CHAPTER TWO

The Cultural Geography of a Greek Christian

Irenaeus from Smyrna to Lyons

Jared Secord

Seen within a broader context, Irenaeus is merely one among the thousands of Greeks—Christians and otherwise—who relocated themselves to Rome.¹ But Irenaeus stands out in this company because of his final destination: most of those who came before and after him went no further west and north than Rome itself, and not as far as Lyons, the crossroads of Roman Gaul.

Yet for all the uncommonness of Irenaeus’s ultimate place of residence, he says virtually nothing about Lyons and very little about Gaul. Little attention has been paid to this silence, apart from the occasional frustrated comments of historians of Roman Gaul,² and the ingenious but misguided attempt by Jean Colin to relocate Irenaeus’s episcopate to an obscure see in northern Asia Minor.³ Suffice it to say, there is no reason to doubt that Irenaeus was a long-term resident of Lyons, but some explanation of his reticence about the city and the region as a whole is necessary.

The goal of this paper is to offer such an explanation, and to consider more broadly his perspective on the Mediterranean world and its geography. As I shall argue, Irenaeus’s view on living in the West remained that of a Greek raised and educated in Asia Minor. He is deliberately vague in his references to Gaul, and he refers to it and the rest of the Mediterranean world in ways that would be comprehensible to an Eastern Greek who was only dimly aware of the geography of the West. The result is a strange mixture, simultaneously Christian and Greek in outlook: Irenaeus regards Gaul as a barbarian land on the Western periphery of the world, but he also emphasizes the unity of the church throughout the entire world and its peoples, even among those who do not speak Greek. This last element is particularly jarring with Irenaeus’s own outlook on speaking a language other than Greek, and the paper will conclude by suggesting that he regarded even Latin as a barbarian language.

Irenaeus took with him to the West his Greek education, which he acquired likely in Smyrna, a major center of sophistic culture and teaching.⁴ If his youth had been spent in Smyrna, he would have been a contemporary there of the sophist Aelius Aristides,⁵ and there is good reason to believe that his teachers had much in common with the more philosophically inclined of the sophists.⁶ His Greek learning is often put on
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display in the *Adversus haereses*, though in several cases the sources of his knowledge seem to be nothing more than doxographical handbooks, resources used by Christians and pagans alike. Certainly, in matters concerning natural philosophy, Irenaeus’s worldview is little different from that of his pagan contemporaries.

A similarly common view is the basis for Irenaeus’s perspective of the geography of the world. The frame of his map is provided by a commonplace of classical geography, viz., that the world has four chief regions and winds. Irenaeus uses this fact as proof that there can be only four Gospels: “For there are four regions of the world in which we exist and four universal winds. And the church has spread out over all the earth, and the gospel is a pillar and foundation of the church as is the spirit of life. So it is natural that the church have four pillars breathing out incorruption everywhere and bringing new life to men.” In what follows, I shall fill in this map, starting in the East, and moving with a westward trajectory.

In the East, Irenaeus’s geographical perspective picks up, as it were, where the Acts of the Apostles left off, with Christianity having spread to the world from Palestine. But for Irenaeus, Jerusalem—by now Aelia Capitolina—is only the former starting point for the Christian movement, and it no longer holds a central position. Thus Jerusalem is likened to a twig no longer useful for bearing fruit, as in John 15: “For just as the twigs of vines are not made chiefly for themselves, but on account of the fruit growing on them, so when it ripens and is picked, the twigs are discarded and borne away [a medio auferuntur], as they are no longer useful for bearing new fruit. So too with Jerusalem.” Jerusalem has already sown its seeds: “And with its fruit sown throughout the entire inhabited world, [Jerusalem]—which had once been very fruitful—is rightly abandoned, and taken away [ἐκ μέσου ἐγένετο]. From it Christ, according to the flesh, and the apostles had sprouted, but now it is no longer useful for bearing new fruit.”

There was a sense of foreignness to the place of Jesus’ ministry, as Irenaeus explains: “In a foreign land the people of Israel came into being in twelve tribes, since Christ too was to make the twelve supporting columns of the Church in a foreign land.” Reverence for Jerusalem was akin to living in the past, a charge that Irenaeus levels against the Ebionites, a group that still practices circumcision, follows the Mosaic law, and “adores Jerusalem as if it were the house of God.” Jerusalem and Palestine are now on the periphery of the Christian world, and regions to the west have trumped them in importance.

