

## An Apologist on Trials: Justin Martyr's *Second Apology* in Comparative Perspective

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### 1) The Martyrdom of Ptolemaeus and Lucius

#### JUSTIN MARTYR, *SECOND APOLOGY* 2<sup>1</sup>

A certain woman lived with an intemperate husband; she herself, too, having formerly been intemperate. But when she came to the knowledge of the teachings of Christ she became sober-minded, and endeavoured to persuade her husband likewise to be temperate, citing the teaching of Christ, and assuring him that there shall be punishment in eternal fire inflicted upon those who do not live temperately and conformably to right reason. But he, continuing in the same excesses, alienated his wife from him by his actions. For she, considering it wicked to live any longer as a wife with a husband who sought in every way means of indulging in pleasure contrary to the law of nature, and in violation of what is right, wished to be divorced from him. And when she was over-persuaded by her friends, who advised her still to continue with him, in the idea that some time or other her husband might give hope of amendment, she did violence to her own feeling and remained with him. But when her husband had gone into Alexandria, and was reported to be conducting himself worse than ever, she — that she might not, by continuing in matrimonial connection with him, and by sharing his table and his bed, become a partaker also in his wickednesses and impieties — gave him what you call a bill of divorce, and was separated from him. But this noble husband of hers — while he ought to have been rejoicing that those actions which formerly she unhesitatingly committed with the servants and hirelings, when she delighted in drunkenness and every vice, she had now given up, and desired that he too should give up the same — when she had gone from him without his desire, brought an accusation against

γυνή τις συνεβίου ἀνδρὶ ἀκολασταίνοντι, ἀκολασταίνουσα καὶ αὐτὴ πρότερον. ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδάγματα ἔγνω, αὐτὴ ἐσωφρονίσθη καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα ὁμοίως σωφρονεῖν πείθειν ἐπειράτο, τὰ διδάγματα ἀναφέρουσα, τὴν τε μέλλουσαν τοῖς οὐ σωφρόνως καὶ μετὰ λόγου ὀρθοῦ βιοῦσιν ἔσεσθαι ἐν αἰωνίῳ πυρὶ κόλασιν ἀπαγγέλλουσα. ὁ δὲ ταῖς αὐταῖς ἀσελγείαις ἐπιμένων ἄλλοτρίαν διὰ τῶν πράξεων ἐποιεῖτο τὴν γαμετὴν. ἀσεβὲς γὰρ ἡγουμένη τὸ λοιπὸν ἡ γυνὴ συγκατακλίνεσθαι ἀνδρὶ, παρὰ τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον καὶ παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον πόρους ἡδονῆς ἐκ παντὸς πειρωμένῳ ποιῆσθαι, τῆς συζυγίας χωρισθῆναι ἐβουλήθη. καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἐξεδυσωπεῖτο ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῆς, ἔτι προσμένειν συμβουλευόντων, ὡς εἰς ἐλπίδα μεταβολῆς ἤξοντός ποτε τοῦ ἀνδρός, βιαζομένη ἑαυτὴν ἐπέμενε. ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ ταύτης ἀνὴρ εἰς τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν πορευθεὶς χαλεπώτερα πράττειν ἀπηγγέλη, ὅπως μὴ κοινῶν τῶν ἀδικημάτων καὶ ἀσεβημάτων γένηται, μένουσα ἐν τῇ συζυγίᾳ καὶ ὁμοδίαιτος καὶ ὁμόκοιτος γινομένη, τὸ λεγόμενον παρ' ἡμῖν ῥεπούδιον δοῦσα ἐχωρίσθη. ὁ δὲ καλὸς κάγαθος ταύτης ἀνὴρ, δέον αὐτὸν χαίρειν ὅτι ἅ πάλαι μετὰ τῶν ὑπηρετῶν καὶ τῶνμισθοφόρων εὐχερῶς ἔπραττε, μέθαις χαίρουσα καὶ κακία πάσῃ, τούτων μὲν τῶν πράξεων πέπαυτο καὶ αὐτὸν τὰ αὐτὰ παύσασθαι πράττοντα ἐβούλετο, μὴ βουλομένου ἀπαλλαγείσης κατηγορίαν πεποιήται, λέγων αὐτὴν Χριστιανὴν εἶναι. καὶ ἡ μὲν βιβλίδιον σοι τῷ αὐτοκράτορι ἀνέδωκεν, πρότερον συγχωρηθῆναι αὐτῇ διοικήσασθαι τὰ ἑαυτῆς ἀξιοῦσα, ἔπειτα ἀπολογήσασθαι περὶ τοῦ κατηγορήματος μετὰ τῶν πραγμάτων αὐτῆς διοίκησιν· καὶ συνεχώρησας τοῦτο. ὁ δὲ ταύτης ποτὲ ἀνὴρ, πρὸς ἐκείνην μὲν μὴ δυνάμενος τὰ νῦν ἔτι λέγειν,

