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## Christian origios cult history

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### Abstract

Progressing further ahead in time will only get more laborious. We aren't more than a couple decades out of the 1st century yet, but at no time do we see any harmony among the six "Christian" movements listed already above, beyond a few superficial overlaps. Contrast this picture with the common belief that Christianity started in one place, with one man, and radiated out from there; this idea just does not stack up, against the documentary evidence of the 1<sup>st</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> century! We're forced, therefore, to depart with this notion, however traditional it may be. What we have, instead, is many different movements, which all contributed, eventually, to what became Christianity. More to the point, the things these movements taught, were quite dissimilar, and they even had different inherent purposes. Of course, setting aside the single-point-of-origin theory of Christianity, only presents more questions, such as: If these movements were so different, how did they merge together into Christianity? Why do widely-separated movements all give the same name, Jesus/Yeshua, to their central figures? It's fine to say that multiple sources eventually "created" Christianity, but there must have been a dynamic by which this occurred.

### Research Methodology

Researcher has presented this research paper with the title of "Christian Origios Cult History" For this research paper Researcher has used historical method and Primary and Secondary sources.

### Objectives

- Christian Cult in the first and century Impacts to spread Christianity.
- Many Historians important role in the church as wrote.
- There are many changes in the Christians cultsnows.

**Keywords:** Christian origios, progressing further

### 1. Introduction

One of the chief problems in studying Christian origins is that much of the material we have, seems not to relate to other material even from about the same time period, and in some cases, it conflicts. In other cases we find—by peeling back the layers of time, going step-by-step in reverse through the process by which Christianity began—that the apparent disparities in Christianity go right back to its roots. To examine this, I will start at the beginning, and examine each of the early Christian documents we have, and the communities that wrote them.

### 2. What is Cults

Cult means "An ideological organization held together by charismatic relationship and demanding total commitment" and Religion "as set of beliefs that answers the ultimate questions. what is ultimate reality. what is the nature of the world. what is the nature of humanity what is humanitys primary problem what is happens after deate" and Heresy means" A teaching which directly opposes the essentials of the Christian faith so that true Christian must divide themselves from all those who hold it"

### 3. The Galilean Cult

The earliest Christian document that we have, is not actually a document that we have! Rather, it's a derivative document, the so-called "lost gospel" Originally composed around 40-50 CE, it was a source for the three *synoptic* (or similar) gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. It was obvious to 19th century source critics that the synoptic gospels must have had some common source; over a period of time they distilled out of the synoptics those portions which must have come from their hypothesized source,

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Their guesswork was confirmed in 1945, with the discovery, at Nag Hammadi Egypt, of a cache of 4th-century Gnostic documents. One of them, the Gospel of Thomas, was a later Gnostic elaboration of is an interesting document. It contains no significant biographical information about Jesus, and very little narrative of any kind. It is, rather, a collection of the sayings of a sage named Jesus, and since it mentions places in Galilee, he must have preached there. Those sayings—some of which have survived into Christianity and are well-known, such as “turn the other cheek”—are actually classical Cynical sayings. Classical Cynics were itinerant philosophers of a Socratic school; the most famous Cynic of ancient times was Diogenes of Sinope. It so happens that there were Cynical schools, just across the Jordan from Galilee, in the mainly-Greek province of Decapolis. There’s some debate over whether Galilee had been fully Hellenized at this time, but the fact is, that even for Jews in Galilee, their chief language was Greek, not Aramaic, so that Greek culture had become a part of life in Galilee—to what extent, is what’s debatable. We can easily suppose that a wandering ethnically-Jewish Cynical sage might have become popular enough that someone recorded some of his sayings. Or, people living there may simply have collected some Cynical sayings, and attributed them to an indefinite person named “Jesus.”

The problem is that, today, there isn’t a whole lot about later Christianity which is Cynical. Classical Cynics disdained most social conventions; they disliked authority figures (a story was told that Alexander the Great came to call upon Diogenes, happening to arrive when he was bathing, and Diogenes put the conqueror to work as a towel-boy!); they distrusted tradition, they questioned everything, and sought to overturn societal expectations. This is not Christianity!