And from Jerusalem Irenaeus follows the paths of the apostles on their journeys west as they sow the seeds of a united church. The geographical narrative in Acts is particularly significant for Irenaeus, who emphasizes that Paul preaches the same message wherever he goes, no matter the audience. This process begins in Damascus, where Irenaeus paraphrases Acts 9:19-20: “In the synagogues in Damascus, Paul heralded Jesus with complete freedom of speech, saying that he is the Christ, the son of God.” Paul’s speech in the synagogues is crucial, for Irenaeus can later find him saying much the same thing in Athens, where, Irenaeus emphasizes, there were no Jews present. Irenaeus concludes by finding Paul with Barnabas preaching the same message in Lystra, in the hinterlands of Asia Minor. Despite the differences in education and language, the Christian message as taught by Paul was the same for Jews in Damascus, educated pagans in Athens, and rustic pagans in Lystra.
The movement west continues, and Irenaeus follows the apostles as they found churches in Rome, Ephesus, and Smyrna, the latter church providing Irenaeus with his own link to the apostles because of his association with Polycarp. So we have a unified message of Christianity spread by Paul and the apostles, and maintained by their successors in a network of unified churches. These churches, says Irenaeus, are like islands afloat in the midst of the Empire: “These guarantees were made not only to the prophets and fathers, but also to the collected churches among the pagans. The Spirit calls these churches ‘islands,’ because they were founded in the midst of turbulence, and they endure the storms of blasphemy. They are also a safe port for those in danger and a refuge for those who love truth.”

This general view of the Christian church (in the singular) is related elsewhere with more geographic detail:

Although it is scattered in the entire world [ἐν δόλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ], the church, having received this preaching and this faith, keeps careful watch over it, as if it lived in one house. . . . The churches founded in the German provinces [ἐν Γερμανίᾳ] believe and pass down traditions no differently than the churches in the Iberian provinces [ἐν ταῖς Ἰβηρίαις], those in the Celtic provinces [ἐν Κέλταις], those throughout the eastern regions [κατὰ τὰς ἀνατολάς], those in Egypt [ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ], those in Libya [ἐν Λιβύῃ], and those throughout the middle regions of the world [οἱ κατὰ μέσα τοῦ κόσμου]. But just as the sun, the creation of God, is one and the same in the entire world [ἐν οἷς πᾶσαν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς], so too does the preaching of the truth shine everywhere and illuminate all the men who wish to come into knowledge of the truth.

The list moves around the four regions of the world, following classical convention, and the geographical divisions favored in handbooks of rhetoric. The German provinces are segregated in the North, the Iberian and Celtic are in the West, then the vaguely defined eastern regions, Egypt and Libya in the South, and finally the regions in the middle. Compare the instructions of Menander Rhetor, who offers advice about how to praise a country: “We estimate and judge the position of a country by its relation to land, sea, or sky. . . . Relation to the sky: is it in the west, east [ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ], south, or north, or in the center [ἐν τῷ μέσῳ]? ”

The Greekness of the list is further demonstrated by Irenaeus’s terminology for the Western regions, in notable contrast to the Roman labels used before him in a geographical excursus by Theophilus of Antioch, whose work he knew. In Theophilus’s list, the references are directly to the Roman provinces: “the so-called Gauls and Spains and Germanies [τὰς καλουμένας Γαλλίας καὶ Σαμανίας καὶ Γερμανίας].” Germany was interchangeable in Greek and Latin, but Irenaeus insists on referring to the provinces of Gaul and Spain with the preferred classical terminology of Keltike and Iberia. In the process, he displays a more stubborn form of Hellenism than that of many of his Greek contemporaries, who at times gloss the term Iberia with Hispania, and use the label Gaul without pause.

Indeed, for a comparable use of the label Ἐν Κέλταις we must turn to an author such as Philostratus, our chief source for the phenomenon of the “Second Sophistic,” a term
he invented. Philostratus recognizes the potential difficulty eastern readers could have in distinguishing between Gaul and Galatia, so he identifies the sophist Favorinus of Arles as one of the "western Gauls [ἐπτερίων Ἕλλην]" and the rhetor Aquila as from "Galatia of the East [Ἀκόλοχος ὁ ἐκ τῆς ἑώρου Ἕλλην]." The term ἐν Κέλτοις provides a way for Philostratus to remove any ambiguity between East and West. Thus he records differing reports concerning the location of a sophist's death: "Some say that Alexander died in the Celtic provinces [ἐν Κέλτοις] ... and others say that he died in Italy [ἐν Τραλικί]." Philostratus and Irenaeus speak the same geographical language.

So when Irenaeus locates himself for his readers, it surprises little that he does so with the phrase ἐν Κέλτοις and one almost parenthetical reference to the Rhone. Such a level of vagueness is the norm for Greek authors who refer to Gaul, with the notable exception of specialized geographers. Typical references are to Massalia (modern Marseilles) or to a few other cities established as Greek colonies, and to the Rhone. The contrast in level of detail in accounts of Gaul between the Greek colonies in the south and the regions to the north is striking. Oppian, for instance, calls Massalia a holy city and its inhabitants the ancient residents of Phocaea, the metropolis that founded the city some eight centuries earlier. But, the rest of Gaul, in opposition to Massalia, is identified anachronistically as the region where the Celts dwell.

