LOST GENERATIONS

From the 360s through the 420s—a period roughly framed by the prominence of the two Melanias— a small cadre of ascetically minded wealthy Christians migrated from Rome to Jerusalem. Scholars have viewed these migrant monks from diverse perspectives: as pilgrims, refugees, itinerant philosophers, cosmopolitan gadabouts. In order to think more broadly about the role of place and space in the construction of imperial Christian piety, politics, wealth, and status, I compare these ascetic émigrés to another notable group of migrant virtuosi: the so-called Lost Generation of expatriate American writers and artists living in Paris after World War I.

Like our ascetic émigrés, the Lost Generation were almost immediately mythologized (indeed, they participated vigorously in their own hagiography), and within a very short time these artists abroad came to represent a new kind of postwar American. This mythological force emerged out of the deliberate tension produced between the center at home and the colonized periphery. Taking on the mantle of a lost generation, displaced but never out of place, these migrant virtuosi modeled a new paradigm for identity. In what follows I use the Lost Generation of Americans in Paris as a historical mirror in order to reflect back themes of empire, exile, and elitism that shape the space of the late ancient Christian empire of the Melanias.

LOST IN EMPIRE

The politics of empire frame both lost generations in distinctive but mutually illuminating fashion. Students of U.S. literature chronologically bookend the lost
generation in Paris within the political upheavals of the two world wars. Of course, Americans had been going to Paris before 1914 (as Christians had visited Aelia Capitolina before the 360s). In addition, only a very few of the artists who came to Paris in the 1920s had actually served in the war. In a broader sense, though, this American lost generation was liberated by the political displacements of war to seek fulfillment abroad. Similarly, the geopolitical reorientations of the 1930s and the dawn of a new world war foreclosed many of those possibilities.

Significant moments of political crisis also punctuate the ascetic migrations of the fourth and fifth centuries. The earliest Western settlers in the new Constantinian Holy Land probably arrived in the 360s. Palladius in his *Lausiac History* recounts the monastic flight of Innocent, a former dignitary in the palace of the emperor Constantius (*tōn epidoxōn en tōi palatiōi*). Appalled by the fornications of his son Paul, an imperial guard (*domestikon strateuomenon*), Innocent, who was probably Italian, fled his secular life and settled on the Mount of Olives, soon after Julian's reign. Western ascetic resettlers continued to arrive, in fits and starts, through the early 400s. In the late 410s, Melania the Younger arrived, and with her, her chaste husband, Pinian, prompted to move (in part) by the barbarian invasions that penetrated to the Mediterranean Basin. Two moments of sharp political destabilization—the disastrous reign of Julian in the 360s and the barbarian invasions of the 410s and 420s—frame our lost monastic generation. Geopolitical disturbances need not be sufficient to explain the migratory patterns of our protagonists; nonetheless, they provide crucial spatial and political context. These dislocations take place across vast spaces, marked by fissures that stretched across seas and continents; they inscribe these movements in imperial space.

If the physical and ideological space of empire informs the chronological bounds of our lost generations, so too, I contend, does it shape the thematic bounds. At the heart of the Lost Generation identity is a complex relationship between an imperial center—at once disavowed and recuperated—and a provincial periphery, a locus of both generative creativity and stark disorientation. This split sense of dislocation and relocation is captured in Gertrude Stein's famous declaration, delivered to a British audience in 1936: “America is my country and Paris is my hometown.” Here, the site of artistic renaissance is absorbed into the imperial center: to be an artist in Paris *is* to be an American—indeed, somehow, in *America*. Notably, Stein is often remembered as saying, “America is my country *but* Paris is my hometown,” or something similar, emphasizing the disjunction between imperial center and artistic periphery. Writers throughout the 1930s and following reaffirmed this doubled, split image of the generative, disjunctive Paris of the Lost Generation: a site of refuge and exile, of artistic nourishment and estrangement. Only by disavowing the imperial center and fleeing to the periphery can the artist become a virtuoso; yet that new, virtuoso persona is always reinscribed as a new, idealized, imperial identity. Of course the particular global poli-
tics of the early twentieth century, with its fragmentary nation-empires, cannot map precisely onto the sweeping imperialism of the Roman world. My point here, as throughout this chapter, is to use the twentieth century as a heuristic mirror: What can we learn looking back twice, as it were, about the imperial framings of individual ambitions?

