt 27:14: καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ πρὸς οὐδὲ ἓν ῥῆμα, ὥστε θαυμάζειν τὸν ἡγεμόνα λίαν. ("But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.") Mark 15:5: ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς οὐκέτι οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίθη, ὥστε θαυμάζειν τὸν Πιλᾶτον. ("But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.") (Cf. John 19:8-10)	Possible undeclared narrative parallel - although the verb in *Mart. Pol.* (ἐξίστημι) is different from that used by both Matt and Mark (θαυμάζω)[13]
Mart. Pol. 12.2: τούτου λεχθέντος ὑπὸ τοῦ κήρυκος, ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος ἐθνῶν τε καὶ Ἰουδαίων τῶν τὴν Σμύρναν κατοικούντων ἀκατασχέτῳ θυμῷ καὶ μεγάλῃ φωνῇ ἐπεβόα· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τῆς ἀσεβείας διδάσκαλος, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ὁ τῶν ἡμετέρων θεῶν καθαιρέτης, ὁ πολλοὺς διδάσκων μὴ θύειν μηδὲ προσκυνεῖν τοῖς θεοῖς. ("When this had been said by the herald, the entire multitude of both Gentiles and Jews who lived in Smyrna cried out in an uncontrollable rage and a loud voice, 'This is the teacher of impiety, the father of the Christians, the overthrower of our gods, the one who teaches many not to sacrifice or worship the gods.'")	The cry of the spectators in the stadium following the herald's announcement may contain an echo of the cry of the crowd accusing Jesus at his trial before Pilate in Luke (Luke 23:2: ἤρξαντο δὲ κατηγορεῖν αὐτοῦ λέγοντες, Τοῦτον εὕραμεν διαστρέφοντα τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν καὶ κωλύοντα φόρους Καίσαρι διδόναι καὶ λέγοντα ἑαυτὸν Χριστὸν βασιλέα εἶναι. ["They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.'"]). Lieu notes that the Jews are only mentioned following the formal	Possible undeclared narrative parallel (although the parallels with Acts are more compelling)

Christ and Caesar, obedience to authorities appointed by God, and threat of execution on the part of the Roman official) is precisely the reverse of the sequence in John 19:10-15. The inclusion of these three narrative elements in order (even though the order is reversed) increases the probability that Polycarp's trial in *Mart. Pol.* is intentionally alluding to Jesus' trial, even though the parallels are relatively weak individually.

13. John does not actually state that Pilate was amazed. It is simply implied by his question to Jesus (John 19:10: οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολῦσαί σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε; ["Do you not know that I have the power to release you and the power to crucify you?"]).

	announcement of Polycarp's confession by the herald (*Mart. Pol.* 12.1-2). She sees their presence as a manifestation of a theological desire to have a universal audience for Polycarp's witnessing to the gospel. Polycarp's martyrdom then serves to fulfill Jesus' prophesy (Matt 10:17-18: προσέχετε δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· παραδώσουσιν γὰρ ὑμᾶς εἰς συνέδρια καὶ ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν μαστιγώσουσιν ὑμᾶς· καὶ ἐπὶ ἡγεμόνας δὲ καὶ βασιλεῖς ἀχθήσεσθε ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. ["Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles."] Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.16.12).[14] (See also discussion of parallels with Acts in table of other biblical parallels in Appendix C.)	
Mart. Pol. 12.3: τότε ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐπιβοῆσαι, ὥστε τὸν Πολύκαρπον ζῶντα κατακαῦσαι. ἔδει γὰρ τὸ τῆς φανερωθείσης ἐπὶ τοῦ προσκεφαλαίου ὀπτασίας πληρωθῆναι, ὅτε ἰδὼν αὐτὸ καιόμενον προσευχόμενος εἶπεν ἐπιστραφεὶς τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ πιστοῖς προσφητικῶς· δεῖ με ζῶντα κατακαυθῆναι. ("Then it was established by them to call out with one accord that Polycarp was to	(1) It is the crowd that demands Polycarp's sentence (in effect sentencing him themselves), just as the crowd calls for Jesus' crucifixion (Matt 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:18-25; John 19:1-16). Just as Polycarp is not explicitly sentenced by the proconsul, so Pilate does not explicitly sentence Jesus, rather in both cases they concede to the crowd's	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - the explicit inclusion of the Jews (along with the Gentiles) among those who call out for Polycarp to be

14. This tendency to portray universality through the phrase "both Jews and Greeks" is also seen in Acts (e.g. Acts 19:10, 17; cf. 14:1, 5) and in Hegesippus' account of the martyrdom of James in Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 2.23.11: πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν; 2.23.18: μάρτυς οὗτος ἀληθὴς Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησιν γεγένηται ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν). Cyprian and Tertullian also use the pairing of Jews and Greeks to express universality (e.g. Cyprian, *De bono pat.* 21; *Epist.* 59.2; Tertullian, *Apol.* 7.3; *Scorp.* 10.9). Lieu argues that the tendency of the Jews to emerge from and then again merge into an amorphous crowd of the unrighteous demonstrates the tension in early Christian writings between the Christian self-understanding of themselves as a "third race" differentiated from both Jews and Gentiles and a more dualistic image of the righteous and the unrighteous. Hence, the appearance of the Jews in the *Mart. Pol.* is a demonstration of Christian self-identity and self-understanding, growing out of Christian apologetics. Judith Lieu, "Accusations of Jewish Persecution," 286–87.

be burned alive. For it was necessary that the vision that had been revealed about the pillow be fulfilled, when having seen it burning while praying, turned towards the faithful with him, he said prophetically, 'It is necessary that I be burned alive.'")	demand.[15] (2) Statement that Polycarp's death is the fulfillment of prophesy parallels the emphasis of the fulfillment of prophesy in the passion narratives (e.g. Matt 26:53-54, 56; Mark 14:49; Luke 24:5-9, 13-27, 44-49; John 18:7-9, 32; 19:23-24, 28, 36-37; cf. Matt 27:18-19, Pilate's wife's dream about Jesus; Luke 23:28-31, Jesus' prophesy of coming catastrophe). (3) Recalling of the prediction of Polycarp's death (*Mart. Pol.* 5.2) parallels the recollection of Jesus' passion predictions in John (John 18:32: ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἤμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν ["This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die."]). Luke includes a post-resurrection reminder of the passion predictions, but without any reference to the means of death (Luke 24:5-9). Matt has the Pharisees and chief priests inform Pilate of Jesus' predictions of his death and resurrection, to justify setting a guard on the tomb in case Jesus' disciples come to steal the body in order to pretend that Jesus rose from the dead (Matt 27:62-66). Of these, *Mart. Pol.* 12.3 is closest in context and content to John.	burned (*Mart. Pol.* 12.2) emphasizes the narrative parallel, although the importance of acclamations by spectators in the arena may be the predominant reason for the crowd's determining the sentence (see table of arena motifs in Appendix B) (2) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - although indicating God's sovereignty and providence through the fulfillment of prophesy was part of a common Christian world-view and, hence, not necessarily an allusion to the passion narratives (particularly as the focus in the gospels is primarily on the fulfillment of scripture and not visionary revelations)

15. Pilate tells Jesus that he has the power to crucify him in John (John 19:10), but there is no explicit record of the sentence beyond his handing Jesus over for crucifixion (John 19:16; cf. Matt 27:26; Mark 15:15). Luke states explicitly that Pilate conceded to what the crowd demanded, but still emphasizes that he is granting the wishes of the crowd (Luke 23:24: καὶ Πιλᾶτος ἐπέκρινεν γενέσθαι τὸ αἴτημα αὐτῶν· ["So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted."]).

		(3) Possible undeclared narrative parallel (with John 18:32)
Mart. Pol. 13.1: ... τῶν ὄχλων παραχρῆμα συναγόντων ἔκ τε τῶν ἐργαστηρίων καὶ βαλανείων ξύλα καὶ φρύγανα, μάλιστα Ἰουδαίων προθύμως, ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς, εἰς ταῦτα ὑπουργούντων. ("the crowds forthwith gathering together timber and dry sticks from the workplaces and baths, the Jews assisting especially eagerly in these things, as was customary for them.")	The particular mention of the Jews in conjunction with Polycarp's death may be intended to parallel the role of the Jews in Jesus' death. It is possible, of course, that the gathering of wood for the execution of *damnati* was customary for the Jews in Smyrna. However, it seems highly unlikely that Jews would be engaged in such activities on a Sabbath (let alone a "great Sabbath," assuming that the reference is to a calendrical festival and not a purely theological category).[16]	Possible undeclared narrative parallel
Mart. Pol. 13.2: ὅτε δὲ ἡ πυρκαϊὰ ἡτοιμάσθη, ἀποθέμενος ἑαυτῷ πάντα τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ λύσας τὴν ζώνην ἐπειρᾶτο καὶ ὑπολύειν ἑαυτόν, μὴ πρότερον τοῦτο ποιῶν διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ ἕκαστον τῶν πιστῶν σπουδάζειν, ὅστις τάχιον τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ ἅψηται ("And when the pyre was prepared, laying aside all of his clothes and loosening his belt, he also attempted to remove his shoes, he had not previously done this as each of the faithful was always eager to do it, [to see] who would grasp his skin most quickly")	(1) Polycarp's removal of his clothing parallels the removal of Jesus' clothing prior to his crucifixion (although the gospels do not mention the removal of his clothing, just its disposal implying that it had been removed): Matt 27:35: σταυρώσαντες δὲ αὐτὸν διεμερίσαντο τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ βάλλοντες κλῆρον, ("And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;") Cf. Mark 15:24 // Luke 23:34 // John 19:23-24 (2) The reference to Polycarp's difficulty in removing his shoes may be an allusion to John the Baptist's statement that he was not worthy to undo Jesus' sandals, although the	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - although given the lack of any specific references linking the two narratives (e.g. casting lots for Polycarp's clothing), it is more likely that it was just common practice for people to be executed naked (2) Possible undeclared narrative parallel (the slight narrative