#### 4. Cilician Cule Arly Churches

The next documents we have, chronologically written in the 50s CE, come from the pen of Paul (formerly Saul) of Tarsus. We know nothing of him, other than what he reports in his own letters, and what was eventually put down in the book of Acts, almost century later. Many of the epistles attributed to him, were not actually written by a mid-1st-century Hellenized Jew from Cilicia; the “genuine” Pauline letters are 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Philemon, and Philippians. Paul speaks of a movement which is of the classical College a type; these were guilds, of sorts, in which members got together periodically, for companionship, to help one another out in need, etc. Modern lodges or fraternal societies are rough equivalents. Some collegia allowed in only certain kinds of people, usually of a particular profession, while others were ethnic in origin (just like modern ethnic clubs). They met, usually weekly, and in the manner of the mystery-religions of the time, they often had a communal meal.

It’s important to remember, though, that many of these College were not religious in origin, and never became religious. What makes Paul’s movement unique, unlike most other College, is that it appears to have had a good number of Jews as well as gentiles. Most cities in the eastern Mediterranean had enclaves of Jews, who (usually) kept to themselves. Many gentiles, however, mostly schooled in the Hellenic style, became interested in their “philosophy” (thinking that the synagogues in which the Jews congregated, were philosophical schools of a Hellenic style). In places they were allowed in, to listen to the rabbis

teach; these folks become known to Jews as “Godfearers.” At any rate, it appears that the movement to which Paul belonged, was trying to reconcile Greek philosophy and mysticism, with Judaism, so that a new “community” could be forged, in which the Godfearers could become an integral part, rather than just remaining on the fringe.

Paul;s letters, therefore, speak of a “Christ” who is mainly an emanated spiritual being, residing in some remote spiritual plane, along the lines of Neo-Platonic thought. He offers almost nothing in the way of biographical information about his savior figure, and works hard to get Jewish scripture to mesh with Greek mysticism. He develops a notion of “sin,” which was common among Anatolian religions of the time, and claims that Christ delivers the believer from it. Paul mainly was concerned about gentiles within his movement. This suggests that it was a primarily-Jewish movement, perhaps having started solely among Jews as a way to integrate Greek mysticism into their own religion; only later, prior to Paul’s time, did it “break” from Judaism completely, bringing in the Godfearers. Note that Jews in his movement were, apparently, still required to abide by the Mosaic Law which also contravenes later Christianity.

#### 5. Syrian Martyr Cult

The next Christian document that we know of, is the gospel of Mark. Its author used as a source, but also appears to have drawn on a Hellenic tradition, that of the martyr. It was related to the “suffering hero,” driven by a cause, who transcends normal human experience and/or ability. A primeval example was the myth of Orpheus, the great musician, whose wife dies while he is on Jason’s quest for the golden fleece; he mourns her, singing dirges, eventually heading to the underworld (and, metaphorically, dying), where his song is so sad and compelling, that Hades himself relents and allows her to return with him. The Pythagorean movement is thought to have been based on Orpean mysticism. In the case of the gospel of Mark, Jesus dies not for a cause which is at close at hand, such as retrieving his deceased wife, but for something else—soteriology, or improving the human condition. In that regard, the author of Mark departed from the usual Hellenic pattern. Instead he added in the notion of world-transforming savior, akin to the Jewish concept of the Messiah, who would come, re-establish the kingdom of Israel, and bring peace to the earth. Still, the author of Mark departed from even *this* idea, as Judaism at the time did not consider that the Messiah would have to be a martyr. The author of Mark, while he uses Jews as figures in his story and discusses topics of interest to Jews of the time, disparages Judaism in general. According to him, Jesus comes down hard on the Pharisees and the Temple establishment. But oddly, he includes a passage wherein Jesus decries the destruction of the Temple, which took place in 70 CE, thus dating his gospel to no earlier than that year. The Christianity of the gospel of Mark is a rather indefinite hodgepodge of Jewish and Hellenic soteriology and some mysticism, which also condemns a good deal of Judaic thought.

#### 6. Judean Cult

About the time that Mark was written, another work made the rounds in Palestine. Now known as the Signs Gospel, it is, like a speculative work, but less definite than in that there hasn’t been another derivative document to back it up (as in

the case of the Gospel of Thomas). It's really a precursor of the gospel of John, but it left a trail in other early Christian writings such as the epistle of Barnabas—which is why source critics are sure it must have existed. It consists, like of a number of short vignettes, this time describing a teacher whose career consists of unusual supernatural signs of something else. Sign miracles were common in Hellenic mythology. One such sign, the miracle at the wedding in Cana, was part of the Dionysian rites, on the Greek mainland, as described in Euripes' *Bacchae* and other sources. Sign-stories were typically used, in Greek mysticism, to represent other truths they were a code, of sorts. The many mystery-religions of the time all had godmen at their centers, about whom signs stories were told and many were quite similar to one another.