Sometimes the geographical focus on Gaul can even be so broad as to include reference to the Rhine, suggesting that Western Europe north of the Alps was regarded as an amorphous area dotted with the occasional large river and a few Greek colonies.

Ultimately, then, little weight can be given to the phrase ἐν Κέλτοις in support of the suggestion that Irenaeus preached "among the Celts." Rather, seen in the larger context of Greek perspectives of Western Europe, Irenaeus is telling his readers that he lived on the course of the Rhone north of the Mediterranean, where the olive and fig trees gave out, vines produced grapes with difficulty, and there were no Greek colonies. And, to avoid any confusion for readers unfamiliar with the details of western geography, he uses the term Keltike rather than Gaul.

To return now to the larger map, Irenaeus situates himself on the western periphery, to the east of which are the elusive "middle regions of the world" and the "eastern regions" (note the plurality). Given their company in the list of territories—they are balanced with all of Libya and Egypt in the south, for instance—both regions must be large. In other words, Irenaeus preferred brevity to detail when he used the phrases "eastern regions" (κατὰ τὰς ἄνατολάς) and "middle regions of the world" (κατὰ μέσα τοὐ κόσμου). After all, these were precisely the areas where he could have engaged in the most detailed geographical lists of places, of the type especially common in Acts (for example, 2:9-11, 16:6-12). One can also compare the perspective of his contemporary Ptolemy in the Tetrabiblos, where the middle of the world is conceived of in broad terms. Ptolemy runs through the four quarters of the world and lists the regions that are "positioned around the middle of the entire inhabited world." Some thirty-five such regions are named—including all of Asia Minor, Egypt, and much of the modern Middle East—situated around a center that seems to be located in the Mediterranean somewhere north of Egypt. The middle of the world need not be small.
With all of this in mind, I suggest that Irenaeus's "middle regions of the world" encompass the apostolic churches of Rome, Ephesus, Smyrna, and Corinth (the only churches named in the entirety of the work). The boundaries are clearly enough demarcated: Europe west and north of the Alps forms one, Libya and Egypt another, and Jerusalem and vicinity a third. The main issue becomes deciding where to separate the eastern regions (κατὰ τὸς ἀνατολῶν) from the "middle regions of the world" (κατὰ μέσα τοῦ κόσμου). But just as middle is a relative term, so is east, and here I would suggest again that Irenaeus's perspective remained that of a resident of western Asia Minor. The "middle regions of the world" then include Italy, Greece, and at least the western coast of Asia Minor. As should be no surprise, apostolic succession is the foundation for centrality in Irenaeus's world, and the result is a large center.

The location of this large center of the world is an area where Irenaeus has departed from his Greek contemporaries. To begin with, Irenaeus prefers the term kosmos to the less-inclusive oikoumene, with its classical implications of an inhabited world limited to Greek lands. Irenaeus's contemporaries almost invariably refer to the middle of the oikoumene rather than the kosmos, and they locate it in the east. Thus Aelius Aristides identifies the Aegean Sea as the middle of the oikoumene, Dio Chrysostom tells the Alexandrians that they are located almost in the middle of the oikoumene, and Galen places the middle region of the oikoumene on a line that runs east-west and passes through Cnidus and Cos in southern Asia Minor. The Aegean and Asia Minor are still part of the middle of Irenaeus's world, but it has expanded farther west than his contemporaries would allow.

The expanded middle of Irenaeus's world is a consequence of the great opportunities for travel and communication during the Antonine Age. As he says, "the world [ὁ κόσμος] has peace because of the Romans so that we might walk on the roads without fear and sail wherever we please". Our knowledge of Irenaeus's travels in this world is mostly lost, as is the case with his correspondence. But from the scraps of information that remain, we can still see the efforts he made to stay in touch with other churches and to collect and transmit literature. Rome is part of the middle regions of the world, but it is not the center, and Christians exist and travel throughout the entire kosmos.

Leaving Rome nonetheless seems to have been a major transition for Irenaeus, despite his comments about the easy mobility provided for Christians by the empire. The Haer. itself seems to have been addressed to a fellow cleric at Rome whom Irenaeus (unfortunately) does not name or identify in any explicit way. But he does offer the hope that this recipient will find the work useful in his effort to lead the curious away from heretical doctrines, sufficient confirmation that he is addressing a cleric or at least a Christian teacher, most likely at Rome.