**EXILE AND EMPIRE: DISAVOWALS AND RECLAMATIONS**

Presumably a variety of motives both mundane and spiritual led Western ascetics to move to the East. The mythic texts of this Lost Generation, however—as also of their twentieth-century counterparts—developed a clear narrative of moral insufficiency at the imperial center that inhibited the realization of a full ascetic life. According to her relative Paulinus, Melania the Elder strove to pursue a life of holiness in Rome after the deaths of her husband and two of her three sons. Her own relatives—tools of the “envious dragon,” Paulinus writes—tried to stand in her way. When Melania at least broke free, her liberation was both spiritual and geographic:

Abandoning worldly life and her own country, she chose to bestow her spiritual gift at Jerusalem, and to dwell there as a foreigner from her body “[a corpore peregrinaretur]. She became an exile from her fellow citizens, but a citizen among the saints.

Paulinus here condenses the rather long route that Melania took from Rome to Jerusalem in the interests of capturing a particular spatial relationship between center and “abroad.” Melania moves directly from Rome to a life of foreignness (*peregrinatio*), an exile (*exsul*) in Jerusalem. Writing about the Lost Generation of the 1920s, Donald Pizer captures the mythic mentality of the expatriate or self-exiled state of mind: “The world one has been bred in is perceived to suffer from intolerable inadequacies and limitations; another world seems to be free of those failings and to offer a more fruitful way of life.” For the American artists of the postwar period (at least as they were remembered, or as they themselves recalled years later) the United States could not properly nourish their artistry: the restraints of prohibition, the stifling provincialism of the Red Scare, the wealthy merchant classes that prized capital over genius all worked against their artistic self-realization. Likewise, according to Paulinus, Melania must flee Rome in order to pursue a more fruitful life of renunciation in the Holy Land.

When the monastic biographer Palladius describes Melania’s return to the West, Rome and ascetic perfection are once more placed in tension. Melania arrived like a tidal wave of piety, instructing and converting relatives, “and led them out from Rome and brought them into the holy and calm harbor of life. And in this way she did battle against all those ‘beasts’ [*pros pantas ethēriomachēse*], that is,
the senators and their wives, hindering her on account of the renunciation of the remaining households.”27 Bereft of its last saints, the city of Rome at last succumbs to “some barbarian hurricane.”28

Jerome paints a similar picture of the failure of the imperial center around the time of his own emigration from Rome. As Andrew Cain has detailed, Jerome’s successful sojourn in Rome, as an ascetic and scriptural maestro, took a steep downward turn in 384: his own controversial writings, the sudden death of Paula’s daughter Blesilla (following Jerome’s ascetic counsel),29 and finally the death of Jerome’s patron Bishop Damasus soured the ambitious monk on the capital city.30 Sensing an imminent move, Jerome in a letter to Marcella from this period ponders retirement from the bustling city to the restorative countryside, a pastoral trope adopted from Roman aristocratic writing.31

By the time he leaves the city of Rome, in 385, under the shadow of some indeterminate ecclesiastical condemnation,32 Jerome has moved from the language of aristocratic retreat to that of biblical condemnation. Rome has become a site of demonic and irreligious scandal, “always persecuting the holy.”33 Jerome begins to call Rome Babylon, from which he prays he may arrive at last “at Jerusalem once more.”34 He longs, he writes, to be “restored to my own country.” “I was stupid,” he laments, “when I wished to sing a song of the Lord in a strange land.”35 Rome is here the site of exile—the biblical Babylon from which Jerome returns to Zion—yet, in later years, he would remember it as both Babylon and a strange shadow Jerusalem, the home of the Senate of Pharisees who condemned him (like Jesus).36 Whether the home town rejecting its prophet or the site of alienation, the city of Rome consistently resists ascetic perfection.37 As a doubled exile (in Rome and from Rome at once), Jerome embraces the role of scandalous expatriate “back home.”38 Once ensconced in Bethlehem, Jerome laments to those back in Rome the impossibility of their pursuing truly pious lives in the squalid, crowded, and impious capital, center of a falling world.39 Jerome’s pessimism about the ascetic possibilities of the imperial city are, of course, made only worse after the barbarian incursions of the early 400s.40

