When Wehofer published his monograph on Justin’s Apologies,\(^1\) he could rightly claim that this work was the first attempt at treating these Apologies from the point of view of literary criticism. There have been books and articles written on Justin’s Apologies before and after Wehofer’s publication. Some writers steered clear of all literary criticism and confined themselves strictly to the theological, philosophical, and other contents,\(^2\) while others, without making a real effort to appreciate Justin by applying the rules of ancient classical rhetoric to his Apologies, declared that the Apologies are disorderly collections of theological and “apologetic” ideas, written without any plan, not to mention a plan à la Greek Rhetoric.\(^3\) Admittedly, it is difficult to outline exact plans in the Apologies. This, however, should not be a reason for despair or disparagement, but rather for a more careful study of them as literary products. On the other hand, it is very easy to exploit the Apologies for their theological and philosophical contents, as e.g. for the doctrines and the life of the early Christian Church. But even this type of interest should be helped very much by a literary appreciation. About fifteen years after Wehofer’s publication, there was another attempt made at a literary criticism of the Apologies, this time by Karl Hubik.\(^4\) Like his predecessor in

\(^1\) Th. Wehofer, Die Apologie Justins des Philosophen und Märtyrers in literar-historischer Beziehung zum erstenmal untersucht, *Roemische Quartalschrift*, Suppl. 6, 1897.


this line of literary study, he, too, examined the Apologies with respect to the classical rhetorical principles that he applied to the Apologies, and offered rhetorical plans for them. We are very much indebted to both Wehofer and Hubik for their pioneering work in this difficult and quite thankless area of literature.

Whenever they refer to Justin’s Apologies, post-Eusebian authors invariably use the term *apologies*. Editors, ancient and modern, never fail to title them *APOLOGIES*. Works, treating these two writings from theological and philosophical points of view, very understandably, never question the so-called *apologetic* character of the Apologies; after all they are a very rich storehouse for the defence of the Christian religion and philosophy. It is, however, most surprising that Wehofer and Hubik, writing on their rhetorical art and not on their theological contents, plainly *assume*, without the slightest doubt in their minds, that these books were *apoologies* not only in the post-classical and ecclesiastical, but also in the classical rhetorical sense. Geffcken,⁵ at any rate, found it impossible to understand Justin’s demands in the First Apology that those *accused* at trials be examined with regard to crimes, other than Christianity, charged against them. These demands, it is easy to see, may, indeed, seem most inept once it is assumed that the trials of Justin’s concern followed strictly the procedural prescriptions of Trajan’s Rescript, especially that the individuals on trial were charged, from its outset, with Christianity. These demands of Justin may, at last but not least, appear to be absurd if he had made them to defend the Christians at those trials, as it were, in an *apologia* of the forensic kind. On the other hand, it is hoped by the writer that Justin and his demands will appear to be most sensible once they are seen in the frame of the proper literary genre, with the correct historical situation as their background.

The scope of this paper will be confined to the First Apology.

One cannot help agreeing with the view ⁶ that what makes it difficult to discover a clear *disposition* in Justin’s writings is his use of an excessive rhetorical art. The purpose of this study does

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⁵ Above, pp. 99–100.