Of this cleric or teacher, Irenaeus begs: "You will not expect from us, who reside in the Celtic provinces [τῶν ἐν Κελτῶν διατρήσαντων] and are busy most of the time with a barbarian language [βάρβαρου διάλεκτον], either the art of rhetoric which we did not learn, or the skill of a writer which we have not exercised, or embellishment of words or persuasion which we do not know." Despite his claims, this is exactly the sort of comment one would expect from an author trained in rhetoric, and we should not be taken in by Irenaeus's false display of modesty.
Instead, what requires commentary is the βάρβαρον διάλεκτον with which Irenaeus is busy most of the time. It must be stated immediately that the word διάλεκτον has for Irenaeus the sense of "language" and not merely of a dialect within a language; he uses the word, for instance, to speak of the many different languages of the world, and also of Greek and Hebrew.\(^4^9\) One must also note that Irenaeus divides the world up into the two classes of Greek and barbarian,\(^5^0\) and speaks of faithful Christians who are nonetheless "barbarians in terms of our language [ad sermonem nostrum barbari sunt]."\(^5^1\) Irenaeus maintains the classical linguistic sense of the word barbarian as a speaker of a language other than Greek.\(^5^2\) There is no sign that his worldview includes a "third race" of Christians in addition to the traditional division of Greeks and barbarians.\(^5^3\)

In light of this perspective, Latin is a possible candidate as the βάρβαρον διάλεκτον of which Irenaeus was speaking.\(^5^4\) Other Greek authors had previously labeled the Romans as barbarians,\(^5^5\) and a notable feature of the interaction between Greek scholars and their Roman patrons in the time of Augustus and the surrounding decades was a tendency to claim that Latin was merely a dialect of Greek.\(^5^6\) This provides a sense of the linguistic anxiety regarding the status of Latin with respect to Greek, an anxiety that had largely faded by the second century, a time when most educated Romans spoke Greek fluently and there was less need for most educated Greeks to learn Latin.

This was even the situation at Rome, where it was quite possible for educated Greeks to function without having the need to speak any Latin. Plutarch, for instance, never had the time to learn Latin well while in Rome because he was too busy teaching in Greek!\(^5^7\) Galen, too, shows no signs of ever needing to speak Latin, and even writes about Rome as if it were a Greek city.\(^5^8\) Such examples concerning the educated pagan elite could be multiplied at great length,\(^5^9\) demonstrating both the commonness and the high status of Greek at Rome.

And Greek was also the most common spoken language among Christians at Rome.\(^6^0\) In addition to the large body of Christian literature written at Rome in Greek, one can add ample testimony to the use of Greek by Christians from epigraphic evidence. The use of Greek for Christian epitaphs does not end until the fourth century, and Greek was used proportionately much more often in Christian epigraphy than in pagan, a fact that becomes significant when one considers that most of the Christian epitaphs in question were the work of amateurs, rather than of trained stone-carvers.\(^6^1\) This demonstrates that Greek was the preferred "in-group" language of Christians at Rome, though Latin of course would be spoken by many of them too.\(^6^2\) But Greek was the sine qua non for educated Christians at Rome, so many of whom came to the city from the East.\(^6^3\) Greek was the language of instruction at the school of Justin Martyr at Rome, where Irenaeus was likely a student for a time.\(^6^4\) Finally, one cannot forget that Irenaeus wrote to Christians at Rome and in the East alike in Greek, including the unnamed recipient of the Haer. at Rome.

Compared to the capital, Lyons was a Latin city. The amount of evidence available from Rome of course dwarfs that from Lyons, but some comparisons can still be made. Our literary sources for Lyons often provide more insight into the snobbery of the authors than the city's cultural attainments, but these authors still provide some
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evidence for the occasional presence of Greek actors and orators at Lyons, even as they disparage the city and its residents. 65 Epigraphy is a more promising area, as Lyons possesses a large corpus of inscriptions. 66 Greek appears rarely in these inscriptions, 67 and is often confined to short formulas, notably the phrase ἀναταῦτα, 68 sometimes written in Latin script. 69 Rather than seeking mystical significance in this phrase, as many have done, Jean-Claude Decourt argues that this is a simple translation of a relatively banal Latin phrase: **ave et vale.** 70 These residents of Lyons, it seems, were merely attempting to display pretensions to Greek culture, as might be fitting for the city’s more educated class. 71 This practice can be compared to the fashion for Greek epitaphs at Rome, thirty percent of which are in verse—a much higher proportion than anywhere else. 72 The educated classes at Rome display greater pretensions to Greek culture and are better able to demonstrate them than the educated at Lyons. And more people at Rome would have been able to read inscribed Greek verses than at Lyons.

The language in inscriptions, it must be admitted, says little about the language(s) spoken by the dedicator/ee. In this respect, it is not a matter of great significance that there are no inscriptions from Lyons in a Celtic language, or even a Celtic language written in Latin script. 73 Onomastics, however, can provide some additional insight, and here it is significant that Irenaeus’s time in Lyons coincides with the peak of the Gallic epigraphic habit. 74 This period is also notable for an increasing number of people commemorated who lack the characteristic twofold or threefold pattern of Roman names and instead possess names in the “Celtic” style of a single name accompanied with a patronymic. 75 These dedicators/ees did not adopt Roman names for themselves, but they nonetheless participated in the Roman epigraphic habit, which necessarily involved the use of Latin. 76 This does not mean that they stopped speaking their native language, but it is still indicative of the increasing use of Latin among people whom we might expect to speak a Celtic language because of their names.