For Melania the Younger and Pinian, Rome—particularly as a site of familial and financial interests—symbolizes all that stands in the way of their ascetic dreams. In his chapter on Melania the Younger, Palladius reiterates the inherent opposition of Rome to ascetic pursuits, as Melania’s parents “by force” (biasamenoi) married her to “one of the first citizens of Rome.”41 Her marital ties are compounded by untold riches, and Palladius’s brief account of Melania’s disentanglement from Rome details both marital and financial renunciations.42 These renunciations are amplified in Gerontius’s later Life of Melania the Younger.43 Even after she has convinced Pinian that they should embrace chastity, the twin constraints of family and wealth keep them tied to their old lives.44 Finally, when Melania’s father dies, they are freed from parental constraint: right away “they left the great city of Rome.”45 As in
earlier accounts of the elder Melania, spiritual liberation and geographic departure from the city of Rome go hand in hand. After a long effort to divest themselves of their wealth (which, as Gerontius makes clear, is imperial in its scope), living first in the Italian suburbs and then in North Africa, “when they had renounced the whole burden of their riches, did they at last start out for Jerusalem.”47 “At last” (hysterón) in Jerusalem, they can truly practice asceticism.

THE ARTIST ABROAD

As the specific site from which these ascetic virtuosi must free themselves, the city of Rome remains central to the myth of renunciation. The spatial center therefore forms a site not just of rejection but also of deep affiliation, a powerful site to be renounced, which can therefore never be forgotten. Precisely mirroring this split sense of alienation and affiliation with the imperial center are the ways that the new home abroad is doubly understood. The Lost Generation of the 1920s found Paris uniquely suited to the nourishment of their artistic genius.48 At the same time, Paris never ceases to be for them a foreign space.49 These divided spatial loyalties in an analogous manner inform the way that Jerusalem became configured by these Western monastic immigrants in late antiquity.

Jerome vigorously championed the possibilities of ascetic advancement available to the hardy soul willing to relocate to the environs of Jerusalem.50 In a letter to Marcella from Paula and Eustochium preserved among Jerome’s letters—which many scholars presume was written by Jerome himself—the recent monastic transplants implore their friend to join them abroad: “As Judea is exalted [sublimior] above all other provinces, so is this city [Jerusalem] exalted above Judea.”51 The language of the provinces highlights the distance from (and relation to) Rome, positing Jerusalem as a new Christian capital in distinctly Roman terms. Later on, the letter returns to the language of provincial identity:52

Certainly if some preeminent orator blames someone or other for having learned Greek letters at Lilybaeum instead of at Athens, and Latin not at Rome but in Sicily (because each and every province has its own certain way, but one can’t be equal to another), why should we suppose anyone could achieve the pinnacle of studies away from our own “Athens”?52

According to this analogy, the Christian must travel abroad (like a Roman learning Greek or a provincial learning Latin) in order to master Christianity. The spatial analogy wobbles a bit: Marcella is at once the foreigner who must study abroad and the native Christian coming home. Jerusalem is at once home (“our Athens”) and abroad, the foreign site where nativeness is mastered.53

Of course, seeking perfection in the Holy Land was not for everybody: only an ascetic elite whose souls already strove for perfection. Around 400, Jerome wrote
a eulogy for the Roman noblewoman Fabiola, who had given up a life of sin (she had remarried while her first husband was still alive) and embarked on a project of sacred beneficence. But “Rome was too narrow for her kindness,” as Jerome writes, and so Fabiola sailed for Jerusalem to perfect her largess. But the sudden rumor of barbarian incursions, along with what Jerome refers to cryptically as “some dissen-
sion among us,” prompted Fabiola to return to Rome, her homeland (ad patriam). Jerome, by contrast, “was held firm by these Eastern habitations, and an age-old desire for the holy places.” The nourishing soil of the Holy Land is not for every Western ascetic: it is the abode of an ascetic elite, migrant virtuosi in training.