16. Gibson notes that gathering firewood on the Sabbath is one of the few activities specifically banned by the Torah (Ex 35:3; Num 15:32-36). Elizabeth Leigh Gibson, "The Jews and Christians in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*: Entangled or Parted Ways?" in *The Ways That Never Parted*, ed. Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 151–52.

	language is significantly different.[17] However, the mention of baptism by fire in conjunction with this saying of John the Baptist in Matt and Luke may strengthen the potential allusion.[18] Matt 3:11: ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἰσχυρότερός μού ἐστιν, οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς τὰ ὑποδήματα βαστάσαι· ("but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals") Mark 1:7: καὶ ἐκήρυσσεν λέγων, Ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς κύψας λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ. ("He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.'") Cf. Luke 3:16 // John 1:27	awkwardness of this comment in the text would seem to imply that this is an intentional allusion to the gospels, despite the verbal disparities)
Mart. Pol. 14.2: εὐλογῶ σε, ὅτι ἠξίωσάς με τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ ὥρας ταύτης, τοῦ λαβεῖν με μέρος ἐν ἀριθμῷ τῶν μαρτύρων ἐν τῷ ποτηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ σου εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς αἰωνίου ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος ἐν	(1) "Cup of your Christ" is a possible allusion to Matt 20:22-23 (ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Οὐκ οἴδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ μέλλω πίνειν; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ, Δυνάμεθα. λέγει αὐτοῖς, Τὸ μὲν	(1, 2) Possible textual allusion - (1) seems to be somewhat more likely than (2).[19] Although both

17. The reference to sandals (ὑποδήματα, or the strap of the sandal, ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων, in Mark and John) is explicit in all four gospels, while it is only implied by the verb ὑπολύω in *Mart. Pol.* Matt does not refer to the removal/undoing of the sandals at all, but to carrying or holding them (βαστάσαι).

18. The baptismal fire in both cases has a purifying function, destroying the chaff while preserving the separated wheat (Matt 3:12: οὗ τὸ πτύον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ διακαθαριεῖ τὴν ἅλωνα αὐτοῦ καὶ συνάξει τὸν σῖτον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην, τὸ δὲ ἄχυρον κατακαύσει πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ. ["His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."] // Luke 3:17). The fire on which Polycarp is burned is described as having a similarly purifying function (*Mart. Pol.* 15.2). The theological link between baptism and martyrdom may also strengthen the link between *Mart. Pol.* and the gospel passages, despite the disparities in language. All four gospels refer to the special baptism Jesus will perform either immediately prior or following the comment about Jesus' sandals.

19. Trip sees this as a clear reference to Matt 20:22-23 // Mark 10:39-39, with a less direct allusion to the prayer at Gethsemane. Tripp, "Prayer of St Polycarp," 101.

ἀφθαρσίᾳ πνεύματος ἁγίου· ("I bless you, because you have deemed me worthy of this day and hour, that I may receive a share in the number of the witnesses [*Or: martyrs*] in the cup of your Christ into resurrection of eternal life of both soul and body in immortality of Holy Spirit")	ποτήριόν μου πίεσθε, τὸ δὲ καθίσαι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν [τοῦτο] δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου. ["But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' He said to them, 'You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.'"] // Mark 10:38-39). (2) Cup may also possibly be an allusion to Christ's prayer in the garden that the cup be taken from him: Matt 26:39: καὶ προελθὼν μικρὸν ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ προσευχόμενος καὶ λέγων, Πάτερ μου, εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν, παρελθάτω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο· πλὴν οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλ' ὡς σύ. ("And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'") Cf. Mark 14:36 // Luke 22:42 (3) Reference to "hour" as a way of referring to the time of one's death may be an allusion to its use in John (John 12:27: Νῦν ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται, καὶ τί εἴπω; Πάτερ, σῶσόν με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης; ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον εἰς τὴν ὥραν ταύτην. ["Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour."] Cf. John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1)	use the concept of "cup" to refer to suffering and death, the context of Matt 20:22-23 // Mark 10:38-39 is closer to that of Polycarp in that it involves a desired imitation of Jesus' death. (3) Possible textual allusion - John does not mention a "day" (ἡμέρα), which may argue against this being an allusion. However, both *Mart. Pol.* and John use ὥρα in a similar way, which makes the allusion more likely.[20]
Mart. Pol. 15.1: μεγάλης δὲ ἐκλαμψάσης φλογός, θαῦμα εἴδομεν, οἷς ἰδεῖν ἐδόθη· οἳ καὶ ἐτηρήθημεν εἰς τὸ ἀναγγεῖλαι τοῖς λοιποῖς τὰ γενόμενα. ("And when a great flame	Possible reference to similar claim in John's passion narrative that the eyewitness was present and testified to what he had seen for a providential purpose (John 19:35: καὶ ὁ ἑωρακὼς	Possible undeclared narrative allusion - Although the sense of the two

20. Massaux, *Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, 2.49.

blazed forth, we saw a marvel, which was given [to us] to see, we who also have been preserved to report the events to those remaining [*Or: to our descendants*].")	μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύ[σ]ητε. ["He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth."])[21]	passages is significantly different.
Mart. Pol. 16.1: πέρας γοῦν ἰδόντες οἱ ἄνομοι μὴ δυνάμενον αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα ὑπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς δαπανηθῆναι, ἐκέλευσαν προσελθόντα αὐτῷ κομφέκτορα παραβῦσαι ξιφίδιον. καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσαντος, ἐξῆλθεν περιστερὰ καὶ πλῆθος αἵματος, ὥστε κατασβέσαι τὸ πῦρ καὶ θαυμάσαι πάντα τὸν ὄχλον, εἰ τοσαύτη τις διαφορὰ μεταξὺ τῶν τε ἀπίστων καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν· ("At last then, the lawless ones seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, they ordered an executioner going up to stick a dagger in him. And when he had done this, a dove and a great quantity of blood came out, so that the fire was quenched and the whole crowd marveled that there could be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect")	(1) Polycarp's being stabbed with a dagger has been seen as an allusion to the piercing of Jesus' side with a lance (John 19:34: ἀλλ᾽ εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ. ["Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out."]). However, there are a number of significant disparities between *Mart. Pol.* and John: Polycarp's stabbing leads to his death, whereas Jesus is pierced after death; the weapon is different, as is the vocabulary used in the two passages generally; only blood (and perhaps a dove) emerges from Polycarp's wound, whereas blood and water flow from Christ's side (although it is possible that the extinguishing of the fire by Polycarp's blood is meant to invoke the idea of water); the location of Polycarp's wound is not specified, although standard arena practice would suggest that he was stabbed in the throat and not the side.[22]	(1 & 2) Possible undeclared narrative parallels, although (2) provides the closer parallel. However, there are also significant difficulties in both cases, particularly the omission of any mention of water in *Mart. Pol.* Arena victims were typically stabbed or had their throats cut in order to ensure they were dead (see discussion of arena motifs below), although this does not negate the possibility that an

21. Barnard, "In Defense of Pseudo-Pionius' Account of Polycarp's Martyrdom," 194–95.

22. The dove is almost universally assumed to be a later interpolation into the text, primarily because it is missing in Eusebius. Dehandschutter, "Martyrium Polycarpi," 49. The text itself also gives indications of a possible interpolation, although it is not possible to determine from the text alone whether the dove or the blood has been added. The absence of the dove from Eusebius' text may imply that the dove is the more likely interpolation. However, there are far more theological reasons for the addition of the blood than for the dove. And it is quite possible that Eusebius may have removed the dove if his source contained both elements in order to correct the grammatical difficulties, particularly because of the theological resonances of the blood. For a more detailed discussion of the textual issues in this passage, see the section of textual issues related to *Mart. Pol.* above.

	(2) Another possible parallel is an addition to the text of Matt 27:49 in a non-insignificant group of manuscript witnesses (א B C L (Γ) 34 miniscule MSS, vg^{mss} mae). The text is similar, but not identical, to John 19:34: αλλος δε λαβων λογχην ενυξεν αυτου την πλευραν, και εξηλθεν υδωρ και αιμα ["Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out."]. The placement of the addition is such that the piercing of Jesus' side occurs before death (rather than after, as in John) and seems in some way to be the precipitating event in causing his death. This makes it much closer narratively to the stabbing in *Mart. Pol.* 16.1.[23]	allusion to the passion narrative was also intended.
Mart. Pol. 16.2: πᾶν γὰρ ῥῆμα, ὃ ἀφῆκεν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐτελειώθη καὶ τελειωθήσεται. ("For every word, which came forth from his mouth, both was fulfilled and will be fulfilled.")	(1) Jesus' identity as a prophet is also emphasized during the course of his passion (e.g. Luke 23:28-31; 24:5-9, 44-49; John 21:18-19; cf. Luke 24:25-27; John 21:22-24, which seems to be an attempt to forestall doubts as to the accuracy of Jesus' prophesies).[24]	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - although it seems more likely that this is simply meant to emphasize Polycarp's holiness and perhaps also his ability to discern God's will.
Mart. Pol. 17.2: ὑπέβαλεν γοῦν Νικήτην τὸν τοῦ Ἡρώδου πατέρα, ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ἄλκης, ἐντυχεῖν τῷ ἄρχοντι, ὥστε μὴ δοῦναι αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα· μή, φησίν, ἀφέντες τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον τοῦτον ἄρξωνται σέβεσθαι· καὶ ταῦτα ὑποβαλλόντων καὶ ἐνισχυόντων τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὃ καὶ	(1) There is a possible allusion here to Matt 27:62-66, where the chief priests and Pharisees petition Pilate for permission to guard the tomb in case Jesus' disciples come to steal the body and tell people that he has risen from the dead. The fact that it is the Jews who keep watch to make sure that the	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - Perhaps strengthened by the fact that the narrative order is a bit peculiar.