Many Greeks who came to Lyons are also commemorated in Latin. 77 A notable example is a bilingual inscription in Greek and Latin from the late second century that commemorates a trader (negotiator) from Syria named Thaemus Iulianus (Θαίμος Ιούλιανος). 78 The bilingualism of the inscription is surely a reflection of his own bilingualism in Greek and Latin. 79 Thaemus was far from the only Eastern trader to come to Gaul, 80 and his example encourages us to think that the acquisition of some Latin was necessary for this profession. Latin could even serve as a means for communication between native Greek speakers and those who might speak a Celtic language within their households or in other settings. 81 And at Lyons, a Roman colony originally settled by veterans that also happened to be “the largest Roman administrative establishment north of the Alps,” 82 the number of these Celtic language settings must have been very few.

The application of this linguistic situation in Lyons to the case of Irenaeus suggests that he was busy most of the time with Latin and not with a Celtic language. The evidence concerning the martyrdoms at Lyons in 177 also suggests as much. Two of the martyrs were Greeks from Asia Minor, 83 but one of these—Attalus of Pergamum—addresses the crowd in Latin (τῆς Ρωμαίας φωνῆς), 84 as does the deacon Sanctus from Vienne. 85 Overall, the names of the martyrs recorded by Eusebius are a mix of Greek and Roman, with few if any traces of Celtic. 86 And the activities of the
Christian community at Lyons seem to have been urban in character—the persecution began by banning them from the city’s "houses, baths, and marketplaces (οἰκίων καὶ βαλνείων καὶ ἁγορᾶς)." This was an urban church in a predominantly Latin-speaking city.

Indeed, if one persists in believing that Irenaeus preached "among the Celts" in a Celtic language, one would have to suggest, following Gustave Bardy, that this activity took place ‘bien loin de sa ville épiscopale.' The gaps in our knowledge of Irenaeus’s biography might allow for such an activity, but the large body of his extant writings and the surviving traces of his no doubt voluminous body of correspondence are suggestive of a bookish existence. Irenaeus took great care in transcribing texts accurately, and he shows a certain amount of pride in the collection of "heretical" writings he had managed to assemble. He continued to receive texts from Rome, and he made a great effort to disseminate his views on a variety of subjects to his fellow clerics. He even displays some uncertainty about whether his opponents really do the "godless, lawless, and unspeakable things [τὰ ἁθετα, καὶ ἐκθεομα, καὶ ἀπαρημένα]" they describe in their writings. This much reading and writing took time, especially when we consider some of the other literary questions to which he devoted his energy. These include a study of Paul’s use of hyperbaton, and of the possible numerological significance of the number of the beast. And the longer that he stayed in Rome before coming to Lyons—he was still in Rome at the time of Polycarp’s martyrdom, which likely occurred in the late 150s, but perhaps as late as 167—the less time Irenaeus would have had to learn a Celtic language and preach "among the Celts:

Instead of this mission "among the Celts," which puts Irenaeus in the pagan countryside like Martin of Tours two centuries later, I would like to conclude by suggesting a different sort of mission to Gaul. Two propositions guide this suggestion: Christianity had to have been introduced to Gaul from outside, and the person or people who introduced it had to have been speakers of Greek. Native residents of Gaul certainly did become Christians, but there was still a need for the sort of (Greek) expertise that could come only from larger centers of Christian teaching, such as Rome. There is a clear precedent for this model in the practice described by Strabo of the Gauls welcoming and hiring Greek sophists and doctors to become residents of their cities and to work in them. A Greek doctor, Alexander of Phrygia, was even one of the Christians martyred at Lyons. In this sense, Irenaeus was perhaps a different sort of Greek expert encouraged or even invited to come to Lyons. How early he came to Lyons remains an open question, but one possible scenario for his invitation is as a response to the advancing age of Pothinus, the episcopus who would be martyred in 177 at the age of ninety years. Irenaeus would have come to Lyons with an impressive pedigree thanks to his connections with the famous martyrs and teachers Polycarp and (most likely) Justin. At Lyons he learned Latin—or at least became a much more fluent speaker—and taught and preached in this language, though no doubt in Greek too. He continued of course to write in Greek, though the Latin translation of the Haer. may well have been produced by the Christian community at Lyons soon after his death. Seen in this light, Irenaeus becomes part of the "Latinization" of the church in the West.
Still, as I have argued above, Irenaeus seems to have missed his time in what he called "the middle regions of the world." He was not entirely happy to be speaking Latin instead of Greek, and the perspective on the world he gained from the schools of Asia Minor remained entrenched in his mind, even as the Greek education he acquired there provided him with tools useful for the refutation of his opponents. Here in Lyons was a Christian who writes about Gaul and the western regions of the empire as if he were Philostratus, and who, on the one occasion when he deigns to mention the existence of the Latin language (a βάρβαρον διάλεκτον), displays more distaste for it than one finds expressed in any of his Hellenic contemporaries. 