The triumphs of the ascetic elites are also highlighted by the failure of other ascetic migrants in the Life of Melania the Younger. Gerontius describes “a certain noblewoman who ended her way of life abroad in the holy places [gynaikos hypa-tou tinos en xeneteiakhatalysasei ton bion eis tous hagious topous],” whose name he mentioned at the offering of the Eucharist. Melania, incensed that he should name a heretic at the holy offering, rises on the spot and refuses Communion. Gerontius is coy on the identity of this “certain woman,” but the contrast between Melania the successful monk and the failed woman who came to seek a life of holiness abroad is clear enough to his readers. A similar near-miss ascetic migrant in the vita is Paula the Younger, the granddaughter of Jerome’s companion Paula, who became Melania the Younger’s monastic protégée: upon returning from a sojourn in Egypt, Melania visited with Paula and “brought her back to much humility from great vanity and a Roman disposition [Rhōmaikou phronēmatos].”

These virtuosi demonstrated their dedication, in part, by resisting the allure of home, by toughing it out in a space that was particularly conducive to their ascetic aspirations but, at the end of the day, also resolutely foreign. I have described elsewhere Jerome’s particular doubled vision of the Christian Holy Land as native and foreign terrain. In his conflict with Rufinus, he mocks his erstwhile schoolmate for his rusty Latin while (implicitly) praising his own multilingualism. The implication here is that, of the two migrant monks, the one who has retained a sense of his cultural origins is the more successful asceticémigré. According to Gerontius, Melania the Younger demonstrated a similar multilingual capacity, “code-switching” with such ease between Latin and Greek that “when she read in Latin, it seemed to everyone that she did not know Greek, and, on the other hand, when she read in Greek, it was thought that she did not know Latin.” The bilingual facility of Jerome and Melania embodies perfectly their double-sitedness: ascetic virtuosi nourished by the foreign soil of the Holy Land, yet never fully detached from their Latin roots. The religious lives of Melania the Younger and Jerome reflected this doubledness as well. Jerome, living for decades abroad, preached in Latin. (We may also imagine that he made use of his Latin translations of Greek homilies for pastoral purposes.) According to John Rufus, Melania the Younger kept distinctly Roman liturgical customs that survived even beyond her death in
the monasteries that she endowed on the Mount of Olives. Whether or not such claims are strictly accurate, they reflect an ongoing framing of the imperial origins of Melania and other ascetic émigrés. Gerontius refers to her even after her death as “Melania the Roman.”

Scholars have noted for decades the logistical and metaphorical intertwining of ascetic migration and religious travel during this period. Jerome’s monastic settlement probably functioned as a pilgrimage hostel, amplifying the foreignness of his monastic experience abroad. In one letter, he notes that “from India, Persia, Ethiopia daily we gaze upon crowds of monks.” These monks were also pilgrims, and not just in a spiritual sense but a very real, spatial sense. When Palladius writes of Melania that “she was a foreigner [xeniteusasa] for thirty-seven years,” it is unclear whether he means for that period of time she practiced asceticism or lived away from home—and, likely, the distinction made little sense to Palladius. For this generation of ascetic virtuosi, the foreignness of the monastic call could be fully embodied and realized in the Holy Land, that site of peregrinatio and xeniteia that was also “our Athens,” the one place in the world most perfectly adapted to engender Christian virtue.