Unfortunately, as we don't have complete information about the mystery-religions, we can only speculate as to what the "code" was behind the signs stories. The signs stories were probably presented to initiates of the mystery-religion in stages, one or two at a time, with the former ones helping the initiate interpret later ones. The Signs Gospel, whatever its metaphorical content may have been, was rather standard mystery-religion material, very much like other literature that trafficked in other mystery-religions. Here again, though, the situation is different from what Christianity became, and different from the other movements we've examined (the Q movement, Paul's Christ-cult, and Mark's martyr ology cult).

### 7. The Cult of Didache

The next document is the Didache, or Teachings of the Disciples, first composed around 80-85 CE. The form in which we know it, discovered in Istanbul in modern times, is probably a late revision, very likely having some portions added after its original composition. Differences can be traced, however, using linguistic style evidence. The earliest versions of Didache contained liturgical instructions, outlining proper practices, and offering guidelines for how to relate to one another and to non-believers.

We don't know where Didache was authored, which leaves us at a disadvantage in understanding it. In its earliest form, however, it was concerned with form, not doctrine, which suggests that at the time it was first written, there was no firm doctrine, or else it was so simple, or unimportant, that it didn't need to be written. Later 2nd century revisions of Didache would have doctrinal points added, as well as some sayings of Jesus. At any rate, subsequent Christianity does not live up to all the specifications outlined in Didache — so again, we have something which does not fit into the picture.

### 8. The new Hebrews Epistle Community

The next significant book is the epistle to the Hebrews, c. 85 CE. Its author was probably Jewish; his work would only have made some sense, at the time, to other Jews or perhaps Godfearers. He attempts to reconcile sacrifice, which had been part of Judaism, with Greek mystical soteriology and martyr ology. In doing so, he establishes that the man who dies for the sins of all, must himself be God no other sacrifice would suffice. To most Jews of the time, this would have been a preposterous idea, but it may have appealed to some Hellenized Jews. They could retain their old Judaic traditions but embrace Hellenic mysticism, at the

same time. Again, this is not what was being taught in the other movements, mentioned above.

### 9. Impacts of Christian Cults

Admittedly, I cannot be too specific about this. What I can say is that these movements did have at least one thing in common: They all crossed the line between the Jewish and Hellenic worlds. The Galilean Q community, for example, were (probably) ethnic Jews who had some Hellenic education and background. Paul's Christ-cult had as its central problem the task of bringing together of Jews and gentiles. The Signs Gospel community was, like the Q community, ethnic Jews pursuing Hellenic ideas. And on it goes. Given that Jews or Judaism influenced each of these movements, it would be natural, therefore, that their central figures would be Jewish, with a Jewish name. Jesus/Yeshua was a common name at the time; and furthermore, some Judaic messianism speculated that the Messiah would be Jesus/Yeshua (just as Joshua, which is the same name, followed Moses, so too the Messiah would usher in a new age to follow the Mosaic).

It's probably this Jewish component within each, which eventually drew all of these movements together. When the Romans put down Jewish uprisings in 70 and 135 CE, this forced Jews to disperse to other parts of the Empire. This exposed other peoples to Judaism, and also, people already in these movements (even gentiles), saw an advantage in drawing together; their world was becoming increasingly hostile to anything Jewish, hence, those within these movements sought mutual protection at the very least. If it sounds far-fetched to believe that people with different beliefs would alter them in order to come together, it's actually not surprising. Look, for example, at Paul's letter to the Galatians. In it, he specifically calls for a major alteration in the cult's doctrine, in order to release gentiles from the Mosaic Law. In his Corinthian letters, he corrects the Corinthians, who are frequently caught up in traditional Hellenic mystical practices such as prophesying; he instructs them to alter their beliefs in order to coincide with the rest of the Christ-cult. These are just two of many examples of occasions when Christians consciously altered their own doctrine, to achieve harmony with other movements (or at the very least, Paul expected them to!). Please note that there has never really been a time when Christianity was ever truly "united." Since the religion's inception, there's always been some Christian, somewhere, teaching a divergent doctrine of some sort. In fact, even as the "merger" among these many 1st-century movements took place, they simultaneously drifted apart, into two camps. One, now known as Gnosticism, emphasized the mystical elements of the religion; the other, commonly referred to as "orthodoxy" or Literalism, emphasized form over mysticism. Eventually Literalism became dominant, and wiped out Gnosticism.

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