But despite his unhappiness with some aspects of living in Lyons, Irenaeus still chose to reside on the western periphery of the world rather than in Rome or Asia Minor, something that cannot be said for almost all of these Hellenic contemporaries. His choice to leave Rome and not to return to Asia Minor must have been motivated in part by the example of Paul. As is reported in 1 Clement, a text Irenaeus knew well, "[Paul] was a herald in the East [ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ] and the West [ἐν τῇ δύσει], and received the genuine glory of his faith. He taught the entire world righteousness and reached the limit of the West." Irenaeus retraces Paul's travels in the third book of the Haer. (III.12.9, III.14.1), and he made a similar journey himself by heading north and west to Lyons. One cannot help but think that Irenaeus conceived of himself in some ways as continuing in Paul's footsteps. This element of Irenaeus's career is captured well by Theodoret of Cyrrhus centuries later, who summarizes his life in these terms: "Irenaeus, who benefited from the teaching of Polycarp, became a shining light of the Gauls of the West [Ἰωλάτων δὲ τῶν ἐπεριστόν]." Beyond the principle of successio apostolorum, Irenaeus's choice to go to Gaul was a tangible enactment of the principle of imitatio apostolorum, and especially imitatio Pauli.
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2. For example, Jean-Claude Decourt and Gérard Lucas, *Lyon dans les textes Grecs et Latins* (Lyon: F. Masion de l'Orient Méditerranéen, 1993), 70. "Il nous a paru difficile d'exclure totalement Irenée de ce recueil. Pourtant ce qui frappe, dans cette œuvre, c'est l'absence presque totale du mentions, non seulement de la ville où il résidait, mais plus généralement du pays dont il a dû longtemps être le seul évêque. Il nous a ainsi fallu chercher pour découvrir un passage où il fut fait au moins allusion sinon à Lyon, du moins aux Gaules:"


8. One example is Irenaeus's reference to the common belief that hens could be impregnated by the blowing of the wind (Haer. II.12.4). Others who express this opinion include Plutarch, Athenaeus, and Aelian. References to these and others in Conway Zirkle, "Animals Impregnated by the Wind;" *PCPhS* 35 (1989): 81–112.


10. Irenaeus, *Haer.*, III.11.8, ed. Adelin Rousseau and Louis Doutreleau, *Contre les Hérésies, Livre III*, 2 vols. (Paris: du Cerf, 1974): "Eppi γὰρ τούσαρα κλίματα τοῦ κόσμου ἐν ὧ ἔμελιν καὶ τούσαρα καθολικά πνεύματα, κατέστρωσεν δὲ ἡ ἐκσκλίψει ἐπὶ πάσης τῆς γῆς, στῦλος δὲ καὶ στηρίγμα ἐκσκλίπθη τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καὶ Πνεῦμα Λωζῆς, εὐφόρω τούσαρος ἔξειν αὐτήν στῦλος πανεμορφῶν πνεύματος τὴν ἀφθονίαν καὶ ἀναξιωματικότατος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. As this passage shows, the number four has much significance for Irenaeus, and he elsewhere defends the idea that the earth has four regions (κλίματα) against the heretical suggestion that it has twelve. See *Haer.* I.17.1.


12. The phrase "a medio aucturum" corresponds roughly to the next passage quoted from *Haer.* IV.4.1: "de medio aletā est," a phrase whose Greek original is ἐκ μέσου ἐγένετο. For the definition of the phrase ἐκ μέσου as "away," see LSJ, sv. μέσος III.c.


15. Ibid., IV.21.3. "Peregre nascabatur duodecimtribus genibus Israel, quoniam et Christus peregere incipiebat duodecastylum firmamentum Ecclesiae generare." This is part of a larger comparison between Christ and Jacob, in this case relating the birth of Jacob's twelve sons in Mesopotamia to Christ's selection of the apostles.
Notes to Chapter 2

17. Ibid., III.12.9.
18. Ibid.

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3. The participants at the Edinburgh conference of Michigan. Particular thanks go to David Ray Van Dam for his assistance and comments.

43. Aelius Aristides 44.3; Dio Chrysostom 32.47.7; Galen, In Hippocratis aphorismos commentarii (Kühn 17b.599).

44. Irenaeus, Haer. IV.30.3. "Sed et mundus pacem habet per eos [sc. Romanos] ut nos sine timore in viis ambulemus et navigemus quocumque voluerimus:' Cf. Lionel Casson, Travel in the Ancient World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 122: "The first two centuries of the Christian Era were halcyon days for a traveler. . . . He could sail through any waters without fear of pirates, thanks to the emperor's patrol squadrons. A planned network of good roads gave him access to all major centers, and the through routes were policed well enough for him to ride them with relatively little fear of bandits."