A NEW SELF EMERGES

The mythology of the lost generation of migrant monks in the fifth century placed its ascetic heroes in a spatial tension: at home when abroad but always the most fully realized examples of a Roman Christian virtue. No surprise, then, that our narratives of ascetic migrations in the Theodosian age so often portray the impact of these ascetic virtuosi back home. We have already seen Palladius’s account of Melania the Elder’s brief and tumultuous return to Rome. Paulinus also contrasts Melania’s sanctity with her decidedly nonascetic “silk-clad children and grandchildren” who come to meet her. In Paulinus’s telling, though, the contrast is more pedagogical than apocalyptic:

Up to now the daughter of Zion has possessed her, and longs for her; but now the daughter of Babylon possesses and admires her. For now even Rome herself in the greater number of her population is the daughter of Zion rather than of Babylon. So Rome admires Melania, as she dwells in the shadow of humility and the light of truth.

The brilliant shadow cast by Melania materially transforms Babylon. Again, we note the wobbly analogy between home and exile and Zion and Babylon, made even hazier by the transformation of Rome from Babylon to Zion. Jerome, in his eulogy for Paula, also emphasizes how—even after death—her example in Bethlehem has made her famous in Rome.

Melania the Younger does not return home to the city of Rome, not even as a ghostly image of perfection like Paula, but does nonetheless model her new piety
in an imperial capital in the *Life of Melania the Younger*. After Pinian's death and the construction of a new monastery, Melania received letters from her uncle Volusian, “ex-prefect of greater Rome [*tēs megalēs Rhōmēs*].” Volusian, now in Constantinople, was still a pagan, and Melania yearned to convert him. Her trip from Jerusalem to Constantinople moves like an imperial triumph across a newly Christianized empire.

In Constantinople she finds a stubborn pagan uncle and Christian nobles hoodwinked by Nestorian heresy. The shining light of her piety works against both these blights in the new capital. Heretical influences are banished, and Volusian is converted. Volusian’s conversion signals the full Christianization of New Rome, which Melania’s concluding prayer configures in clear spatial terms: “How great is [the Lord’s] concern for even one soul, that in his goodness he arranged for Volusian to come from Rome and moved us to come from Jerusalem.” Constantinople is the in-between space in which Rome comes to enjoy the bright light of piety acquired by the ascetic virtuoso in the Holy Land.

The interplay between these multiple spaces—imperial center, provincial periphery—in the production of Christian Romanness shows us that the identity forged abroad is not a unitary identity, a new Christian self that will seamlessly move us from the old world to the new. The spatialized narrative of the lost generation is a narrative of division and separation, of a split self that is at home neither in the center nor abroad. I do not think this split self, mapped across diverse and fractured terrains, is necessarily a Christian innovation; indeed, as I have argued elsewhere, Roman imperial power was always, in some respects, split against itself and its others.

**CONCLUSIONS: A LOST GENERATION FOUND**

The spatial narrative that I have been tracing—between Rome and Jerusalem—is also not the only spatial narrative of ascetic perfection in late antiquity. We must place this particular spatialized vision alongside the myth of the desert, the closed fountain of the women’s cloister, even the bishop’s household: all idealized, asceticized Christian spaces in late antiquity. What I have attempted to do here, through the historical intertext of the Lost Generation, is highlight the particular imperializing effects of one of these narratives. The positing of a special place outside the imperial center creates a vantage point from which a select few—an ascetic elite—might critique the values of the center. As we have seen, the possibilities for personhood that arise out of this spatially split matrix are also split and divided. Little surprise, then, that out of this space of critique arise new possibilities of personhood in the Christian Roman Empire: gender, class, status, and even the boundaries of the human body are called into question in this space of ascetic virtuosity in the Holy Land.
Comparison with the Lost Generation in Paris also allows us to raise the very question of generationality. Reframing national identity through rhetoric of a generation gave to the Lost Generation in Paris a chronological as well as a spatial component. Not only is the space abroad set apart (geographically, artistically, and morally) from the imperial center, but it is explicitly a site for youthful regeneration. Yet that young generation, thinking new thoughts and dreaming new dreams, will one day (soon) also be the old guard awaiting displacement by a new generation.

This rhetoric of generationality is useful in thinking about this influential cadre of ascetic émigrés, as well. As sociologists have been pointing out since the 1920s, the notion of a generation has little to do with actual demographic progression. (Otherwise, of course, it makes little sense to speak of Melania the Elder and Melania the Younger as members of the same generation.) Generations emerge as markers, spaces of cultural, political, and social innovation. When we think of Christians in the Roman Empire before and after this lost generation of ascetic migrants, it is clear they also mark a watershed: not merely the imperialization of Christianity (and the Christianization of empire) but new ways of thinking about bodies, status, and hierarchy emerge on the other side. In our textbook surveys of the fourth and the early fifth century we routinely call this period the post-Constantinian era. When we think of the transformations of personhood engendered—in part—by a small group of ascetic virtuosi seeking new ways of being on the fringes of empire, we may also begin thinking of it as the age of the Melanias.

NOTES

Many thanks to my research assistant at Scripps College, Beatrice Smith, for her bibliographic work on the Lost Generation, and to my erstwhile colleague, Chris Guzaitis, for her expertise in U.S. imperialism and Steiniana.


2. Melania the Elder was not the first of these immigrants. Günter Stemberger, Jews and Christians in the Holy Land: Palestine in the Fourth Century (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000), 115–16, identifies Innocent of Rome as the earliest settler from the West in Jerusalem (on which see below). Another earlier Western settler may have been Florentinus (see below, note 12).


4. Several prominent expatriates produced autobiographies of this period, the most notable being Ernest Hemingway’s A Moveable Feast (most recently a “restored” version has been edited by Hemingway’s grandson Sean: A Moveable Feast: The Restored Edition [New York: Scribner’s, 2009]), as well as Gertrude Stein, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1933), and Malcolm Cowley, whose Exile’s Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s (New York: Norton, 1934)


7. Dolan, *Modern Lives*, 16 (citing Robert Wohl, *The Generation of 1914* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979], 45), notes that the term "Lost Generation" was coined in Germany ("verlorene Generation") in 1912 to describe prewar political unease and was “used extensively in Britain and France in the first years after World War I to describe the literal age cohort that had been 'lost' forever in the fighting of 1914–18." See also Michael Soto, *The Modernist Nation: Generation, Renaissance, and Twentieth-Century American Literature* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 33–43. According to Hemingway, *Moveable Feast*, 61, Gertrude Stein applied it to the postwar expatriates. The phrase, with its ascription to Stein (“in conversation”), had already appeared in 1926 as an epigraph to Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* balanced neutrally (or even positively) with a long quote from Ecclesiastes. In *A Moveable Feast*, however, the phrase redounds to Stein’s discredit: "I thought too of Miss Stein and Sherwood Anderson and egotism and mental laziness versus discipline and I thought who is calling who a lost generation?" (62)


8. On attempts to catalogue the lost generation dating back to the 1930s, see Soto, *Modernist Nation*, 43–50.


Melania the Elder and Rufinus settled in Jerusalem in the 370s, although Rufinus may have arrived earlier as a guest of an Italian émigré, Florentinus, in whose care Jerome wrote to Rufinus in 374 or 375: Jerome, Ep. 4 and 5 (Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae, ed. Isidorus Hilberg, CSEL 54: 19–23). Florentinus may be another early ascetic immigrant, if he is the same Florentinus (or Florentius) whom Jerome mentions as one of a few notable monks ("insignes monachi") in his continuation of Eusebius's Chronicon s.a. 377 (Die Chronik des Hieronymus / Hieronymi Chronicon: Eusebius' Werke 7.1, 3rd ed., Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der Ersten Drei Jahrhunderte 47, edited by Rudolf Helm [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1984], 248): "Among them Florentinus was so merciful toward the needy that he was commonly called 'father of the poor.'" Jerome followed Paula and Eustochium to the Holy Land in the 380s, eventually settling in Bethlehem, where they constructed monasteries. John Cassian and his companion Germanus stayed at Egyptian monasteries in Bethlehem in the 380s. We may also include here such short-term settlers as Egeria, Silvia, and Poemenia, ascetic Western travelers often called pilgrims but whose sojourns, we should recall, often lasted several years. On the Western origins of these women, see Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, 160–63.


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23. Ibid.
24. Jerome, Chronicon s.a. 374, condenses Melania's story: "Melania, most noble of Roman women...sailed for Jerusalem" (GCS 24: 247); in Ep. 39.5 (ed. Hilberg, CSEL 54: 305) he recounts that Melania's children died soon after her husband (her husband was still unburied ["necdum humato"] and that immediately from the funeral she set sail for Jerusalem. But see Kevin Wilkinson, "Elder Melania's Missing Decade," 173–75.

28. Ibid. 54.7 (Storia lausiaca, ed. Bartelink, 248).
32. Cain, Letters of Jerome, 114–24, argues that Paula's family led the charge against Jerome in order to prevent him from leading her (and her fortune) away from Rome to the Holy Land and that Jerome was convicted on charges of conduct (financial and amorous) unbecoming a priest.
33. Jerome, Ep. 45.4 (ed. Hilberg, CSEL 54: 325–26): "O Envy, first biting yourself! O satanic cunning, always persecuting holy things! No other Roman women supplied drama to the city, except Paula and Melanium, who held property in contempt and left behind their relatives and raised up the Lord's cross as their particular seal of piety."
36. Jerome, Interpretatio Libri Didymi de Spiritu Sancto, prol.: "When I lived in Babylon, and I was a serf of the purple-clad whore, and I lived according to the law of the Quirites...And the senate of the Pharisees shouted...And I returned to Jerusalem: and after the house of Romulus and the Luper- calian games, I gazed upon the lodging place of Mary and the Savior's cave" (Traité du Saint-Esprit, ed. and trans. Louis Doutreleau, SC 386: 138–40).
39. In his letter to Heliodorus, Jerome bemoans the "calamities of our times," and concludes that the "Roman world is falling" (Ep. 60.15, 16 [ed. Hilberg, CSEL 54: 568, 570]). In his letter to Laeta on the education of Paula the Younger, Jerome describes Rome's "squalid" conditions (Ep. 107.1 [ed. Hilberg, CSEL 55: 291]) and, after detailing a rigorous program of ascetic education for Paula, admits that such a pedagogical program is impossible in Rome, wherefore Laeta should send Paula to her grandmother and aunt in Bethlehem (Ep. 107.13 [ed. Hilberg, CSEL 55: 303]).


42. Ibid. 3–6 (Storia lausiaca, ed. Bartelink, 264–68).

43. Gerontius, *Vita Melaniae Iunioris* 1 (Vie de sainte Mélanie: Texte grec, introduction, traduction et notes, ed. and trans. Denys Gorce, SC 90: 130), describes her parents as “forcibly uniting her in marriage” (μετὰ πολλῆς βίας συνάπτουσιν αὐτήν πρὸς γάμον τῷ μακαρίῳ ἀνδρὶ Πινιανῷ), similar to Palladius’s description (see above), with which Gerontius was probably familiar. Translations of the *vita* are based on Gerontius, *Life of Melanias the Younger*, trans. E. A. Clark, modified for clarity.

44. In despair, they even contemplate running away: “[ἀναχωρεῖν] and flee the city [φεύγειν τῆς πόλεως]” (Gerontius, *Vita Melaniae Iunioris* 6 [Vie de sainte Mélanie, ed. and trans. Gorce, SC 90: 138]). "Some heavenly perfume" (εὐωδία τις . . . οὐράνιος) intervenes to bring them to their senses; Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 64–65, places this scene in the context of similar olfactory miracles.


46. Ibid. 19 (Vie de sainte Mélanie, ed. and trans. Gorce, SC 90: 162–64): “They fearlessly gave away the remainder of their possessions in Rome, . . . possessions that were, so to speak, enough for the whole world.”

47. Ibid. 34 (Vie de sainte Mélanie, ed. and trans. Gorce, SC 90: 190).

48. Cott, “Revisiting the Transatlantic 1920s.”


55. Possibly Jerome had convinced her to endow monastic foundations there (see Jerome, *Ep.* 77.7 [ed. Hilberg, CSEL 55: 44–45]); Jerome, *Ep.* 77.8 (ed. Hilberg, CSEL 55: 45), notes that he was looking for a “little place for her to live” (*habitaculum*), similar to “Mary’s inn.”
56. Cain, *Letters of Jerome*, 173, assumes based on the dates (394–95) that Fabiola was loath to become embroiled in the burgeoning Origenist controversy. See also Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 191.

57. Jerome, *Ep.* 77.8 (ed. Hilberg, CSEL 55: 46). During his brief sojourn in Syria, Jerome had used similar shaming language for companions who were unable to tough it out in the monastic wilderness. (See *Ep. 14*, to Heliodorus [ed. Hilberg, CSEL 54: 44–61].) What has developed in the meantime is Jerome’s explicit contrast between Rome, the *patria*, and the “holy places.”

58. Pizer, *American Expatriates*, 22–24, notes the negative models in Hemingway’s *Moveable Feast* (such as Scott Fitzgerald and Ezra Pound), who fail to respond appropriately to the *locus amoenus* of Paris. We may read Jerome’s sudden change of heart toward Paulinus—encouraging in *Ep.* 53, discouraging in *Ep.* 58 (ed. Hilberg, CSEL 54: 442–65, 527–41)—not only as a political calculation (see Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 192–93) but also a change in Jerome’s perception of Paulinus’s fitness for Holy Land asceticism.


60. Clark, in Gerontius, *Life of Melania the Younger*, trans. E. A. Clark, 150, speculates that the heretic was Melania the Elder herself; T. D. Barnes concurs (*Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010], 251–52).


64. See my “‘What Has Rome to Do With Bethlehem?’ Cultural Capital(s) and Religious Imperialism in Late Ancient Christianity,” Classical Receptions Journal 3 (2011): 29–45.


68. The publisher of the Latin version of the *Vita Melaniae Iunioris*, Cardinal Mariano Rampolla, sought to heighten the Roman aspect of Melania’s liturgical practices as described in the *vita*; Clark, *Life of Melania the Younger*, 119–28, treats these claims with more skepticism.


In the same passage Palladius notes that Melania "persevered in her foreignness [ἐγκαρτερήσας τῇ ξενιτείᾳ]." Meyer, in Palladius: The Lausiac History, ed. and trans. Meyer, 134, renders this word in both places as "gave hospitality to," but such a translation seems to be stretching the definition. Bartelink, in Palladius, Storia lausiaca, ed. Bartelink, renders it as "perseverato . . . nella vita ascetica," but earlier renders ξενιτεύσασα as "visse separate dal mondo." (See also 387 note 8, where he discusses the chronological and translational difficulties of this passage.) See s.vv. ξενετεία and ξενιτεύω in G. W. H. Lampe, ed., A Patristic Greek Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 931–32.


Rufinus Antonius Agrypinus Volusianus, Melania’s maternal uncle, may be one of the most sought-after pagans for Christian conversion: the dedicatee of Augustine’s City of God and recipient of numerous letters from the African bishop, Volusian seemed happy to remain non-Christian until soon before his death. See Gerontius, Life of Melania the Younger, trans. E. A. Clark, 129–33.


Ibid. 55 (Vie de sainte Mélanie, ed. and trans. Goree, SC 90: 238).

The interplay between piety acquired abroad and transformation of the political center is reinforced by the immediately following narrative of the empress Eudoxia’s harrowing journey back to Jerusalem with Melania: ibid. 56 (Vie de sainte Mélanie, ed. and trans. Goree, SC 90: 238–40).


See Kristina Sessa, The Formation of Papal Authority in Late Antique Italy: Roman Bishops and the Domestic Sphere (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Kate Cooper, The Fall of the Roman Household (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

We should not forget one of the most significant discourses of moral revaluation to be reimported back from the Holy Land to Rome: the ideas of Origen, translated and transmitted by Rufinus: see Elizabeth A. Clark, The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Similarly the Lost Generation in Paris, performed by such figures as Djuna Barnes, Josephine Baker, and James Baldwin, was notably more open to racial and sexual diversity and experimentation than U.S. society in general at the time.