<sup>1</sup> Translations adapted from Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (eds.) *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1; trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885); Greek text from Edgar J. Goodspeed (ed.) *Die ältesten Apologeten. Texte mit kurzen Einleitungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1915).

her, affirming that she was a Christian. And she presented a paper to you, the Emperor, requesting that first she be permitted to arrange her affairs, and afterwards to make her defense against the accusation, when her affairs were set in order. And this you granted. And her one time husband, since he was now no longer able to prosecute her, directed his assaults against a man, Ptolemæus, whom Urbicus punished, and who had been her teacher in the Christian doctrines. And this he did in the following way. He persuaded a centurion — who had cast Ptolemæus into prison, and who was friendly to himself — to take Ptolemæus and interrogate him on this sole point: whether he were a Christian? And Ptolemæus, being a lover of truth, and not of a deceitful or false disposition, when he confessed himself to be a Christian, was bound by the centurion, and for a long time punished in the prison. And, at last, when the man came to Urbicus, he was asked this one question only: whether he was a Christian? And again, being conscious of his duty, and the nobility of it through the teaching of Christ, he confessed his discipleship in the divine virtue. For he who denies anything either denies it because he condemns the thing itself, or he shrinks from confession because he is conscious of his own unworthiness or alienation from it, neither of which cases is that of the true Christian. And when Urbicus ordered him to be led away to punishment, one Lucius, who was also himself a Christian, seeing the unreasonable judgment that had thus been given, said to Urbicus: What is the ground of this judgment? Why have you punished this man, not as an adulterer, nor fornicator, nor murderer, nor thief, nor robber, nor convicted of any crime at all, but who has only confessed that he is called by the name of Christian? **This judgment of yours, O Urbicus, does not become the Emperor Pius, nor the philosopher, the son of Cæsar, nor the sacred senate.** And he said nothing else in answer to Lucius than this: You also seem to me to be such a one. And when Lucius answered, Most certainly I am, he again ordered him also to be led away. And he professed his thanks, knowing that he was delivered from such wicked rulers, and was going to the

πρὸς Πτολεμαῖόν τινα, ὃν Οὐρβικὸς ἐκολάσατο, διδάσκαλον ἐκείνης τῶν Χριστιανῶν μαθημάτων γενόμενον, ἐτράπετο διὰ τοῦδε τοῦ τρόπου. ἑκατόνταρχον εἰς δεσμὰ ἐμβαλόντα τὸν Πτολεμαῖον, φίλον αὐτῷ ὑπάρχοντα, ἔπεισε λαβέσθαι τοῦ Πτολεμαίου καὶ ἀνερωτῆσαι εἰ, αὐτὸ τοῦτο μόνον, Χριστιανός ἐστιν. καὶ τὸν Πτολεμαῖον, φιλαλήθη ἄλλ' οὐκ ἀπατηλὸν οὐδὲ ψευδολόγον τὴν γνώμην ὄντα ὁμολογήσαντα ἑαυτὸν εἶναι Χριστιανόν, ἐν δεσμοῖς γενέσθαι ὁ ἑκατόνταρχος πεποίηκεν, καὶ ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἐν τῷ δεσμοτηρίῳ ἐκολάσατο. τελευταῖον δέ, ὅτε ἐπὶ Οὐρβικὸν ἦχθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὁμοίως αὐτὸ τοῦτο μόνον ἐξήτάσθη, εἰ εἶη Χριστιανός. καὶ πάλιν, τὰ καλὰ ἑαυτῷ συνεπιστάμενος διὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδαχὴν, τὸ διδασκαλεῖον τῆς θείας ἀρετῆς ὡμολόγησεν. ὁ γὰρ ἀρνούμενος ὅτι οὖν ἢ κατεγνωκῶς τοῦ πράγματος ἕξαρνος γίνεται, ἢ ἑαυτὸν ἀνάξιον ἐπιστάμενος καὶ ἀλλότριον τοῦ πράγματος τὴν ὁμολογίαν φεύγει. ὧν οὐδὲν πρόσεστιν τῷ ἀληθινῷ Χριστιανῷ. καὶ τοῦ Οὐρβίκου κελεύσαντος αὐτὸν ἀπαχθῆναι Λούκιός τις, καὶ αὐτὸς ὧν Χριστιανός, ὄρων τὴν ἀλόγως οὕτως γενομένην κρίσιν, πρὸς τὸν Οὐρβικὸν ἔφη· Τίς ἡ αἰτία; τοῦ μήτε μοιχὸν μήτε πόρνον μήτε ἀνδροφόνον μήτε λωποδύτην μήτε ἄρπαγα μήτε ἀπλῶς ἀδίκημά τι πράξαντα ἐλεγχόμενον, ὀνόματος δὲ Χριστιανοῦ προσωνομίαν ὁμολογοῦντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον τοῦτον ἐκολάσω; οὐκ ἐπέποντα Εὐσεβεῖ αὐτοκράτορι οὐδὲ φιλοσόφου Καίσαρος παιδὶ οὐδὲ τῇ ἱερᾷ συγκλήτῳ κρίνεις, ὦ Οὐρβικε. καὶ ὃς οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἀποκρινάμενος καὶ πρὸς τὸν Λούκιον ἔφη· Δοκεῖς μοι καὶ σὺ εἶναι τοιοῦτος. καὶ Λουκίου φήσαντος· Μάλιστα, πάλιν καὶ αὐτὸν ἀπαχθῆναι ἐκέλευσεν. ὁ δὲ καὶ χάριν εἰδέναί ὡμολόγει, πονηρῶν δεσποτῶν τῶν τοιούτων ἀπηλλάχθαι γινώσκων καὶ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ βασιλέα τῶν οὐρανῶν πορεύεσθαι. καὶ ἄλλος δὲ τρίτος ἐπελθὼν κολασθῆναι προσετιμήθη.