45. Consider, for instance, the fragment of Irenaeus's lost treatise On the Ogdoad (Eusebius, HE V.20.2-3) where he encourages future copyists of his work to transcribe it carefully!

46. Irenaeus, Haer. I. praef.3. Rome seems the likeliest choice given both Irenaeus's previous links with the city, and the fragments of his correspondence directed to his bishop (e.g., Harvey's [1857] Syriac Fragment 28). Rome was also the nearest major Christian center, and a place from which further copies of the work could be sent to other communities. See Harry Y. Gamble, Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 137, for discussion.

47. Compare what is said in the letter concerning the martyrdom of Lyons about Alexander, a martyr and doctor originally from Phrygia (Eusebius, HE V.1.49): "he had resided in the Gallic provinces for many years (οἱ δὲ οὗτοι ἐν ταῖς Παλαισιίς διηρήσαντο." The similarity in phrasing is striking, but one must note that the author of this letter uses the more Roman phrase εν ταῖς Παλαισιίς instead of Irenaeus's preferred εν Κελτοῖς. This discrepancy in geographical terminology makes it less likely, I would suggest, that Irenaeus was the author of the letter (as Pierre Nautin, Lettres et ecrivains chretiens des IIe et IIIe siecles [Paris: du Cerf, 1961], 54–61, argues), which also uses the Roman terminology τῶν Παλαισιίς in its address (V.1.3). For the argument that this address is genuine, and not a later addition to the text, see G. W. Bowersock, Martyrdom and Rome (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 85–98.

48. Irenaeus, Haer. I. praef.3. θυσίαν ἔπραξες τῶν Κελτῶν διαφορότων, καὶ παρὰ κάθετον διάλεκτον τὸ πλεῖστον ἀγολοφυτῆς, λόγων τέχνης, ἣν οὐκ έμφάνισαν, οὐτὲ δόνας συγγραφέως, ἣν οὐκ ἁπαξεμένην, οὐτὲ καλλόμοιρον λέξην, οὐτὲ παθωτήτα, ἣν οὐκ οίδαμεν.

49. Ibid., I.10.2 of the diverse languages of the world; III.21.2 on Greek and Hebrew in the context of the production of the Septuagint; III.1.1 on Hebrew.

50. Ibid., V.30.3. "None of the idols which are adored publicly among the Greeks and barbarians have this name [sc. Titan, a possible name for the Antichrist]:' "Neque eorum quae publice adorantur idolorum apud Graecos et barbaros habet vocabulum hoc."

51. Ibid., III.4.2.


54. Cf. Fergus Millar, "Culture grecque et culture latine dans le haut-empire: la loi et la foi;' in Les Martyrs de Lyon (177): Colloque international du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Lyon, 20–23 septembre 1977 (Paris: CNRS, 1978), 193. "Il est possible que l'on ait raison de croire ... qu'Iréné parlait de la langue celtique; mais ne peut-on suggérer qu'un écrivain grec, comme Iréné, quand il parlait du dialecte barbare du milieu occidental où il vivait et travaillait, voulait dire tout simplement le latin?"

55. Strabo, for instance, implicitly includes the Romans with other barbarian races (βάρβαρος οἶνος) in a transitional comment signaling that he is moving from the western parts of Europe to Greece (VIII.1.1). He also comments that the regions of southern Italy that were once Greek have been, with few exceptions, "completely barbarized (ἐκβαλεὶς πλῆθος ἔθνους)" (V.1.2). This passage is discussed by G. W. Bowersock, "Les Grecs "barbarisés,"" Ktema 17 (1992): 249–57. Polybiius also calls the Romans barbarians, once implicitly in his own voice (XII.4b.2–3), and three times in reported speeches (V:104.1–11; IX.32.3—39.7; XI.4.1—6.8).
These passages are discussed by Craigie Champion, "Romans as Barbaroi: Three Polybian Speeches and the Politics of Cultural Indeterminacy," CPh 95.4 (2000): 425–44, who is more eager to believe that Polybius calls the Romans barbarians than Andrew Erskine, "Polybios and Barbarian Rome," Mediterraneo Antico 3 (2000), 165–82, who comes to slightly different conclusions. Plutarch's Pyrrhus also contains explicit references to the Romans as barbarians, all in reported speech (16.7 and 16.13 are the most telling). This work is now discussed by Judith Mossman, "Taxis ou Barbaros: Greek and Roman in Plutarch's Pyrrhus," CQ 55.2 (2005): 502–4. My thanks to David Potter for drawing my attention to this reference.