23. Holmes argues that this text is either an early interpolation to Matt or part of the original text. Holmes, "The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the New Testament Passion Narratives," 416–17.

24. The combination of this statement with the image of the dove and blood emerging from Polycarp's wound may also be an allusion to 1 John 5:6-8, in which the Spirit, water and blood present a unified witness testifying to the truth. The difficulty is, of course, that the water is missing, since only the Spirit (i.e. the dove) and the blood are made manifest in his death.

ἐτήρησαν, μελλόντων ἡμῶν ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς αὐτὸν λαμβάνειν, ἀγνοοῦντες, ὅτι οὔτε τὸν Χριστόν ποτε καταλιπεῖν δυνησόμεθα, τὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τῶν σωζομένων σωτηρίας παθόντα, ἄμωμον ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτωλῶν, οὔτε ἕτερόν τινα σέβεσθαι. ("At any rate, he [i.e. the Evil One] provoked Nicetas, the father of Herod and brother of Alce, to petition the magistrate not to hand over his body, 'Lest,' he said, 'leaving the crucified one they begin to worship this one.' The Jews also provoked and confirmed these things, they even kept guard when we were going to take him from the fire, not recognizing that neither would we ever be able to forsake Christ, the one who suffered on behalf of the salvation of the entire world of those who are being saved, blameless on behalf of sinners, nor are we able to worship any other.")	Christians do not remove Polycarp's body from the fire would seem to strengthen the parallel. Nicetas' suggestion that they might abandon the crucified one and worship Polycarp instead might be an allusion to the accusation of deception in Matt 27:64. Matt's vocabulary is significantly different from that used in *Mart. Pol.* here. (2) Lieu argues that a desire to imitate the passion narrative is not entirely responsible for the inclusion of the Jews in *Mart. Pol.* However, she does note that it may contribute to the linking of Herod and the Jews in *Mart. Pol.* 17.2 and may be partially a function of the presence of such themes of imitation in the text as a whole.[25]	Are they watching to ensure that the Christians do not remove Polycarp's body from the pyre extinguished by his blood (from which he seems to already have been removed in the next paragraph, since he has to be brought back into the middle of the arena to be burned again)? (2) Possible undeclared narrative allusion - This is more of a general link between the use of passion traditions and the presence of the Jews in the narrative. Lieu's sense that imitation of the passion is not entirely responsible for references to the Jews but might contribute to references to Jews in particular contexts seems reasonable.
Mart. Pol. 17.3: τοῦτον μὲν γὰρ υἱὸν ὄντα τοῦ θεοῦ προσκυνοῦμεν, τοὺς δὲ μάρτυρας ὡς μαθητὰς καὶ μιμητὰς τοῦ κυρίου ἀγαπῶμεν ἀξίως ἕνεκα εὐνοίας ἀνυπερβλήτου τῆς εἰς τὸν ἴδιον βασιλέα καὶ διδάσκαλον· ὧν γένοιτο	While the focus here is on the Christians' imitation of the martyrs, the explicit reference to their being "imitators of the Lord" recalls the statement at the beginning of *Mart. Pol.* that Polycarp's martyrdom is	Declared narrative parallel (of Polycarp's life/martyrdom to Jesus' life/passion)

25. Judith Lieu, "Accusations of Jewish Persecution," 288.

καὶ ἡμᾶς κοινωνούς τε καὶ συμμαθητὰς γενέσθαι. ("For we worship this one, being Son of God, but we love the martyrs as disciples and imitators of the Lord, worthy because of their unsurpassable acts of affection for their own king and teacher. May it happen that we also become both partners and fellow disciples among them.")	κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (1.1).	
Mart. Pol. 18.1: Ἰδὼν οὖν ὁ κεντυρίων τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων γενομένην φιλονεικίαν, θεὶς αὐτὸν ἐν μέσῳ, ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς, ἔκαυσεν. ("Then the centurion, seeing the contentiousness being caused by the Jews, placing it [i.e. Polycarp's body] in the middle, he burned it as was customary for them.")	(1) The sudden appearance of the centurion in association with the events following Polycarp's death suggests the possibility of a parallel with the centurion who witnesses Jesus' death in the synoptics (although there is no hint of a similar acknowledgement of Polycarp's holiness or innocence on the part of this centurion): Matt 27:54: Ὁ δὲ ἑκατόνταρχος καὶ οἱ μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ τηροῦντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἰδόντες τὸν σεισμὸν καὶ τὰ γενόμενα ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα, λέγοντες, Ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος. ("Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, 'Truly this man was God's Son!'") Cf. Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47. (2) There is perhaps a closer parallel in Mark when the centurion appears again to confirm to Pilate that Jesus has already died, in response to Joseph of Arimathea's request to obtain Jesus' body: Mark 15:44: ὁ δὲ Πιλᾶτος ἐθαύμασεν εἰ ἤδη τέθνηκεν καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τὸν κεντυρίωνα ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτὸν εἰ πάλαι ἀπέθανεν· ("Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time.") Mark's gospel is also the only one to	(1) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - although the lack of any confession of Polycarp's holiness or innocence by the centurion makes the allusion rather unlikely. (2) Possible undeclared narrative parallel - The use of the unusual κεντυρίων and a shared link between the centurion and the disposal of the bodies makes this parallel more likely than the previous one. However, the narrative parallel is still not terribly close and specific references to Mark are so unusual in this period that it seems unlikely.

	use this term for centurion (*centurio* transliterated into Greek, rather than much more common translation ἑκατόνταρχος used by Matt and Luke).[26]	
Mart. Pol. 19.1: Τοιαῦτα τὰ κατὰ τὸν μακάριον Πολύκαρπον, ὃς σὺν τοῖς ἀπὸ Φιλαδελφίας δωδέκατος ἐν Σμύρνῃ μαρτυρήσας, μόνος ὑπὸ πάντων μνημονεύεται, ὥστε καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ λαλεῖσθαι· οὐ μόνον διδάσκαλος γενόμενος ἐπίσημος, ἀλλὰ καὶ μάρτυς ἔξοχος, οὗ τὸ μαρτύριον πάντες ἐπιθυμοῦσιν μιμεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ γενόμενον. ("Such are the things concerning the blessed Polycarp, who along with those from Philadelphia was the twelfth martyred [*Or: bearing witness*] in Smyrna, he alone is remembered by all, so as to be talked about even by the Gentiles in every place, not only being a remarkable teacher, but also an outstanding martyr, whose martyrdom, occurring according to the gospel of Christ, all desire to imitate.")	Polycarp is the preeminent martyr among the twelve martyrs of Smyrna because his martyrdom is κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ. By taking place according to the gospel, his martyrdom is worthy of being imitated and remembered by others. Martyrdom (and Polycarp's martyrdom in particular) is linked here with the mission and preaching of the apostles, through the statement that Polycarp was one of twelve, the fact that the events of his death are remembered by all and spoken of by the Gentiles in every place (e.g. Matt 24:14; 28:19; Mark 13:10; Luke 2:32; 24:37), and the fact that Polycarp is now "rejoicing with the apostles" (*Mart. Pol.* 19.2: σὺν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις... ἀγαλλιώμενος). Polycarp's position as a bishop may have strengthened this association with the apostles. The implication is that just as Polycarp imitates Christ through his death, so others should desire to imitate Polycarp (and in fact do so). In the process, Christ is remembered, through remembering Polycarp, and the gospel (in the form of Polycarp's death) is spoken of even by the Gentiles (ὑπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν).[27]	Declared narrative parallel (for *Mart. Pol.* as a whole, referring back to *Mart. Pol.* 1.1)

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26. A simple search in the *TLG* provides only a single instance of the use of the transliterated form in a non-Christian author (Polybius, *Historiae* 6.24.6), and only 17 occurrences in pre-4th century texts (including *Mart. Pol.* and the two in Mark). By contrast, there are 52 occurrences of forms of ἑκατόνταρχος in Dio alone.

27. There seems to be a tension here between the desire to portray Polycarp's death as a kind of imitative preaching, which depends to some degree on his death being imitated by others, and the desire to single out Polycarp as uniquely worthy of veneration and honor. This is seen particularly in the claim that Polycarp alone is remembered by all (μόνος ὑπὸ πάντων μνημονεύεται).

Mart. Pol. 22.1: ἐρρῶσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχόμεθα, ἀδελφοί, στοιχοῦντας τῷ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον λόγῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, μεθ' οὗ δόξα τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῇ τῶν ἁγίων ἐκλεκτῶν, καθὼς ἐμαρτύρησεν ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος, οὗ γένοιτο ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὰ ἴχνη εὑρεθῆναι ἡμᾶς. ("We wish you farewell, brothers and sisters, being in line with [*Or: corresponding to*] the word of Jesus Christ according to the gospel, with whom be glory to God, both Father and Holy Spirit [*Or: God, and Father, and Holy Spirit*] for the salvation of the holy elect, just as the blessed Polycarp was martyred [*Or: bore witness*]. May it happen that we are found in his [i.e. Polycarp's] footsteps in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.")	This continues the theme of imitation, indicating both that Polycarp's martyrdom corresponds to the word of Jesus Christ, as well as being according to the gospel. The implication is that the Christian life generally is also a following in the footsteps of Polycarp in his imitation of Christ through his martyrdom.	General declared narrative parallel

Appendix B: *Spectacula* motifs

Table of passages of *Mart. Pol.* containing motifs and/or vocabulary related to the Roman *spectacula*, along with a brief analysis:

***Mart. Pol.* passage**	**Parallels to *spectacula***	**Distinctions from typical *spectacula* motifs**
Mart. Pol. 2.2-4: τὸ γὰρ γενναῖον αὐτῶν καὶ ὑπομονητικὸν καὶ φιλοδέσποτον τὶς οὐκ ἂν θαυμάσειεν; οἳ μάστιξιν μὲν καταξανθέντες, ὥστε μέχρι τῶν ἔσω φλεβῶν καὶ ἀρτηριῶν τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς οἰκονομίαν θεωρεῖσθαι, ὑπέμειναν, ὡς καὶ τοὺς περιεστῶτας ἐλεεῖν καὶ ὀδύρεσθαι· τοὺς δὲ καὶ εἰς τοσοῦτον γενναιότητος ἐλθεῖν, ὥστε μήτε γρύξαι μήτε	(1) Very visual image of torture (displaying the inner structure of the martyrs' bodies) (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2). (2) Torments go too far and produce an undesired (from the point of view of the Roman authorities) reaction in the spectators (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2). Attention to spectator reactions is consistent with non-Christian discussions of *spectacula*.	(1) The lack of pathos displayed by the martyrs unusual for *damnati*, although does show up in some of the martial ideals of gladiators (*Mart Pol.* 2.2). What is presented here is also not exactly Stoic (e.g. comment on the martyrs being away from the flesh is qualified, or perhaps even completely revised, to instead be the result of Christ's presence consorting

στενάξαι τινὰ αὐτῶν, ἐπιδεικνυμένους ἅπασιν ἡμῖν, ὅτι ἐκαίνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ βασανιζόμενοι τῆς σαρκὸς ἀπεδήμουν οἱ μάρτυρες τοῦ Χριστοῦ, μᾶλλον δέ, ὅτι παρεστὼς ὁ κύριος ὡμίλει αὐτοῖς. καὶ προσέχοντες τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ χάριτι τῶν κοσμικῶν κατεφρόνουν βασάνων, διὰ μιᾶς ὥρας τὴν αἰώνιον ζωὴν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι. καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἦν αὐτοῖς ψυχρὸν τὸ τῶν ἀπανθρώπων βασανιστῶν· πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν γὰρ εἶχον φυγεῖν τὸ αἰώνιον καὶ μηδέποτε φβεννύμενον, καὶ τοῖς τῆς καρδίας ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀνέβλεπον τὰ τηρούμενα τοῖς ὑπομείνασιν ἀγαθά, ἃ οὔτε οὖς ἤκουσεν οὔτε ὀφθαλμὸς εἶδεν οὔτε ἐτὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου ἀνέβη, ἐκείνοις δὲ ὑπεδείκνυτο ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, οἵπερ μηκέτι ἄνθρωποι, ἀλλ' ἤδη ἄγγελοι ἦσαν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ εἰς τὰ θηρία κατακριθέντες ὑπέμειναν δεινὰς κολάσεις, κήρυκας μὲν ὑποστρωννύμενοι καὶ ἄλλαις ποικίλων βασάνων ἰδέαις κολαφιζόμενοι, ἵνα, εἰ δυνηθείη, διὰ τῆς ἐπιμόνου κολάσεως εἰς ἄρνησιν αὐτοὺς τρέψῃ. ("For who would not be amazed by their nobility and endurance and love of the master? On the one hand, they submitted to being torn by whips, until the very organization of their flesh was revealed down to the veins and arteries, until even the bystanders felt pity and wailed. On the other hand, they came to such nobility, so that none of them either grumbled or moaned, exhibiting to all of us that in that hour, while under torture, the martyrs of Christ had traveled away from the flesh, or rather, that the Lord was standing by consorting with them. And clinging to the	(3) Sharp contrast between the uncontrolled display of emotion by the spectators and the controlled and dignified reactions of the martyrs (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2). (4) Martyrs presented as spectators of an eternal *spectaculum*, watching the eternal and unquenchable fire, which makes their present sufferings something to be despised (*Mart. Pol.* 2.3). Their *spectaculum* includes not only the suffering of *damnati*, but also the vision of the gifts of Christ's grace, which are beyond the grasp of those still in this world. (5) Use of technical language for those condemned to the beasts (οἱ εἰς τὰ θηρία κατακριθέντες = *damnati ad bestias*).	with them). (2) Φιλοδέσποτον added to a set of virtues associated with the arena (*Mart. Pol.* 2.2). (3) Torments of this world endured for the sake of gaining eternal life in the next, rather than for honor, glory, etc. as one would expect in Greco-Roman texts (*Mart. Pol.* 2.3). (4) Odd account of punishments: lying on shells would not be expected in association with *damnatio ad bestias*.

grace of Christ they disdained the tortures of the world, purchasing by one hour eternal life. And the fire of their inhuman torturers was cold to them, for they held before their eyes that they fled the eternal and never extinguished [fire], and with the eyes of their hearts they looked up to the good things preserved for those who submitted, [the things] which neither ear has heard nor eye has seen nor has it come into the heart of human beings, but it has been revealed by the Lord to those who are no longer humans, but already angels. And similarly, those condemned to the beasts submitted to terrible punishments, being laid out on shells and being buffeted with other various kinds of tortures, so that, if possible, he might turn them toward denial through continuous punishment.")		
Mart. Pol. 3.1: ὁ γὰρ γενναιότατος Γερμανικὸς ἐπερρώννυεν αὐτῶν τὴν δειλίαν διὰ τῆς ἐν αὐτῷ ὑπομονῆς· ὃς καὶ ἐπισήμως ἐθηριομάχησεν. Βουλομένου γὰρ τοῦ ἀνθυπάτου πείθειν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγοντος, τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ κατοικτεῖραι, ἑαυτῷ ἐπεσπάσατο τὸ θηρίον προσβιασάμενος, τάχιον τοῦ ἀδίκου καὶ ἀνόμου βίου αὐτῶν ἀπαλλαγῆναι βουλόμενος. ("For the most noble Germanicus strengthened their cowardice through his endurance; he also fought the beasts with skill. For when the proconsul wished to persuade him and said to have pity on his age, he dragged the beast on himself by force, wishing to be delivered quickly from their unrighteous and unlawful	(1) Uses the technical term for arena spectacles involving *bestiarii* in Greek (θηριομάχομαι). (2) Emphasis is on Germanicus' strength and endurance and the ways in which his display of courage and skill effects similar virtues in those who observe him (in this case, his companions). (3) The imagery being evoked here is consistent with some representations of arena spectacles, in which the animals are shown in the process of leaping on their intended victims, on top of them, or clinging to their bodies in the moment of attack. However, in visual depictions of *damnatio ad bestias*, the	(1) Germanicus' skill as a *bestiarius* is demonstrated ironically through his losing the fight with the beast (i.e. his strength and courage in seeking death), rather than his defeat of the animal as would be expected by a Roman audience. (2) The trial and the *spectaculum* seem to be oddly compressed in the text, as the lion has already been released into the arena against Germanicus while the proconsul is urging him to recant. This would not be normal procedure, where the trial would occur in an entirely different context from the *spectaculum* in which the execution would be carried out and might be separated from it by several months (as prisoners

life.")	*damnati* are nearly always portrayed as being helpless (e.g. tied to a stake, bound or constrained by arena personnel). Some are portrayed with their hands free (although typically in defensive postures), so there would be the potential for the victim to purposefully pull the beast onto himself.[28]	were held over until the next games were given). Once an individual was given a sentence of *damnatio ad bestias*, there was not usually any opportunity for reprieve.[29] (3) The expected response of *damnati* (as represented in visual and narrative depictions) is helplessness and fear, not impassivity and actively seeking death.[30]
Mart. Pol. 3.2: ἐκ τούτου οὖν πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, θαυμάσαν τὴν γενναιότητα τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς καὶ θεοσεβοῦς γένους τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ἐπεβόησεν· αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους· ζητείσθω Πολύκαρπος. ("Because of this, the whole multitude, amazed by the nobility of the god-loving and god-fearing race of the Christians, called out, 'Away with the atheists! Let Polycarp be sought!'")	(1) Attention is paid to the response of the crowd, both their amazement at the nobility and honor of the martyrs and their demand for the death of Polycarp. (2) Acclamations are a documented means by which spectators interacted with Roman officials. These could include demands for political or legal action, as is the case here.[31]	(1) The crowd seeks the death of the leader of the Christian community, immediately after the text claims they were amazed by the nobility, piety, and devotion of these same Christians. Hence, there is a certain defiance of logic here. Perhaps it was frustration at being given gladiator-like endurance and impassivity, when they were expecting the terror, suffering, and submission that were apparently characteristic of executions.
Mart. Pol. 8.2-3: καὶ ὑπήντα αὐτῷ ὁ εἰρήναρχος Ἡρώδης καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ Νικήτης, οἳ καὶ μεταθέντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν καροῦχαν ἔπειθον παρακαθεζόμενοι καὶ λέγοντες· τί γὰρ κακόν ἐστιν εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Καῖσαρ, καὶ ἐπιθῦσαι	Serves as a kind of micro-scale trial/arena contest, complete with questioning by a Roman official (the police chief Herod), an audience (Nicetas), confession by Polycarp, and endurance of abuse (the "fearful words," scraping of	The abuse leveled against Polycarp in this incident is trivially minor. The "fearful words" spoken to Polycarp by Herod and Nicetas may have consisted of threats regarding potential sentences (just as the proconsul threatens Polycarp

28. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 53–54.

29. While stories do exist of *damnati* being rescued by the beasts sent out against them, such incidents are consistently presented as miraculous tales, not as common occurrences. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 93, 119n128. Crowds are known to have very occasionally demanded that *damnati* be granted a reprieve, but such instances are extremely rare. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 84–85; Potter, "Spectacle," 385.

30. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 92; Brown, "Death as Decoration," 194.

31. Potter, "Performance, Power, and Justice in the High Empire," 132–41.

καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἀκόλουθα καὶ διασώζεσθαι; ὁ δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτοῖς, ἐπιμενόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἔφη· οὐ μέλλω ποιεῖν, ὃ συμβουλεύετέ μοι. οἱ δὲ ἀποτυχόντες τοῦ πεῖσαι αὐτὸν δεινὰ ῥήματα ἔλεγον καὶ μετὰ σπουδῆς καθῄρουν αὐτόν, ὡς κατιόντα ἀπὸ τῆς καρούχας ἀποσῦραι τὸ ἀντικνήμιον. ("And the police chief Herod and his father Nicetas met him [i.e. Polycarp], and transferring him to the carriage, they began to persuade him, sitting beside him and saying, 'Why is it bad to say, "Caesar is Lord" and to offer incense and such analogous things and to save yourself?' At first he did not answer them, but when they persisted he said, 'I am not going to do what you advise me.' And having failed to persuade him, they began saying fearful words and they put him down with such haste as to scrape his shin coming down from the carriage.")	Polycarp's shin). Polycarp responds with dignity and does not acknowledge that he has been hurt.	with *damnatio ad bestias* and *crematio*, *Mart. Pol.* 11).
Mart. Pol. 8.3: ... ἀγόμενος εἰς τὸ στάδιον, θορύβου τηλικούτου ὄντος ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ, ὡς μηδὲ ἀκουσθῆναι τινα δύνασθαι. ("... being led into the stadium, there was such a great clamor in the stadium, that it was not possible to hear anything.")	(1) Crowd of spectators emphasized from the beginning, although their desires and opinions are not yet clear (instead simply an amorphous wall of sound). (2) The use of stadia for Roman *spectacula* was standard practice in the eastern part of the empire, especially in places that did not possess an amphitheater.[32]	(1) The correspondence of these events with what is known of historical spectacles is not clear. E.g. why are the people already gathered in the stadium? Is it just that word has traveled ahead to Smyrna that Polycarp has been arrested? Are they still there for the *spectaculum* during which the earlier set of martyrs were executed? If so, unless the sequence of events leading to Polycarp's arrest took only a day or two, these would be extraordinarily long games.

32. Katherine Elizabeth Welch, "Greek Stadia and Roman Spectacles: Asia, Athens, and the Tomb of Herodes Atticus," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 11 (1998): 122–25.

Mart. Pol. 9.1: Τῷ δὲ Πολυκάρπῳ εἰσιόντι εἰς τὸ στάδιον φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐγένετο· ἴσχυε, Πολύκαρπε, καὶ ἀνδρίζου. καὶ τὸν μὲν εἰπόντα οὐδεὶς εἶδεν, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν. καὶ λοιπὸν προσαχθέντος αὐτοῦ, θόρυβος ἦν μέγας ἀκουσάντων, ὅτι Πολύκαρπος συνείληπται. ("But on entering the stadium a voice came to Polycarp from heaven, 'Be strong, Polycarp, and be courageous *[Or: be manly]*.' And no one saw the one who had spoken, but those of our people who were present heard the voice. Finally, when he was brought forward, there was a great clamor among those who heard that Polycarp had been apprehended.")	(1) God seems to be taking on the role of the trainer (*lanista*) encouraging Polycarp before the games begin. (2) The non-Christian spectators are making too much noise (*Mart. Pol.* 8.3; 9.1) for them to be able to hear the heavenly voice addressing Polycarp. They have allowed themselves to succumb to excessive emotional involvement in the *spectaculum*, whereas the Christian audience (who can hear the voice) have maintained proper control over their emotions.[33]	An alternative *spectaculum* is being established overlaying that put on by the Roman authorities, with its own distinct audience, the Christians, who are able to see (or hear, in this case) a true reality invisible to the rest of the spectators, who are simply crying out.
Mart. Pol. 9.2: προσαχθέντα οὖν αὐτὸν ἀνηρώτα ὁ ἀνθύπατος, εἰ αὐτὸς εἴη Πολύκαρπος. τοῦ δὲ ὁμολογοῦντος, ἔπειθεν ἀρνεῖσθαι λέγων· αἰδέσθητί σου τὴν ἡλικίαν, καὶ ἕτερα τούτοις ἀκόλουθα, ὧν ἔθος αὐτοῖς λέγειν· ὄμοσον τὴν καίσαρος τύχην, μετανόησον, εἶπον· αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος ἐμβριθεῖ τῷ προσώπῳ εἰς πάντα τὸν ὄχλον τὸν ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ ἀνόμων ἐθνῶν ἐμβλέψας καὶ ἐπισείσας αὐτοῖς τὴν χεῖρα, στενάξας τε καὶ ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν· αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους. ("Then, when he was brought forward, the proconsul asked if he was Polycarp. And when he had agreed, the proconsul	(1) Spectators could play a significant role in determining the course of events in the arena. Polycarp appears to be attempting to intentionally aggravate the crowd so they will demand his condemnation.[34] (2) By holding the trial in the arena, the spectators have become the jury.	(1) Typically arena participants would attempt to use the influence of the spectators in their favor. Polycarp has reversed the understanding of what constitutes a positive outcome - redefining this as condemnation rather than release. (2) In the context of the narrative, the trial has become part of the *spectaculum*, being held in the arena. The events described do not seem to fit within the normal chronology of the games, which seem to have been put on hold in order to accommodate the interrogation of Polycarp (followed by his execution).

33. Potter, "Spectacle," 386.

34. Potter, "Spectacle," 402; Futrell, *Blood in the Arena*, 49; Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 270.

began to persuade him saying, 'Have compassion for your age,' and other such related things, which they are accustomed to say: 'Swear by the fortune of Caesar, repent and say, "away with the atheists."' But Polycarp looking with a stern face at the whole crowd of lawless Gentiles in the stadium and shaking his hand at them, groaning and looking up to heaven he said, 'Away with the atheists.'")		
Mart. Pol. 10.1-2: ἐπιμένοντος δὲ πάλιν αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγοντος· ὄμοσον τὴν καίσαρος τύχην, ἀπεκρίνατο· εἰ κενοδοξεῖς, ἵνα ὀμόσω τὴν καίσαρος τύχην, ὡς σὺ λέγεις, προσποιεῖ δὲ ἀγνοεῖν με, τίς εἰμι, μετὰ παρρησίας ἄκουε· Χριστιανός εἰμι. εἰ δὲ θέλεις τὸν τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ μαθεῖν λόγον, δὸς ἡμέραν καὶ ἄκουσον. ἔφη ὁ ἀνθύπατος· πεῖσον τὸν δῆμον. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· σὲ μὲν καὶ λόγου ἠξίωκα· δεδιδάγμεθα γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τεταγμέναις τιμὴν κατὰ τὸ προσῆκον τὴν μὴ βλάπτουσαν ἡμᾶς ἀπονέμειν· ἐκείνους δὲ οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι ἀξίους τοῦ ἀπολογεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς. ("But when he [i.e. the proconsul] again persisted and said, 'Swear by the fortune of Caesar,' he [i.e. Polycarp] answered, 'If you are so vain-glorious that [you think] I might swear by the fortune of Caesar, as you say, but you pretend not to recognize me, who I am, listen with boldness: I am a Christian. But if you wish to learn an account of Christianity, assign a day and listen.' The proconsul said, 'Persuade the people.' But Polycarp said, 'I consider you worthy of an account, for we	(1) Continues to show the importance of the crowd in directing the course of events in the arena. In this case, the proconsul is fairly explicitly treating the assembled spectators as the jury of the trial by inviting Polycarp to defend himself to them directly. The use of the term δῆμος (elsewhere in the text they are referred to as περιεστῶτες (2.2), τὸ πλῆθος (3.2; 12.2), ὄχλος (9.2; 13.1; 16.1), οἱ ἄνομοι (16.1, although it is not clear whether this is the spectators as a whole or just the Roman officials)) suggests the political role of the people and perhaps even their official function as a popular assembly. By giving Polycarp an opportunity to give a defense to the people, the proconsul was giving him the option of diffusing his earlier incitement of the crowd (*Mart. Pol.* 9.2). (2) Acts 19:33 suggests that such public defenses might be made in contexts of public protests (such as the crowd's having demanded Polycarp's arrest and trial or the near riot caused by the silversmiths in Ephesus).	(1) Polycarp's unwillingness to provide a defense of Christianity to the crowd is consistent with his earlier incitement of the crowd by denouncing them as atheists (*Mart. Pol.* 9.2).

are taught to impart honor to rulers and authorities appointed by God in so far as it does not harm us, but I do not think those people are worthy that I defend myself to them.’”)		
Mart. Pol. 11.1-12.2: ὁ δὲ ἀνθύπατος εἶπεν· θηρία ἔχω, τούτοις σε παραβαλῶ, ἐὰν μὴ μετανοήσῃς. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· κάλει, ἀμετάθετος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἡ ἀπὸ τῶν κρειττόνων ἐπὶ τὰ χείρω μετάνοια· καλὸν δὲ μετατίθεσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν χαλεπῶν ἐπὶ τὰ δίκαια. ὁ δὲ πάλιν πρὸς αὐτόν· πυρί σε ποιήσω δαπανηθῆναι, εἰ τῶν θηρίων καταφρονεῖς, ἐὰν μὴ μετανοήσῃς. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· πῦρ ἀπειλεῖς τὸ πρὸς ὥραν καιόμενον καὶ μετ’ ὀλίγον σβεννύμενον· ἀγνοεῖς γὰρ τὸ τῆς μελλούσης κρίσεως καὶ αἰωνίου κολάσεως τοῖς ἀσεβέσι τηρούμενον πῦρ. ἀλλὰ τί βραδύνεις; φέρε, ὃ βούλει. ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ἕτερα πλείονα λέγων θάρσους καὶ χαρᾶς ἐνεπίμπλατο, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ χάριτος ἐπληροῦτα ὥστε οὐ μόνον μὴ συμπεσεῖν ταραχθέντα ὑπὸ τῶν λεγομένων πρὸς αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ τοὐναντίον τὸν ἀνθύπατον ἐκστῆναι, πέμψαι τε τὸν ἑαυτοῦ κήρυκα ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ σταδίου κηρῦξαι τρίς· Πολύκαρπος ὡμολόγησεν ἑαυτὸν Χριστιανὸν εἶναι. τούτου λεχθέντος ὑπὸ τοῦ κήρυκος, ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος ἐθνῶν τε καὶ ᾽Ιουδαίων τῶν τὴν Σμύρναν κατοικούντων ἀκατασχέτῳ θυμῷ καὶ μεγάλῃ φωνῇ ἐπεβόα· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τῆς ἀσεβείας διδάσκαλος, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν	(1) If the τρίς is taken as part of the announcement rather than an indication of the number of times the announcement was made in *Mart. Pol.* 12.1, this would be consistent with Pliny, *Ep.* 96.3: *Confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogaui supplicium minatus: perseuerantes duci iussi* (“those confessing again I questioned also for a third time having threatened punishment: those persisting I commanded to be led away.”). While Polycarp only explicitly proclaims himself to be a Christian once (using the formulaic Χριστιανός εἰμι), the proconsul has three times invited Polycarp to participate in pagan ritual by swearing by the emperor’s genius and Polycarp has three times refused to do so - constituting a three fold confession, even without the explicit statement.[35]	(1) The proconsul is reduced to issuing threats, while Polycarp maintains his composure and does not display fear or alarm (remaining able to provide reasoned, almost philosophical responses). Whereas the expected response would be for the individual about to be condemned to react with fear, while the elite Roman official maintains a dignified calm.

35. Jan den Boeft and Jan N. Bremmer, “Notiunculae Martyrologicae III: Some Observations on the Martyria of Polycarp and Pionius,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 39, no. 2 (1985): 111–13.

Χριστιανῶν, ὁ τῶν ἡμετέρων θεῶν καθαιρέτης, ὁ πολλοὺς διδάσκων μὴ θύειν μηδὲ προσκυνεῖν τοῖς θεοῖς. ("But the proconsul said, 'I have beasts, I will throw you to them, unless you repent.' But he [i.e. Polycarp] said, 'Call [them], for repentance from better to inferior things is impossible for us, but to change from cruel to righteous things is good.' And again [he said] to him, 'I will cause you to be consumed by fire, if you despise the beasts, unless you repent.' But Polycarp said, 'You threaten fire that burns for an hour and is quenched after a short time, for you are ignorant of the fire of the coming judgment and eternal retribution that is kept for the ungodly. But what are you waiting for? Bring what you wish.' "And saying these and many other things, he was filled with courage and joy, and his face was full of grace, so that not only did he not fall down from being troubled by the things said to him, but on the contrary the proconsul was confounded, and he sent his own herald into the middle of the stadium to proclaim three times, 'Polycarp has confessed himself to be a Christian.' When this had been said by the herald, the entire multitude of both Gentiles and Jews who lived in Smyrna cried out in an uncontrollable rage and a loud voice, 'This is the teacher of impiety, the father of the Christians, the overthrower of our gods, the one who teaches many not to sacrifice or worship the gods.'")		

Mart. Pol. 12.2-3: ταῦτα λέγοντες ἐπεβόων καὶ ἠρώτων τὸν Ἀσιάρχην Φίλιππον, ἵνα ἐπαφῇ τῷ Πολυκάρπῳ λέοντα. ὁ δὲ ἔφη, μὴ εἶναι ἐξὸν αὐτῷ, ἐπειδὴ πεπληρώκει τὰ κυνηγέσια. τότε ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐπιβοῆσαι, ὥστε τὸν Πολύκαρπον ζῶντα κατακαῦσαι. ("Saying these things, they began calling out and asking the Asiarch Philip that he might let loose a lion against Polycarp. But he said that it was not permitted for him to do so, since he had already concluded the *venatio*. Then it was established by them to call out with one accord that Polycarp was to be burned alive.")	(1) Fierce animals (such as lions) could only be used in *spectacula* with imperial permission and there were restrictions on the number of animals that could be used and the duration of the *venatio*.[36] (2) Exotic animals (such as lions) were difficult and expensive to acquire, transport, and maintain. Hence, it is also possible that all of the lions had already been killed in the course of the *venatio* and he did not have any animals available. (3) *Damnatio ad bestias* and *crematio* seem to have been the most common forms of execution in the context of *spectacula*. Hence, if animals were not available, *crematio* would be a natural second choice.	(1) As previously mentioned, chronology of Polycarp's trial and execution with respect to the *spectaculum* in which it is recorded as having occurred is rather awkward. Germanicus and some of the other martyrs mentioned at the beginning of the account (*Mart. Pol.* 2.4; 3.1) were executed *ad bestias*, presumably during the mid-day break following the *venatio* as was common by the end of the first century. Given that only special imperial *spectacula* lasted more than a few days and *Mart. Pol.* (at least in its current form) implies that it took at least two days for Polycarp to be arrested and returned to the city, it would seem unlikely that the *spectaculum* would still be in progress. (2) Given that Polycarp seems to have been of fairly high social rank, a sentence of either *damnatio ad bestias* or *crematio* would have been atypical.[37] Elite free-born individuals were generally entitled to being executed by simple beheading, often with the option of exile instead.[38]
Mart. Pol. 13.1: ... τῶν ὄχλων παραχρῆμα συναγόντων ἔκ τε τῶν ἐργαστηρίων καὶ βαλανείων ξύλα καὶ φρύγανα, μάλιστα Ἰουδαίων προθύμως, ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς, εἰς ταῦτα ὑπουργούντων. ("the crowds forthwith gathering together	Firewood and timber would have been needed in order to carry out a sentence of *crematio*.	It seems highly unlikely that those gathered for the *spectaculum* during which Polycarp would be executed would have left their seats in the stadium in order to gather wood for the execution. In a normal arena execution, the

36. Potter, "Spectacle," 398; Robert, *Les Gladiateurs dans l'Orient Grec*, 274.

37. Thompson, "The Martyrdom of Polycarp," 38.

38. This would generally have been the case even for provincial elites who were not necessarily Roman citizens.

timber and dry sticks from the workplaces and baths, the Jews assisting especially eagerly in these things, as was customary for them.")		wood, along with the stake and other items, would have already been prepared before the event started.
Mart. Pol. 13.2: ὅτε δὲ ἡ πυρκαϊὰ ἡτοιμάσθη, ἀποθέμενος ἑαυτῷ πάντα τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ λύσας τὴν ζώνην ἐπειρᾶτο καὶ ὑπολύειν ἑαυτόν ("And when the pyre was prepared, laying aside all of his clothes and loosening his belt, he also attempted to remove his shoes")	*Damnati* were typically executed naked or nearly naked, particularly *damnati ad bestias*.[39]	*Damnati* would usually have been led into the arena already naked, rather than undressing during the show. Polycarp's undressing becomes part of the spectacle as a function of the trial's having been shifted into the stadium to become part of the *spectaculum*.
Mart. Pol. 13.3-14.1: εὐθέως οὖν αὐτῷ περιετίθετο τὰ πρὸς τὴν πυρὰν ἡρμοσμένα ὄργανα. μελλόντων δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ προσηλοῦν, εἶπεν· ἄφετέ με οὕτως· ὁ γὰρ δοὺς ὑπομεῖναι τὸ πῦρ δώσει καὶ χωρὶς τῆς ὑμετέρας ἐκ τῶν ἥλων ἀσφαλείας ἄσκυλτον ἐπιμεῖναι τῇ πυρᾷ. οἱ δὲ οὐ καθήλωσαν μέν, προσέδησαν δὲ αὐτόν. ("Immediately the tools appropriate for the fire were put around him. But when they were going to nail him also, he said, 'Leave me thus; for the one who allowed me to endure the fire will allow me to stay in the fire undisturbed even without your security from the nails.' And so they did not nail him, but they bound him.")	(1) Tertullian claims that Christians were known as "belonging to brushwood" (*sarmenticii*) and "half-axle-men" (*semaxios*) "because having been bound to a stake [the size] of half an axle we were set on fire surrounded with brushwood" (Tertullian, *Apol.* 50.3: *quia ad stipitem dimidii axis revincti sarmentorum ambitu exurimur*).[40] While Tertullian's Carthage was a long way from Smyrna, it suggests that the usual practice in *crematio* would be to attach the victim to a stake of some sort and to pile the wood around the base.[41] (2) Presumably the nails would	(1) It is possible that the lack of nails might have increased the suspense for the audience of the *spectaculum*, adding to the excitement of the execution itself the possibility that Polycarp might attempt to get free (although any escape from the flames would have been at most temporary). However, given that audiences of executions were expecting the *damnati* to be humiliated, desperate, and defeated, Polycarp's display of courage and endurance may have been somewhat disappointing to the audience. (2) Other sources do not consistently mention the use of nails in conjunction with

39. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 53–54. It is likely that those condemned to *crematio* were also executed naked, although there are fewer extant artistic depictions of *crematio* than there are of *damnatio ad bestias*, so it is not as clear what the common practice was.

40. Latin text is from Tertullian, *Tertullian: Apology, De Spectaculis*, trans. T. R. Glover, Loeb Classical Library (New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1931), 222.

41. Death by *crematio* was also accomplished by means of the *tunica molesta*, an inflammable garment, or by smearing the body with pitch or tar before setting it alight. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 170. However, neither of these more elaborate methods seem to have been used in Polycarp's case.

	have been used to ensure that the body remained positioned in the fire, even after any ropes would have been burned away. Nailing Polycarp to the stake may also have been seen as adding further torture to his execution (although in that case it seems unlikely that they would have so easily yielded to Polycarp's request to refrain from nailing him).	*crematio*. Hence, the primary purpose for Polycarp's statement was probably to emphasize the endurance and courage bestowed on him by Christ because of his confession.[42]
Mart. Pol. 16.1: πέρας γοῦν ἰδόντες οἱ ἄνομοι μὴ δυνάμενον αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα ὑπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς δαπανηθῆναι, ἐκέλευσαν προσελθόντα αὐτῷ κομφέκτορα παραβῦσαι ξιφίδιον. καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσαντος, ἐξῆλθεν περιστερὰ καὶ πλῆθος αἵματος, ὥστε κατασβέσαι τὸ πῦρ καὶ θαυμάσαι πάντα τὸν ὄχλον, εἰ τοσαύτη τις διαφορὰ μεταξὺ τῶν τε ἀπίστων καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν· ("At last then, the lawless ones seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, they ordered an executioner going up to stick a dagger in him. And when he had done this, a dove and a great quantity of blood came out, so that the fire was quenched and the whole crowd marveled that there could be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect")	(1) It was standard procedure for *damnati* to be stabbed or to have their throats cut after their sentences had been carried out (both to make certain in the case of those already dead and to finish off those who were not).[43] (2) The term used for executioner (κομφέκτωρ) is taken from the Latin, *confector* (= a slayer), and is used by Suetonius for arena participants (*Aug.* 43; *Nero* 12).	(1) The chronology seems a bit odd here, as the statement that Polycarp's blood extinguished the fire implies that it was still burning (with Polycarp bound in its midst) when he is stabbed by the executioner. In order to stab Polycarp with a dagger, the executioner would have to have been practically in the fire with him, which seems highly unlikely (unless the fire had already burned down significantly[44]). (2) It is difficult to determine what would have prompted the crowd's amazement. *Mart. Pol.* (in its current form) seems to link it to the vast quantity of blood expelled from Polycarp's body and the extinguishing of the flames, but it is unclear why this would lead the crowd to marvel at the difference between unbelievers and the elect.[45] It is more likely that the crowd's amazement would arise from the whole series of events which had transpired (the "miraculous" arched flame, the sweet smells, and Polycarp's having survived the pyre).[46]

42. After all, Polycarp probably would have been unconscious from shock or smoke inhalation by the time the ropes binding him were burned through. In addition, the wood would most likely have been piled up against Polycarp's body, making it extremely difficult for him

Mart. Pol. 17.1-2: ὁ δὲ ἀντίζηλος καὶ βάσκανος πονηρός, ὁ ἀντικείμενος τῷ γένει τῶν δικαίων, ἰδὼν τό τε μέγεθος αὐτοῦ τῆς μαρτυρίας καὶ τὴν ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς ἀνεπίληπτον πολιτείαν, ἐστεφανωμένον τε τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στέφανον καὶ βραβεῖον ἀναντίρρητον ἀπενηνεγμένον, ἐπετήδευσεν, ὡς μηδὲ τὸ σωμάτιον αὐτοῦ	(1) Uses the usual technical terms for the awarding of prizes in the games (e.g. στέφανος, βραβεῖον). (2) It was not unusual for the bodies of *damnati* not to be released to family or friends or even to be denied burial.[47]	(1) The claim that they were denied Polycarp's body matches what would seem to be normal procedures regarding the corpses of *damnati*. However, it does not match with the fact that no attempt seems to have been made to prevent the Christians from collecting and removing Polycarp's remains after his

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even to attempt escape.

43. This seems to have often taken place outside of the arena in the *spoliarium*. The use of the *spoliarium* for this purpose is clear both from comments made by Seneca (*Ep.* 93.12) and in SHA *Comm.* 18.3, 5; 19.1, 3. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 158–59.

44. In which case it would seem unlikely that the crowd would be amazed by Polycarp's blood having extinguished the fire, although Polycarp's having survived the fire for so long would have been quite a marvel.

45. Certainly for the Christian audience the extinguishing of the fire by Polycarp's blood would have had a clear theological significance, effectively proclaiming the martyr's eternal salvation (especially in conjunction with Polycarp's statement in *Mart. Pol.* 11.2). The indications that Polycarp's martyrdom ended the current persecution in Smyrna (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1; 19.1-2) would lend added significance to the symbolism of Polycarp's blood extinguishing the fire. However, these aspects are unlikely to be a source of amazement for the predominantly non-Christian crowd. What immediately follows (*Mart. Pol.* 16.2) suggests that the reason given for the crowd's amazement is meant to draw attention to Polycarp's new redeemed state and his elevated status as a martyr and prophet.

46. The dove would certainly have caused the crowd to marvel, but there is a general consensus that this is a later addition to the text (the grammar of the passage strongly suggests an emendation here - the verb is in the singular with two subjects - and Eusebius makes no mention of the dove in his version). Dehandschutter, "Martyrium Polycarpi," 51–55. Presumably the crowd was able to perceive all the miraculous events (with the exception of the voice from heaven, which only the Christian witnesses could hear) associated with Polycarp's death.

47. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 17, 19, 267–69. Kyle has shown that the treatment of the corpses of those who died in the arena was related to the status and symbolic meaning of the victim. Elite gladiators could expect to have their bodies released to family members or to undertakers paid by the gladiator's burial society, whereas those accused of crimes such as *maiestas* could expect not only denial of burial, but also post-mortem corpse abuse. The denial of burial to *damnati* executed in the arena seems to have been at best an occasional occurrence.

ὑφ᾽ ἡμῶν ληφθῆναι, καίπερ πολλῶν ἐπιθυμούντων τοῦτο ποιῆσαι καὶ κοινωνῆσαι τῷ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ σαρκίῳ. ὑπέβαλεν γοῦν Νικήτην τὸν τοῦ Ἡρώδου πατέρα, ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ἄλκης, ἐντυχεῖν τῷ ἄρχοντι, ὥστε μὴ δοῦναι αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα· (“But the jealous and slanderous malicious one, the adversary of the race of the righteous, having seen the greatness of his [i.e. Polycarp’s] witness [*Or: martyrdom*] and his blameless way of life from the beginning, both having been crowned with the crown of immortality and obtained an incontestable prize, made it his business that his body might not be received by us, even though many were longing to do this and to have a share in [*Or: to commune with; or: to have fellowship with*] his holy flesh. At all events, he provoked Nicetas, the father of Herod and brother of Alce, to petition the magistrate not to hand over his body.”)		body was burned in the arena (*Mart. Pol.* 18.1-2). (See further discussion of *Mart. Pol.* 18.1-2 below.)
Mart. Pol. 18.1: ἰδὼν οὖν ὁ κεντυρίων τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων γενομένην φιλονεικίαν, θεὶς αὐτὸν ἐν μέσῳ, ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς, ἔκαυσεν. (“Then the centurion, seeing the contentiousness being caused by the Jews, placing it [i.e. Polycarp’s body] in the middle, he burned it as was customary for them.”)	(1) As is clear here, even if one were to discount Polycarp’s miraculous survival of the fire, the bodies of those who were executed by *crematio* were rarely, if ever, entirely consumed by the flames. Even packing firewood around a body tied to a stake, using the *tunica molesta*, or coating the body with some inflammable material (e.g. pitch) would not cause the body to be reduced to ash, although it would certainly create sufficient heat and smoke to result in the individual’s death. The complete consumption of a human body by fire requires a very high temperature flame and even with the specialized skills of Roman funeral	(1) Cremation was a rather elite means of disposal for corpses in the Roman world, requiring significant resources and some degree of specialized skill. According to standard procedures the fragments of bone and other remains not consumed by the fire would have been interred in a *columbarium* or other tomb. In this case, however, the primary goal may have been to prevent the Christian community from obtaining and burying the body (although the fact that no effort is made to prevent the Christians from collecting the remains following the cremation contradicts the portrayal of this as a form of desecration of the corpse).

	directors instances are recorded in which the body failed to be consumed by the pyre.[48] (2) It is quite likely that the centurion, as a Roman official and an agent of the proconsul, would have responded as described in a situation where a local conflict seemed to be brewing, honoring the request of Nicetas (who as the father of the chief of police must have been a fairly high status individual), supported by the Jewish community, to burn the body rather than handing it over to the Christian community. However, it is also possible that the disposal of arena victims through cremation was customary (as *Mart. Pol.* also claims) and both Nicetas' objection and the hostility of the Jews are added in order to make a theological claim (for the possibility that the contentiousness of the Jews was added as an allusion to the passion narrative, see table on gospel parallels in Appendix A).[49]	(2) Even if burning the bodies of those killed in the arena was the usual custom in Smyrna, it seems unlikely that the disposal of the corpse would have been part of the spectacle itself, carried out in the middle of the stadium. Descriptions from non-Christian texts (and some Christian ones) suggest that it was usual to drag the corpse from the arena, continuing the humiliation of the *damnati* even after death. It is possible that concerns about Christian attempts to steal the body might have prompted the officials to immediately dispose of Polycarp's remains in the stadium. However, the deliberate placing of the corpse in the middle of the arena suggests that the final disposal of the body has been deliberately made part of the *spectaculum* (at least in the case of *Mart. Pol.*'s narrative).[50] (3) The participation of a centurion in the disposal of Polycarp's body seems rather unusual, especially as the

48. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death*, 169–71. Kyle notes that even in the case of funeral pyres, which were stuffed with papyrus to be able to achieve the necessary high temperatures, accidents are recorded (e.g. Plutarch, *Ti. Gracch.* 13.5; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 7.186). On the use of papyrus in funeral pyres, Martial, *Epig.* 8.44.14; 10.97.1.

49. Gibson argues that *Mart. Pol.* 17.2-3 are an interpolation and in the original text the "conflict" was over an attempt by "the Jews" to obtain Polycarp's remains for themselves. Gibson, "Jews and Christians in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*," 152–58. While an intriguing idea, there are a number of leaps in the argument that seem somewhat problematic, including Gibson's justification for why the Jews in the text (more probably Torah observant Christians) would have sought Polycarp's body.

		presence of military personnel has not previously been mentioned. However, it is possible that a centurion would have taken over the proconsul's role in presiding over the *spectaculum*, especially as the main events were essentially over (Polycarp was dead and the *spectaculum* must have already been unusually extended in order to accommodate his execution).

Appendix C: Allusions to other biblical texts

Table of passages of *Mart. Pol.* containing allusions or quotations of biblical texts other than the gospels, the referenced biblical text, and a brief analysis:[51]

***Mart. Pol.* text**	**Biblical allusion/parallel, alternative identity understanding, etc.**	**Discussion/evaluation**
Mart. Pol. 9.1: τῷ δὲ Πολυκάρπῳ εἰσιόντι εἰς τὸ στάδιον φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐγένετο· **ἴσχυε**, Πολύκαρπε, **καὶ ἀνδρίζου**. καὶ τὸν μὲν εἰπόντα οὐδεὶς εἶδεν, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν. ("But on entering the stadium a voice came to Polycarp from heaven, 'Be strong, Polycarp, and be courageous *[Or: be manly]*.' And no one saw the one who had spoken, but those of our people who were present heard the voice.")	Josh 1:9: ἰδοὺ ἐντέταλμαί σοι· **ἴσχυε καὶ ἀνδρίζου**, μὴ δειλιάσῃς μηδὲ φοβηθῇς, ὅτι μετὰ σοῦ κύριος ὁ θεός σου εἰς πάντα, οὗ ἐὰν πορεύῃ. ("I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.") Dan 10:19: καὶ εἶπέ μοι Ἄνθρωπος ἐλεεινὸς εἶ, μὴ φοβοῦ, ὑγίαινε· **ἀνδρίζου καὶ ἴσχυε**. καὶ ἐν τῷ λαλῆσαι αὐτὸν μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ ἴσχυσα καὶ εἶπα Λαλησάτω ὁ κύριός μου, ὅτι ἐνίσχυσέ με.	The heavenly voice in *Mart. Pol.* 9.1 echoes the commands given to Joshua (by God or Moses, in God's name, commanding him to enter the Land), Solomon (by David, commanding him to build the Temple), and Daniel (by his angelic guide, prior to offering further revelations) in the LXX. In all cases, those addressed are called on to engage in tasks that will reveal God's care and concern for Israel and God's control over history. Joshua's entrance into the Land is also characterized by miracles and Daniel is being strengthened

51. For parallels and allusions to the gospels, please see Appendix A above.

	("He said, 'Do not fear, greatly beloved, you are safe. Be strong and courageous!' When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, 'Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.'") Cf. Deut 31:6-7, 23; Josh 1:6, 7, 18; 1 Chr 22:13.	specifically to obtain further revelations from God (and ultimately to pass them on to others). The implication is that Polycarp's martyrdom will similarly reveal God's power and display God's care for his people. This is fulfilled in the miracles associated with Polycarp's death (*Mart. Pol.* 15-16.1), the fact that events unfold as prophesied (*Mart. Pol.* 5.2; 12.3), and the fact that the persecution ceases with his martyrdom (*Mart. Pol.* 1.1).
Mart. Pol. 10.1-2: ἐπιμένοντος δὲ πάλιν αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγοντος· ὄμοσον τὴν καίσαρος τύχην, ἀπεκρίνατο· εἰ κενοδοξεῖς, ἵνα ὀμόσω τὴν καίσαρος τύχην, ὡς σὺ λέγεις, προσποιεῖ δὲ ἀγνοεῖν με, τίς εἰμι, μετὰ παρρησίας ἄκουε· Χριστιανός εἰμι. εἰ δὲ θέλεις τὸν τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ μαθεῖν λόγον, δὸς ἡμέραν καὶ ἄκουσον. ἔφη ὁ ἀνθύπατος· πεῖσον τὸν δῆμον. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· σὲ μὲν καὶ λόγου ἠξίωκα· δεδιδάγμεθα γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τεταγμέναις τιμὴν κατὰ τὸ προσῆκον τὴν μὴ βλάπτουσαν ἡμᾶς ἀπονέμειν· ἐκείνους δὲ οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι ἀξίους τοῦ ἀπολογεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς. ("But when he [i.e. the proconsul] again persisted and said, 'Swear by the fortune of Caesar,' he [i.e. Polycarp] answered, 'If you are so vain-glorious that [you think] I might swear by the fortune of Caesar, as you say, but you pretend not to recognize me, who I am, listen with boldness: I am a Christian. But if you wish to learn an account of Christianity, assign a day and listen.' The proconsul said, 'Persuade the people.' But Polycarp said, 'I consider you worthy of an account, for we	(1) There are some narrative parallels with the story of the uproar in Ephesus caused by Paul's preaching there (Acts 19:21-41), where the term δῆμος is also used (Acts 19:33: ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος κατασείσας τὴν χεῖρα ἤθελεν ἀπολογεῖσθαι τῷ δήμῳ. ["And Alexander motioned for silence and tried to make a defense before the people."]; cf. Acts 19:30). Like the trial of Polycarp, this is a spontaneous popular gathering at a place where *spectacula* would have been held (although in Acts it is a theater rather than a stadium), characterized by popular acclamations and trial-like elements (although in Acts the people do not allow Alexander to make his defense). (2) Polycarp's response to the proconsul's request that he attempt to persuade the people has been seen as an allusion to the commands in Rom 13:1 and 1 Pet 2:13-14 to render obedience and respect to rulers and authorities. Rom 13:1: Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, αἱ δὲ	(1) More likely that the two narratives employ similar spectacle motifs than that *Mart. Pol.* is making any direct allusion to the Acts narrative. (2) An awareness of the content of Rom 13:1 and 1 Pet 2:13-14 does seem to underlie Polycarp's remark. However, the wording of *Mart. Pol.* is significantly different from either of the proposed parallels (particularly from 1 Pet 2:13-14; Rom 13:1 at least shares some common vocabulary with *Mart. Pol.*).

are taught to impart honor to rulers and authorities appointed by God in so far as it does not harm us, but I do not think those people are worthy of a defense to them.’”)	οὖσαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσίν· (“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.”) 1 Pet 2:13-14: ῾Υποτάγητε πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει διὰ τὸν κύριον, εἴτε βασιλεῖ ὡς ὑπερέχοντι, εἴτε ἡγεμόσιν ὡς δι᾽ αὐτοῦ πεμπομένοις εἰς ἐκδίκησιν κακοποιῶν ἔπαινον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν· (“For the Lord’s sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right.”)	
Mart. Pol. 12.2: τούτου λεχθέντος ὑπὸ τοῦ κήρυκος, ἅπαν τὸ πλῆθος ἐθνῶν τε καὶ ᾿Ιουδαίων τῶν τὴν Σμύρναν κατοικούντων ἀκατασχέτῳ θυμῷ καὶ μεγάλῃ φωνῇ ἐπεβόα· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τῆς ἀσεβείας διδάσκαλος, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ὁ τῶν ἡμετέρων θεῶν καθαιρέτης, ὁ πολλοὺς διδάσκων μὴ θύειν μηδὲ προσκυνεῖν τοῖς θεοῖς. (“When this had been said by the herald, the entire multitude of both Gentiles and Jews who lived in Smyrna cried out in an uncontrollable rage and a loud voice, ‘This is the teacher of impiety, the father of the Christians, the overthrower of our gods, the one who teaches many not to sacrifice or worship the gods.’”)	The acclamation made by the spectators in the stadium has parallels with the accusation leveled against Stephen (Acts 6:13-14: ἔστησάν τε μάρτυρας ψευδεῖς λέγοντας, ῾Ο ἄνθρωπος οὗτος οὐ παύεται λαλῶν ῥήματα κατὰ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἁγίου [τούτου] καὶ τοῦ νόμου· ἀκηκόαμεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι ᾿Ιησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος οὗτος καταλύσει τὸν τόπον τοῦτον καὶ ἀλλάξει τὰ ἔθη ἃ παρέδωκεν ἡμῖν Μωϋσῆς. [“They set up false witnesses who said, ‘This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.’”]) and the accusation of the Ephesian silversmiths against Paul (Acts 19:25-27: οὓς συναθροίσας καὶ τοὺς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐργάτας εἶπεν, ῞Ανδρες, ἐπίστασθε ὅτι ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἐργασίας ἡ εὐπορία	The parallel with the accusation of the Ephesian silversmiths is closer in the sense that the context involves a direct attack on pagan deities and people’s refusal (or potential refusal) to worship the gods because of the influence of a Christian teacher. The accusation of Stephen in Acts emphasizes the awkwardness of *Mart. Pol.*’s inclusion of the Jews among the spectators who cried out against Polycarp. The accusation that Polycarp was teaching people not to sacrifice or worship the gods makes sense when spoken by pagans, but one would expect an accusation of perverting the Law from Jews (who could also be accused of failure to worship the gods).

	ἡμῖν ἐστιν καὶ θεωρεῖτε καὶ ἀκούετε ὅτι οὐ μόνον Ἐφέσου ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν πάσης τῆς Ἀσίας ὁ Παῦλος οὗτος πείσας μετέστησεν ἱκανὸν ὄχλον λέγων ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι. οὐ μόνον δὲ τοῦτο κινδυνεύει ἡμῖν τὸ μέρος εἰς ἀπελεγμὸν ἐλθεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθὲν λογισθῆναι, μέλλειν τε καὶ καθαιρεῖσθαι τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς ἣν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται.[52] ["These he gathered together, with the workers of the same trade, and said, 'Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business. You also see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her.'"]). In both cases the issue is a perceived attack against the established religious institutions.	

52. Some manuscripts of *Mart. Pol.* (m, L) and the testimony of Eusebius have Ἀσίας instead of ἀσεβείας (which is the reading of all the Greek manuscripts except m). The acclamation that Polycarp was the teacher of Asia may allude to the silversmiths' accusation that Paul has persuaded a multitude of people throughout nearly all of Asia to cease worshipping the gods.

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