Father and King of the heavens. And still a third having come forward, was condemned to be punished.	
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## 2) Justin and Crescens

### JUSTIN MARTYR, *SECOND APOLOGY* 8 [3]

I too, therefore, expect to be plotted against and fixed to the stake, by some of those I have named, or perhaps by Crescens, that lover of bravado and boasting; for the man is not worthy of the name of philosopher who publicly bears witness against us in matters which he does not understand, saying that the Christians are atheists and impious, and doing so to win favour with the deluded mob, and to please them. For if he assails us without having read the teachings of Christ, he is thoroughly depraved, and far worse than the illiterate, who often refrain from discussing or bearing false witness about matters they do not understand. Or, if he has read them and does not understand the majesty that is in them, or, understanding it, acts thus that he may not be suspected of being such [a Christian], he is far more base and thoroughly depraved, being conquered by illiberal and unreasonable opinion and fear. **For I would have you to know that I proposed to him certain questions on this subject, and interrogated him, and found most convincingly that he, in truth, knows nothing. And to prove that I speak the truth, I am ready, if these disputations have not been reported to you, to conduct them again in your presence.** And this would be an act worthy of a prince. But if my questions and his answers have been made known to you, you are already aware that he is acquainted with none of our matters; or, if he is acquainted with them, but, through fear of those who might hear him, does not dare to speak out, like Socrates, he proves himself, as I said before, no philosopher, but an opinionative man; at least he does not regard that Socratic and most admirable saying: But a man must in no way be honoured before the truth. But it is impossible for a Cynic, who makes indifference his end, to know any good but indifference.

Κάγὼ οὖν προσδοκῶ ὑπὸ τινος τῶν ὀνομασμένων ἐπιβουλευθῆναι καὶ ξύλῳ ἐμπαγῆναι, ἢ καὶν ὑπὸ Κρίσκεντος τοῦ φιλοσόφου καὶ φιλοκόμπου. οὐ γὰρ φιλόσοφον εἰπεῖν ἄξιον τὸν ἄνδρα, ὅς γε περὶ ἡμῶν ἃ μὴ ἐπίσταται δημοσίᾳ καταμαρτυρεῖ, ὡς ἀθέων καὶ ἀσεβῶν Χριστιανῶν ὄντων, πρὸς χάριν καὶ ἡδονὴν τῶν πολλῶν τῶν πεπλανημένων ταῦτα πράττων. εἴτε γὰρ μὴ ἐντυχῶν τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδάγμασι κατατρέχει ἡμῶν, παμπόνηρός ἐστι καὶ ἰδιωτῶν πολὺ χείρων, οἳ φυλάττονται πολλακίς περὶ ὧν οὐκ ἐπίστανται διαλέγεσθαι καὶ ψευδομαρτυρεῖν· ἢ εἰ ἐντυχῶν, μὴ συνῆκε τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς μεγαλεῖον, ἢ συνείς, πρὸς τὸ μὴ ὑποπτευθῆναι τοιοῦτος ταῦτα ποιεῖ, πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀγεννῆς καὶ παμπόνηρος, ἰδιωτικῆς καὶ ἀλόγου δόξης καὶ φόβου ἐλάττων ὢν. καὶ γὰρ προθέντα με καὶ ἐρωτήσαντα αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσεις τινὰς τοιαύτας καὶ μαθεῖν καὶ ἐλέγξει, ὅτι ἀληθῶς μὴδὲν ἐπίσταται, εἰδέναι ὑμᾶς βούλομαι. καὶ ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγω, εἰ μὴ ἀνηνέχθησαν ἡμῖν αἱ κοινωνίαι τῶν λόγων, ἔτοιμος καὶ ἐφ' ὑμῶν κοινωνεῖν τῶν ἐρωτήσεων πάλιν· βασιλικὸν δ' ἂν καὶ τοῦτο ἔργον εἴη. εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐγνώσθησαν ὑμῖν αἱ ἐρωτήσεις μου καὶ αἱ ἐκείνου ἀποκρίσεις, φανερόν ὑμῖν ἐστίν ὅτι οὐδὲν τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐπίσταται· ἢ εἰ καὶ ἐπίσταται, διὰ τοὺς ἀκούοντας δὲ οὐ τολμᾷ λέγειν, ὁμοίως Σωκράτει ὡς προέφη, οὐ φιλόσοφος ἀλλὰ φιλόδοξος ἀνήρ δαίμνεται, ὅς γε μὴδὲ τὸ Σωκρατικὸν ἀξιεράστον ὄν τιμᾶ· Ἄλλ' οὐτι γὰρ πρὸ τῆς ἀληθείας τιμητέος ἀνήρ. ἀδύνατον δὲ Κυνικῶ, ἀδιάφορον τὸ τέλος προθεμένῳ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν εἰδέναι πλὴν ἀδιαφορίας.

3) The Persecution of Christians

JUSTIN MARTYR, <i>SECOND APOLOGY</i> 1	
<p>Romans, the things which have recently happened in your city under Urbicus, and the things which are likewise being everywhere unreasonably done by the governors, have compelled me to frame this composition for your sakes, who are men of like passions, and brethren, though you know it not, and though you be unwilling to acknowledge it on account of your glorying in what you esteem dignities. For everywhere, <b>whoever is corrected by father, or neighbour, or child, or friend, or brother, or husband, or wife, for a fault, for being hard to move, for loving pleasure and being hard to urge to what is right</b> (except those who have been persuaded that the unjust and intemperate shall be punished in eternal fire, but that the virtuous and those who lived like Christ shall dwell with God in a state that is free from suffering – we mean, those who have become Christians), and the evil demons, who hate us, and who keep such men as these subject to themselves, and serving them in the capacity of judges, incite them, as rulers actuated by evil spirits, to put us to death.</p>	<p>Καὶ τὰ χθὲς δὲ καὶ πρώην ἐν τῇ πόλει ὑμῶν γενόμενα ἐπὶ Οὐρβίκου, ὃ Ῥωμαῖοι, καὶ τὰ πανταχοῦ ὁμοίως ὑπὸ τῶν ἡγουμένων ἀλόγως πραττόμενα ἐξηνάγκασέ με ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, ὁμοιοπαθῶν ὄντων καὶ ἀδελφῶν, κἂν ἀγνοῆτε καὶ μὴ θέλητε διὰ τὴν δόξαν τῶν νομιζομένων ἀξιωματῶν, τὴν τῶνδε τῶν λόγων σύνταξιν ποιήσασθαι. πανταχοῦ γὰρ, <b>ὃς ἂν σωφρονίζηται ὑπὸ πατρός ἢ γείτονος ἢ τέκνου ἢ φίλου ἢ ἀδελφοῦ ἢ ἀνδρός ἢ γυναικὸς κατ' ἔλλειψιν</b>, χωρὶς τῶν πεισθέντων τοὺς ἀδίκους καὶ ἀκολάστους ἐν αἰωνίῳ πυρὶ κολασθήσεσθαι, τοὺς δ' ἐναρέτους καὶ ὁμοίως Χριστῶ βιώσαντας ἐν ἀπαθείᾳ συγγενέσθαι τῷ θεῷ (λέγομεν δὲ τῶν γενομένων Χριστιανῶν), <b>διὰ τὸ δυσμετάθετον καὶ φιλήδονον καὶ δυσκίνητον πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ὀρμήσαι</b>, καὶ οἱ φαῦλοι δαίμονες, ἐχθραίνοντες ἡμῖν καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους δικαστὰς ἔχοντες ὑποχειρίους καὶ λατρεύοντας, ὡς οὖν ἄρχοντας δαιμονιῶντας, φονεύειν ἡμᾶς παρασκευάζουσιν.</p>

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