76. Cf. Woolf, 103, 203.
78. CIL 13.2448 = IG 14.2532.
79. He also likely spoke Aramaic. Cf. Adams, 688.
80. See the example discussed by Jones, with further references cited there.
81. Cf. Josef Herman, "La langue latine dans la Gaule romaine," ANRW 2.29.2 (1983): 1051: "Cette situation déjà complexe était rendue plus complexe encore par la présence d'individus et de groupes dont la langue d'origine n'était ni le latin ni le gaulois, soit parce qu'ils appartenaient à des ethnies minoritaires, soit parce qu'ils venaient de provinces où de régions de langue non latine (Orientaux divers, soldats de troupes auxiliaires, esclaves importés). Pour eux—et avec eux—le seul moyende communication utilisable devait normalement être le latin."
82. Woolf, 103, 38.
84. Ibid., V.1.52.
85. Ibid., V.1.20.
87. Eusebius, HE V.1.5. Such a comment recalls the circumstances of Justin's school at Rome, located in a public and visible place "above the bath of Myrtinus (= παρὰ τοῦ Μύρτινου)" in Acta Justini et Septem Sodalium, 3.3 (recension a). See now Harlow Gregory Snyder, "'Above the Bath of Myrtinus': Justin Martyr's 'School' in the City of Rome," HTR 100, no. 3 (2007): 335–62, for a discussion of the location of Justin's school.
88. Bardy, 75.
89. Eusebius, HE V.20.2-3.
90. References in Haer. 1. praef. 2; 1.31.2; IV. praef. 2.
91. This is made particularly clear by his letter addressed to Victor: Harvey (1857), Syriac Fragment 28.
92. Examples from Eusebius include V.20.1, V.20.4-8, V.24.11-17, V.24.18.
93. Irenaeus, Haer. I.25.5.
94. Ibid., III.7.1-2.
95. Ibid., V.30.1-3.
96. T. D. Barnes, "Pre-Decian Acta Martyrum," JTS n.s. 19, no. 2 (1968): 510–14, surveyed the possible dates of the martyrdom and concluded that 156 was most likely, but has now put forward a very strong argument for 157 (Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010], 367–78). The significance of this date for the biography of Irenaeus is based on the statement in the Moscow manuscript of the Martyrology of Polycarp (22.2) that Irenaeus was in Rome when Polycarp was martyred.
97. Strabo IV.1.5. Other examples of Greek doctors in Gaul are cited by A. Trevor Hodge, Ancient Greek France (London: Duckworth, 1998), 136–37. And compare the practice at Rome, where Greek doctors and teachers were also encouraged to come to the city. See Noy, Foreigners at Rome, 47.
98. Eusebius, HE V.1.49. Another Greek doctor from Lyons is credited with an antidote to scorpion venom by Galen, De Antidosis (Kühn 14.177).
99. Ibid., V.1.29.
100. Later local tradition as reported by Gregory of Tours held that (Historiae 1.29) "The most blessed Irenaeus ... in a short period of time turned the entire city [of Lyons] to Christianity, especially by his preaching." Beatissimus vero Hireneus ... in modici temporis spatio praedicatione sua maxime in integrum civitatem reddidit christianam." The claim that Irenaeus converted the entire city is certainly an exaggeration, but it does raise interesting possibilities about his preaching in the city in Latin.
101. This painfully literal Latin translation is perhaps the same version Tertullian used in his Adversus Valentinianos early in the third century. (Argument and details in Adhémar D'Alès, "La date de la version latine de saint Irénée," RecSR 6 [1916]: 133–37.) The language of the translation is such that it would be useful as a crib for a reader struggling with the original Greek, and it is perhaps indicative of an early date of production in a community that was still making a transition from Greek to Latin. But a definitive solution to the date of the

102. The language of the Gallic churches in the third century seems to have been predominantly Latin, and the one named bishop of Lyons known to us from this period has a Latin name. This is a certain Faustinus of Lyons who appears in the correspondence of Cyprian. See Bardy, Vol. 1, 187.

103. Interesting examples are provided by Arrian’s *Periplus Ponti Euxini*, where be notes the bad Greek of an inscription carved by barbarians (1.2), and the names of places corrupted by barbarians (21.2). But he also refers without pause or complaint about the reports in Latin that he has submitted and will submit to Hadrian (6.2; 10.1). Arrian had good reason to speak and to write in Latin, and he is able to reconcile this easily with his Hellenic and classical outlook.

104. Irenaeus cites 1 Clement at *Haer.* III.3.3, and he may even have regarded it as scripture. Rousseau’s arguments (Contre les Heresies, Livre IV, 1:24B-50) concerning the scriptural status for Irenaeus of 1 Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas are not convincing, especially for the latter of the two texts. I see no reason to disagree with Eusebius (HE VIII.7, referring to *Haer.* IV.20.2) that Irenaeus regarded the Shepherd of Hermas as scripture.

105. 1 Clement 5.6-7. \(\gamma\pi\psi\upsilon\varphi\tau\sigma\varsigma\upsilon\upsilon\omicron\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigm